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THE

WHOLE WORKS

OF THE

RIGHT REV. JEREMY TAYLOR, D.D.

LORD BISHOP OF DOWN, CONNOR, AND DROMORE.

VOL. I.

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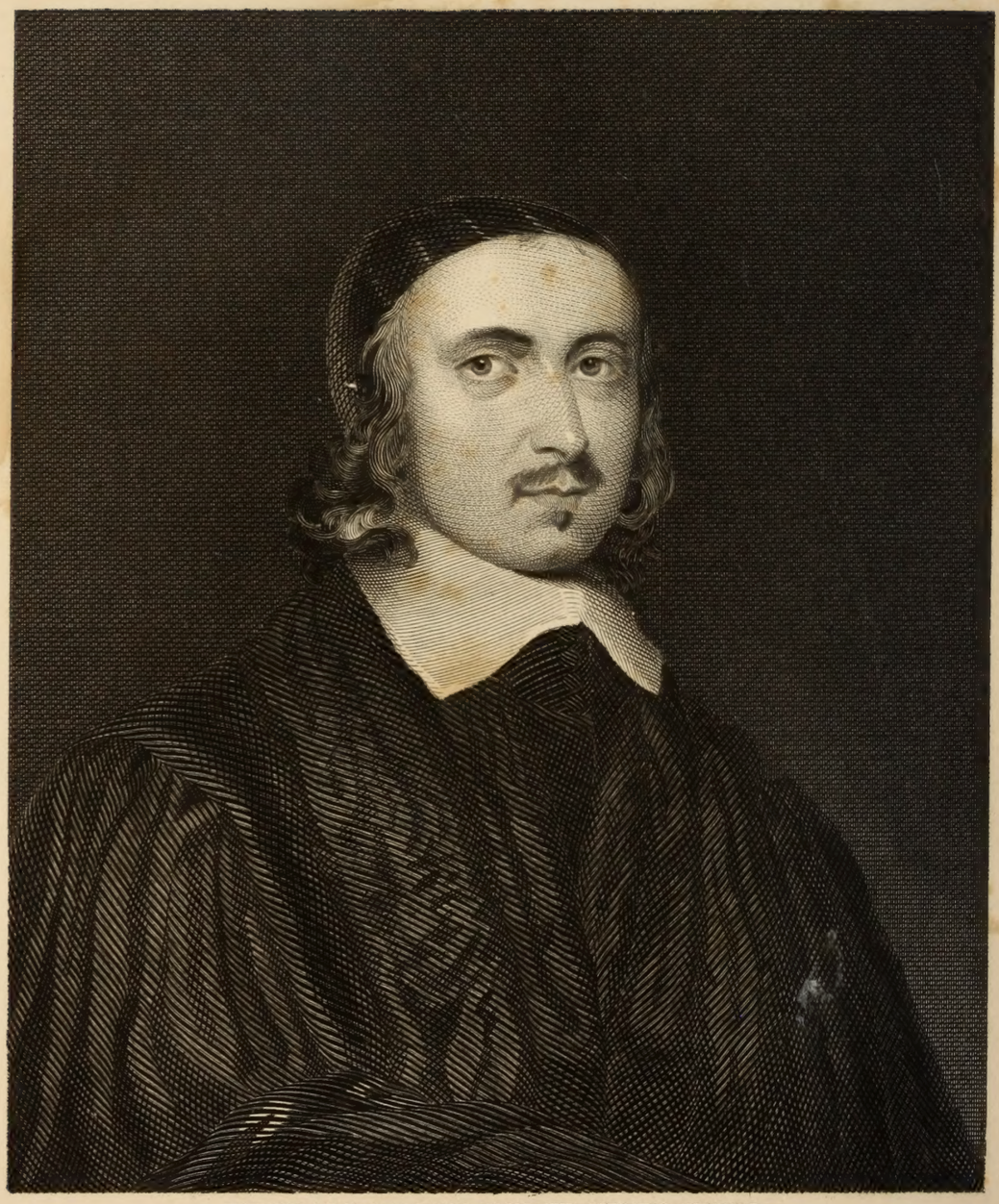

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Jer: Taylor

June · 9 · 1657.

London, Published by Wesley & Davis, Ave Maria Lane, 1836.

THE

WHOLE WORKS

OF THE

RIGHT REV. JEREMY TAYLOR, D.D.

LORD BISHOP OF DOWN, CONNOR, AND DROMORE:

WITH

AN ESSAY,

BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
HENRY G. BOHN, YORK STREET,
COVENT GARDEN.
MDCCCXLIV.

JOHN CHILDS AND SON, BUNGAY.

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PREACHED AT GOLDEN GROVE,

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AN

ESSAY ON THE GENIUS AND WRITINGS

OF

JEREMY TAYLOR.

Jeremy Taylor forms the subject of one of the most beautiful pieces of biography in our language. We refer to Bishop Heber's life of him; a work which, for the most part, is singularly free from the vices which too often attach to that species of composition. The writer's enthusiastic admiration of his author does not blind him to a perception of his faults or imperfections; and the work, therefore, is not, what biography so often is, a tissue of indiscriminate eulogy. Its merits as a composition are of no common order; the narrative is dignified by the spirit of philosophy, and adorned and enlivened by an elegant and chastened imagination; above all, it is, for the most part, pervaded by a degree of moderation, charity, and candour, not often seen in those whose task it is to write of those eventful times, and probably inspired in no small degree by familiar converse with the lovely spirit which breathes in the immortal productions of his author.

But if the merits of that piece of biography be so great,—and no man can be more willing, or even eager, to admit them than the present writer,—some apology may be deemed necessary for the apparent presumption implied in this attempt to furnish another critical introduction to his writings. Two very sufficient reasons, however, may be assigned to justify the attempt. It seemed desirable that the present edition of Jeremy Taylor's Works should not be sent forth to the world without *some* general introduction; and it is obvious that whatsoever the merits of Bishop Heber's "Life," that work could not be prefixed to these volumes. But this is not the only reason for the present attempt. The principal object of the present Essay is distinct from that of the "Life;" what is subordinate in the one is principal in the other. Bishop Heber's object was to furnish, what had never been furnished before, an accurate, and as far as his materials would permit, a copious, account of Taylor's life, with an extensive examination of his writings. That of the present Essay is to attempt a minute analysis of his character, intellectual, moral, and religious; to which will be appended a brief critical estimate of his principal productions. It is true, indeed, that many valuable and striking observations on Jeremy Taylor's character are to be found in Bishop Heber's "Life," but with the exception of a very few pages at the close, they are, (as might be expected in a work of continuous narrative,) interwoven with the narrative itself, rendering it impossible to obtain a consistent view of Jeremy Taylor's character except by a diligent comparison of different parts of the volume. The present is an attempt to furnish a full analysis of it in a systematic form; and it is confidently hoped, that it will not be found a mere repetition of what has been already given in other shapes to the public.

But as it may be interesting to the reader, and is, in some measure, necessary for the illustration of the following pages, to give some account of the principal occurrences of his life, we shall preface

the combined influence of poverty and gratitude, partly in compliance with the base fashion of adulation which distinguished the dedications of the day,*) Hatton must have been a man of considerable worth, learning, and ability.

Taylor's history during the rest of the civil war is involved in the deepest obscurity. Wood tells us that he followed the king's army as chaplain, and that he often preached before the court at Oxford. But one of his letters, the original of which is still extant in the British Museum, shows that during, at all events, a *part* of the year 1643, he was residing with his mother-in-law. Some expressions in it seem to betray the fact that Taylor was already involved in those pecuniary embarrassments, from which he was at few periods of his life perfectly exempt.

His residence with his mother-in-law could have been but temporary, for the following year he is found in Wales, whither, as Bishop Heber conjectures, he had retired after his second marriage. Here circumstances again brought him into connexion with part of the royal army. In such ill-omened company even the mountain solitudes of Wales could afford him no protection. In the victory gained by the parliamentary forces over Colonel Gerard, near Cardigan Castle, Taylor was taken prisoner; at least none will feel the slightest doubt that he is the " Dr. Taylor " whom Whitelocke mentions as taken on this occasion. Some light is thrown on this portion of his history by Jeremy Taylor himself in the dedication to his " Liberty of Prophesying." But though the passage fully shows that Jeremy Taylor had been exposed to *some such* calamity as that above mentioned, he has so completely disguised the narrative under the form of allegory, that it is impossible to tell, from his excessively figurative language, what the precise facts of the case were. The passage is, indeed, so beautiful in itself, and so eminently characteristic of the writer, that we cannot refrain from transcribing it. Nor is the close of it, in which he makes honourable mention of the " gentleness and mercies of a noble enemy," the least worthy of notice. It is delightful to reflect that as, in that ferocious struggle, there were men who were capable of performing such kind offices to their foes, so there were others who, like Taylor, could gratefully record them.

" My Lord,

" In this great storm, which hath dashed the vessel of the church all in pieces, I have been cast upon the coast of Wales, and, in a little boat, thought to have enjoyed that rest and quietness, which, in England, in a greater, I could not hope for. Here I cast anchor, and thinking to ride safely, the storm followed me with so impetuous violence, that it broke a cable, and I lost my anchor; and here again I was exposed to the mercy of the sea, and the gentleness of an element that could neither distinguish things nor persons. And but that he who stilleth the raging of the sea, and the noise of his waves, and the madness of his people, had provided a plank for me, I had been lost to all the opportunities of content or study. But I know not whether I have been more preserved by the courtesies of my friends, or the gentleness and mercies of a noble enemy: Οἱ γὰρ βάρβαροι παρεῖχον οὐ τὴν τυχοῦσαν φιλανθρωπίαν ἡμῖν· ἀνάψαντες γὰρ πυρὰν, προσελάβοντο πάντας ἡμᾶς, διὰ τὸν ὑετὸν τὸν ἐφεστῶτα, καὶ διὰ τὸ ψύχος. And now since I have come ashore, I have been gathering a few sticks to warm me, a few books to entertain my thoughts, and divert them from the perpetual meditation of my private troubles and the public dyscrasy: but those which I could obtain were so few, and so impertinent, and unuseful to any great purposes, that I began to be sad upon a new stock, and full of apprehension that I should live unprofitably, and die obscurely, and be forgotten, and my bones thrown into some common charnel-house, without any name or note to distinguish me from those who only served their generation by filling the number of citizens, and who could pretend to no thanks or reward from the public, beyond 'jus trium liberorum.'"

What was the term of Taylor's imprisonment, and by whose kindness he obtained his freedom, it is impossible to ascertain. Neither is it known where he betook himself immediately after his release. It is, however, highly improbable that he would rejoin the king's army, the condition of which was fast becoming desperate. Indeed, it is probable that the very terms on which he was set at large, were such as precluded the possibility of his again attaching himself to the royal camp.

Being now thrown entirely on his own resources, he did what Milton and many other great men of the age were compelled to do—he kept a school. He did not, however, venture on this drudgery alone; William Nicholson, afterwards bishop of Gloucester, and William Wyatt, afterwards pre-

* Gross as some of Taylor's flattery is, it is nothing compared with the fulsome stuff to be found in some of the dedications of South, a man many of whose peculiarities would have appeared to render flattery impossible. But experience shows us that insolence and meanness are not unfrequently near neighbours.—It is to be observed as an apology for Taylor, that his boundless charity, the warmth and the kindness of his nature, his gratitude, not to say his profound humility, would often induce him most sincerely to overrate the merits of others; but from such a man as South—so cold—so sarcastic—so cynical—gross flatteries can be considered as little better than deliberate lies.

bendary of Lincoln, were associated with him. Newton Hall, a house in the parish of Lanfihangel, was the scene of their labours, and it is said, that, all things considered, their success more than equalled their expectations. How long this triumvirate of schoolmasters existed is not known; not more than a very few years at most. While this connexion continued, appeared "A new and easy Institution of Grammar," which has been ascribed by some to Taylor himself, by some to Wyatt; by others, with greater probability, it is supposed to have been a joint work. The dedication, however, which is inscribed to the eldest son of Hatton, is all Taylor's. "An easy Institution of Grammar," by Jeremy Taylor, reminds one of the little tracts of his great contemporary Milton, entitled, "Accedence commenced Grammar," and "Artis Logicæ Institutio."

But this humble effort was soon after followed by his celebrated work, "The Liberty of Prophesying;" a work which though not read so much as most of his devotional and practical writings, has probably conferred upon him more reputation, and has certainly entitled him to the gratitude of all posterity. As this work, together with the other principal pieces of Taylor, will be characterized at the close of this Essay, we are absolved for the present from the necessity of saying any thing of its merits. Its general object, it is well known, is to establish within certain limits, what was then little understood, and scarcely in a single instance practised,—the doctrine of toleration.

That such a work, in such an age, should pass unquestioned and uncontroverted, was not to be expected. Of the many who attacked the principles it defended, the only one whose name has blessed the ears of posterity was Samuel Rutherford, professor of divinity in the university of St. Andrews. His reply was entitled, "A free Disputation against pretended Liberty of Conscience," and is not a whit behind Edwards's "Gangrœna" in blind bigotry and intolerance. His name is contemptuously referred to by Milton in his sarcastic lines entitled, "On the New Forcers of Conscience under the Long Parliament." Bishop Heber affirms that Milton was always reputed to have been an admirer of Taylor; there can be little doubt that he was so, though on what authority Bishop Heber affirms the fact, the present writer knows not. There is great probability, however, in his conjecture that Milton in the following lines of the poem above referred to, had an eye to his illustrious contemporary, whose sentiments on the subject of toleration so exactly coincided with his own:

> "Men whose life, learning, faith, and pure intent
> Would have been held in high esteem by Paul,
> Must now be named and branded heretics,
> By shallow Edwards and Scotch what d'ye call."

The name of Jeremy Taylor's second wife (whom Bishop Heber supposes him to have married before his imprisonment in Wales, and to whom, it is tolerably certain, he must have been married before his "Liberty of Prophesying" appeared) was Joanna Bridges; she was possessed of some property at Mandinam, at Llanguedor, in the county of Caermarthen. Little of her history is known, and of her family nothing. According to current report, however, she was a natural daughter of Charles the First, born while he was Prince of Wales. Her portrait, still preserved, proves that she must have possessed no ordinary beauty, and her features, it is said, bore a singular resemblance to those of her supposed father.

Whether "the Mandinam property," as her estate is called in the family papers, was small, or that Taylor's release from captivity after the defeat of the royalists at Cardigan was effected with the loss of considerable part of it, is not known; but it is certain that it was not sufficient to exempt him from the necessity of literary exertion, or of availing himself of the liberality of his friends.

His most generous patron, at this period of his life, and for several years after, was Richard Vaughan, Earl of Carbery, a man of considerable note in his day; a cavalier, but not one of the most violent. Throughout the whole struggle, he was on friendly terms with many of the victorious party; and was consequently allowed, after the defeat at Marston Moor, to compound for his estates under very advantageous circumstances. His seat was at Golden Grove, in the parish of Llanguedor. In this family Taylor found, for some years, the most generous protection and support, which he has repaid by giving them immortality in his writings. He officiated as their chaplain; to them, and their immediate neighbourhood, he preached his ενιαυτος of "sermons;" while he has honoured, with separate dedications in his "Great Exemplar," the two wives of his patron, the Ladies Frances

and Alice Carbery, the first of whom, if we may take her estimate by Taylor's gratitude, must have been a person of almost superhuman worth. The second was the celebrated heroine of "Milton's Comus."

The "Life of Christ" was the next in the order of his publications. This work, as were all his other publications for some years, is wholly of a practical and devotional character. His other works during the above mentioned period, were; a "Funeral Sermon" for Lady Carbery; A short Catechism for Children;" his "Twenty-Seven Sermons for the Summer Half-Year;" and his "Holy Living and Dying."

In 1654, he again mingled, though doubtless with reluctance, in controversy. On this occasion, he broke his first lance with the Roman catholics, against whom he produced his excellent treatise on the "Real Presence and Spiritual of Christ in the blessed Sacrament."

New trials now awaited Taylor. His preface to his Manual (entitled, in compliment to his patron, "Golden Grove") contained matter, which could not fail to excite the anger of the dominant parties. Imprisonment was the consequence; though at what precise time this event occurred is uncertain. The fact is ascertained by a letter from one of his friends, in which the writer congratulates him on his restoration to freedom.

This friend was John Evelyn, Esq. of Says Court, who proved to Taylor as kind a protector and patron as the Earl of Carbery had been. The circumstances which led to their intimacy are not known. All that is certain is, that he was one of Taylor's auditors in London, in 1654; and that the acquaintance, which at that time subsisted between them, soon ripened into the most endeared friendship. Evelyn ever after regarded Taylor as his "ghostly father," while Taylor received in exchange for his "spiritual things," a liberal supply of his friend's "temporal things."

Shortly after he had formed this valuable friendship, Taylor appears, by a letter of Evelyn, to have been again imprisoned. This imprisonment was doubtless the same with that at Chepstow Castle, to which he refers in his answer to the letter of the bishop of Rochester, touching "Original Sin," appended in the present edition to his "Deus Justificatus." The cause is not known. It is certain, however, that his imprisonment was not of long duration; nor does it seem to have been of much severity. For in the letter to the bishop of Rochester, he tells his correspondent, "Your Lordship's letter, dated July 28, I received not till Sept. 11; it seems R. Royston detained it in his hands, supposing it could not come safely to me, while I remain a prisoner now in Chepstow Castle. But I now have that liberty that I can receive any letters, and send any; for the gentlemen under whose custody I am, as they are careful of their charges, so they are civil to my person."

It was under such discouraging circumstances as these, that Taylor finished his "Course of Sermons for every Sunday in the Year," and composed his "Unum Necessarium, or the Doctrine and Practice of Repentance."

This work contained those rash speculations on the subject of "Original Sin," which, in spite of his conciliatory preface to the bishops of Salisbury and Rochester and the clergy of the church of England generally, exposed him to suspicion and censure from very many in his own communion, and involved him in his unpleasant controversy with Dr. Jeanes and others. These ill-advised speculations will hereafter come more fully under review. The replies, letters, and expostulations, which these novelties in doctrine provoked against him, induced him to vindicate himself in his "Further Explication of the Doctrine of Original Sin;" and once more, in his "Deus Justificatus," or "Vindication of the Glory of the Divine Attributes in the Question of Original Sin."

The "Further Explication" was submitted, while in manuscript, to the Bishop of Rochester, for his revision and correction; but as the tract was in fact only a more elaborate defence and reiteration of doctrines deemed to be unscriptural and false, the bishop declined the task to which he was invited. The prefatory letter of Taylor to the bishop (first published in Heber's life) is well worth insertion here, as a beautiful exemplification of the spirit of humility and charity which characterized the writer. It shows that though he might reason ill, he did not cherish his error. The place from which it is dated, affords evidence that he was at this time released from confinement, and was once more at Mandinam.

"Right Reverend Father in God.

"My very good Lord,—I wrote to your Lorp. about a fortnight or three weekes since, to wh. letter, although I believe an answer is upon the road, yet I thought fitt to prevent the arrival of by this addresse; together with which

I send up to Royston a little tract, giving a further account of that doctrine which some of my brethren were lesse pleased with. And although I find, by the letters of my friends from thence, that the storme is over, and many of the contradictors professe themselves of my opinion, and pretend that they were so before, but thought it not fit to owne it, yet I have sent up these papers, by which (according to that counsel which your Lorp. in your prudence and charity was pleased to give me) I doe intend, and I hope they will effect it,—give satisfaction to the church and to my jealous brethren: besides, possibly, they may prevent a trouble to me, if peradventure any man should be *tam otiose negotiosus* as to write against me. For I am very desirous to be permitted quietly to my studies, that I may seasonably publish the first three books of my Cases of Conscience, which I am now preparing to the presse, and by which, as I hope to serve God and the church, so I doe designe to doe some honour to your Lorp., to whose charity and noblenesse I and my relatives are so much obliged. I have given order to Royston to consigne these papers into your Lorp.'s hands, to peruse, censure, acquit, or condemne, as your Lorp. pleases. If the written copy be too troublesome to read, your Lorp. may receive them from the presse, and yet suppresse them before the publication, *si minus probentur*. But if, by your Lorp.'s letters, which I suppose are coming to mee, I find any permission or counsel from your Lorp. that may cause me to alter or adde to what is sent up, I will obey it, and give Royston order not to post so fast, but that I may overtake him before these come abroad. But I was upon any termes willing to be quit of these, that I might no longer suffer or looke upon any thing that may retard my more beloved intendment.

"My Lord, I humbly begge your blessing upon

"Your Lorp.'s most obliged and most affectionate and thankful Servant,

"Mandinam, November 17, 1655." "JER. TAYLOR."

About this time Evelyn strongly urged Taylor to write some work for the private use of those who, in those unsettled times, were deprived of the usual privileges of public ordinances and a regular ministry. This application drew from Taylor the following beautiful letter, first published in Bishop Heber's memoir of him.

TO JOHN EVELYN, ESQUIRE.

St. Paul's Convers. $5\frac{5}{6}$.

"Deare Sr,—I perceive by your symptoms how the spirits of pious men are affected in this sad catalysis: it is an evil time, and we ought not to hold our peace; but now the question is, Who shall speake? Yet I am highly persuaded, that, to good men and wise, a persecution is nothing but a changing the circumstance of religion, and the manner of the formes and appendages of divine worship. Publike or private is all one: the first hath the advantage of society, the second of love. There is a warmth and light in that; there is a heate and zeale in this; and if every person that can, will but consider concerning the essentials of religion, and retaine them severelly, and immure them as well as he can with the same or equivalent ceremonies, I know no difference in the thing, but that he shall have the exercise, and, consequently, the reward of other graces, for which, if he lives and dies in prosperous dayes, he shall never be crowned. But the evills are, that some will be tempted to quit their present religion, and some to take a worse, and some to take none at all. It is a true and a sad story; but *oportet esse hæreses*, for so they that are faithful shall be knowne; and I am sure He that hath promised to bring good out of evil, and that all things shall cooperate to the good of them that feare God, will verify it concerning persecution. But concerning a discourse upon the present state of things in relation to soules and our present duty, I agree with you that it is very fitt it were done, but yet by somebody who is in London, and sees the personal necessities and circumstances of pious people. Yet I was so far persuaded to do it myselfe, that I had amassed together divers of my papers useful to the worke; but my Cases of Conscience call upon me so earnestly, that I find myselfe not able to beare the cries of a clamorous conference. Sr, I thank you for imparting to me the vile distich of the dear departed saint. I value it as I doe the picture of deformity or a devil; the art may be good, and the gift faire, though the thing be intolerable; but I remember that when the Jesuits, sneering and deriding our calamity, shewed this sarcasme to my lord Lucas, Birkenhead being present, replied as tartly, 'It is true our church wants a head now; but if you have charity as you pretend, you can lend us one, for your church has had two and three at a time.' Sr, I knowe not when I shall be able to come to London; for our being stripped of the little reliques of our fortune remaining after ye shipwrecke, leaves not cordage nor sailes sufficient to beare me thither. But I hope to be able to commit to the presse my first bookes of Conscience by Easter time; and then, if I be able to get up, I shall be glad to wayte upon you; of whose good I am not more sollicitous than I am joyful that you so carefully provide for it in your best interest. I shall only give you the same prayer and blessing that St. John gave to Gaius; 'Beloved, I wish that you may be in health and prosper;' and your soule prospers; for so, by the rules of the best rhetorike, the greatest affaire is put into a parenthesis, and the biggest businesse into a postscript. Sr, I thanke you for your kind expressions at the latter end of your letter: you have never troubled mee, neither can I pretend to any other returne from you but that of your love and prayers. In all things else I doe but my duty, and I hope God and you will accept it; and that, by means of his own procurement, he will, some way or other (but how I know not yet) make provisions for mee. Sr, I am, in all heartinesse of affection,

"Your most affectionate friend and minister in the Lord Jesus,

"JER. TAYLOR."

A few months after this, we find Taylor in London, paying a delightful visit to Evelyn, at Saye's Court, where he met Berkeley, Boyle, and Wilkins. In the following beautiful and truly christian letter, he refers to the high gratification he had enjoyed in such society.

"TO JOHN EVELYN, ESQUIRE.

"April 16, 1656.

"Honour'd and Deare Sr,—I hope your servant brought my apology with him, and that I already am pardoned, or excused in your thoughts, that I did not returne an answer yesterday to your friendly letter. Sr, I did believe myselfe so very much bounde to you for your so kind, so friendly reception of mee in your *Tusculanum*, that I had some little wonder upon mee when I saw you making excuses that it was no better. Sr, I came to see you and your lady, and am highly pleased that I did so, and found all your circumstances to be an heape and union of blessings. But I have not either so great a fancy and opinion of the prettinesse of your aboad, or so low an opinion of your prudence and piety, as to thinke you can be any wayes transported with them. I know the pleasure of them is gone off from their height before one month's possession; and that strangers, and seldome seers, feele the beauty of them more than you who dwell with them. I am pleased, indeed, at the order and the cleannesse of all your outward things; and look upon you not onely as a person, by way of thankfulnesse to God for his mercies and goodnesse to you, specially obliged to a great measure of piety, but also as one who, being freed in great degrees from secular cares and impediments, can, without excuse and allay, wholly intend what you so passionately desire, the service of God. But, now I am considering yours, and enumerating my owne pleasures, I cannot but adde that, though I could not choose but be delighted by seeing all about you, yet my delices were really in seeing you severe and unconcerned in these things, and now in finding your affections wholly a stranger to them, and to communicate with them no portion of your passion but such as is necessary to him that uses them or receives their ministries. Sr, I long truly to converse with you; for I doe not doubt but in those liberties we shall both goe bettered from each other. For your *Lucretius*, I perceive you have suffered the importunity of too kind friends to prevaile with you. I will not say to you that your *Lucretius* is as far distant from the severity of a christian as the faire Ethiopian was from the duty of Bp. Heliodorus; for indeede it is nothing but what may become the labours of a christian gentleman, those things onely abated which our evil age needes not; for which also I hope you either have by notes, or will by preface prepare a sufficient antidote: But since you are ingag'd in it, doe not neglect to adorne it, and take what care of it it can require or neede; for that neglect will be a reproofe of your own act, and looke as if you did it with an unsatisfied mind, and then you may make that to be wholly a sin, from which onely by prudence and charity you could before be advised to abstain. But, Sr, if you will give me leave, I will impose such a penance upon you for your publication of Lucretius, as shall neither displease God nor you; and since you are buisy in that which may minister directly to learning, and indirectly to error or the confidences of men, who of themselves are apt enough to hide their vices in irreligion, I know you will be willing, and will suffer your selfe to be intreated, to imploy the same pen in the glorifications of God, and the ministeries of eucharist and prayer. Sr, if you have Msr. *Silhon de l' Immortalité de l' Ame*, I desire you to lend it mee for a weeke; and believe that I am in great heartiness and dearenesse of affection,

"Deare Sr,

"Your obliged and most affectionate friend and servant,

"JER. TAYLOR."

About this period, he published his "Deus Justificatus; or, a Vindication of the Glory of the Divine Attributes in the Question of Original Sin." In the same year appeared a "Treatise on Artificial Handsomeness," which was, at one time, generally attributed to Taylor, and which many of his admirers still believe to be his. It appears to the writer of this Essay, that Bishop Heber has satisfactorily demonstrated this supposition to be erroneous. The internal evidence even of the style (though it sometimes unquestionably reminds the reader of Taylor's peculiarities) is, on the whole, against such an hypothesis: but a far more conclusive refutation of it is furnished by the nature of many of the sentiments, or rather by the whole strain of argument, the tract is designed to support. It contradicts Taylor's known and recorded opinions. The tract in question is an elaborate defence of artificial beauty; and those who have read attentively Taylor's "Holy Living," and his "Great Exemplar," will not need to be told that he was not likely to prostitute his genius in the advocacy of any such absurdities.

In the latter part of the same year, Taylor was visited with a severe domestic calamity. He suddenly lost two of the three "hopeful" boys which were the fruit of his second marriage. The following letter, a copy of which is in the British Museum, contains a touching reference to this sad bereavement. It is not known to whom it was addressed.

"Deare Sir,—I know you will either excuse or acquit, or at least pardon mee that I have so long seemingly neglected to make a returne to your so kind and friendly letter; when I shall tell you that I have passed through a great cloud which hath wetted mee deeper than the skin. It hath pleased God to send the small poxe and feavers among my children; and I have, since I received your last, buried two sweet, hopeful boyes; and have now but one sonne left, whom I intend, if it please God, to bring up to London before Easter, and then I hope to waite upon you, and by your sweet conversation and other divertisements, if not to alleviate my sorrow, yet, at least, to entertain myself and keep me from too intense and actual thinkings of my trouble. Dear Sr, will you doe so much for mee as to beg my pardon of Mr. Thurland, that I have yet made no returne to him for his so friendly letter and expressions. Sr, you see there

is too much matter to make excuse; my sorrow will, at least, render me an object of every good man's pity and commiseration. But, for myself, I bless God, I have observed and felt so much mercy in this angry dispensation of God, that I am almost transported, I am sure, highly pleased, with thinking how infinitely sweet his mercies are when his judgments are so gracious. Sr, there are many particulars in your letter which I would faine have answered; but, still, my little sadnesses intervene, and will yet suffer me to write nothing else: but that I beg your prayers, and that you will still own me to be,

"Deare and Honoured Sir,

"Your very affectionate friend and hearty servant,

"Feb. 22, 165$\frac{6}{7}$." "JER. TAYLOR."

Shortly after this melancholy event, and probably in consequence of it, he is said to have left Golden Grove for a considerable time, and to have repaired to London; it is also said that he there officiated to a small congregation of episcopalians. This is Wood's representation. On this point, however, there is great doubt. Bishop Heber thinks that, in all probability, his visits to the metropolis were merely occasional, and that he never permanently resided there.

In 1657, his pecuniary perplexities were most generously relieved by the grant of a yearly pension from Evelyn. Taylor's short letter in reply to it, is characteristic of the warmth and ardour of his affections.

"TO JOHN EVELYN, ESQUIRE.

"Honour'd and deare Sir,—A stranger came two nights since from you with a letter, and a token; full of humanity and sweetnesse that was, and this of charity. I know it is more blessed to give than to receive; and yet as I no ways repine at the Providence that forces me to receive, so neither can I envy that felicity of yours, not onely that you can, but that you doe give; and as I rejoyce in that mercy which daily makes decrees in heaven for my support and comfort, soe I doe most thankfully adore the goodnesse of God to you, whom he consignes to greater glories by the ministeries of these graces. But, Sir, what am I, or what can I doe, or what have I done, that you thinke I have or can oblige you? Sir, you are too kinde to mee; and oblige me not onely beyond my merit, but beyond my modesty. I onely can love you, and honour you, and pray for you: and in all this I cannot say but that I am behind hand with you, for I have found so great effluxes of all your worthinesse and charities, that I am a debtor for your prayers, for the comfort of your letters, for the charity of your hand, and the affections of your heart. Sir, though you are beyond the reach of my returnes, and my services are very short of touching you, yet if it were possible for me to receive any commands, the obeying of which might signify my great regards of you, I could with some more confidence converse with a person so obliging; but I am oblig'd and asham'd, and unable to say so much as I should doe to represent myselfe to be,

"Honour'd and deare Sir,

"Your most affectionate and obliged friend and servant,

"May 15, 1657." "JER. TAYLOR."

This same year, Taylor republished several of his pieces, controversial and practical, in one volume folio, under the title Σύμβολον Ηθικο-πολεμικον. The "Liberty of Prophesying," in this edition, contained some few additions, while the volume was enriched with one valuable and beautiful little tract, never before published, the "Discourse of Friendship."

Early in the year 1658, Taylor was once more in London, though in no enviable lodgings;—the Tower! It appears that his publisher had prefixed to his "Collection of Offices," a picture of Christ in the attitude of prayer! By an act recently passed, all such "effigies" were declared "scandalous," and "tending to idolatry," and as, in those strange times, there was often as much injustice in the execution of the laws as in the laws themselves, Taylor had to pay for his bookseller's indiscretion. By the good offices, however, of his never-failing friend, Evelyn, he was soon set at liberty.

Evelyn, shortly after this, lost two sons—Richard and George Taylor, at all times well qualified to administer consolation, was in this case peculiarly fitted for this office. He could the more deeply sympathize with his friend's sorrows, that he had so recently been called to drink the same bitter cup even to the dregs. The following is the eminently beautiful letter of condolence which he addressed to Evelyn on this occasion, and which we make no apology for transcribing entire.

"TO JOHN EVELYN, ESQUIRE.

"Deare Sir,—If dividing and sharing griefes were like the cutting of rivers, I dare say to you, you would find your streame much abated; for I account myselfe to have a great cause of sorrow, not onely in the diminution of the numbers of your joys and hopes, but in the loose of that pretty person, your strangely hopeful boy. I cannot tell all

my owne sorrowes without adding to yours; and the causes of my real sadnesse in your losse are so just and so reasonable, that I can no otherwise comfort you but by telling you, that you have very great cause to mourne; so certaine it is that griefe does propagate as fire does. You have enkindled my funeral torch, and by joining mine to yours, I doe but encrease the flame. 'Hoc me malè urit,' is the best signification of my apprehension of your sad story. But, Sir, I cannot choose, but I must hold another and a brighter flame to you, it is already burning in your heart; and if I can but remove the darke side of the lanthorne, you have enoughe within you to warme yourselfe, and to shine to others. Remember, Sir, your two boyes are two bright starres, and their innocence is secured, and you shall never hear evil of them agayne. Their state is safe, and heaven is given to them upon very easy termes; nothing but to be borne and die. It will cost you more trouble to get where they are; and amongst other things one of the hardnesses will be, that you must overcome even this just and reasonable griefe; and, indeed, though the griefe hath but too reasonable a cause, yet it is much more reasonable that you master it. For besides that they are no loosers, but you are the person that complaines, doe but consider what you would have suffer'd for their interest: you would have suffered them to goe from you, to be great princes in a strange country: and if you can be content to suffer your owne inconvenience for their interest, you command [commend] your worthiest love, and the question of mourning is at an end. But you have said and done well, when you looke upon it as a rod of God; and he that so smites here will spare hereafter: and if you, by patience and submission, imprint the discipline upon your own flesh, you kill the cause, and make the effect very tolerable; because it is, in some sense, chosen, and therefore, in no sense, insufferable. Sir, if you doe not looke to it, time will snatch your honour from you, and reproach you for not effecting that by christian philosophy which time will doe alone. And if you consider, that of the bravest men in the world, we find the seldomest stories of their children, and the apostles had none, and thousands of the worthiest persons, that sound most in story, died childlesse: you will find it is a rare act of Providence so to impose upon worthy men a necessity of perpetuating their names by worthy actions and discourses, governments and reasonings. If the breach be never repair'd, it is because God does not see it fitt to be; and if you will be of his mind, it will be much the better. But, Sir, you will pardon my zeale and passion for your comfort, I will readily confesse that you have no need of any discourse from me to comfort you. Sir, now you have an opportunity of serving God by passive graces; strive to be an example and a comfort to your lady, and by your wise counsel and comfort, stand in the breaches of your owne family, and make it appeare that you are more to her than ten sons. Sir, by the assistance of Almighty God, I purpose to wait on you some time next weeke, that I may be a witnesse of your christian courage and bravery; and that I may see, that God never displeases you, as long as the main stake is preserved, I meane your hopes and confidences of heaven. Sir, I shall pray for all that you can want, that is, some degrees of comfort and a present mind; and shal alwayes doe you honour, and faine also would doe you service, if it were in the power, as it is in the affections and desires of,

"Dear Sir,

"Your most affectionate and obliged friend and servant,

"Feb. 17, 1657-8. "JER. TAYLOR."

The friends of Taylor, probably prompted as much by fears for his safety as by compassion for his poverty, now suggested an expedient for securing the one and relieving the other; an expedient which, as Heber properly remarks, would, under any other circumstances, have excited the utmost astonishment. They proposed to banish him to a sort of Patmos,—out of the way of further persecution,—to the north-eastern part of barbarous Ireland! The proposal originated with the Earl of Conway, who had immense possessions in the neighbourhood of Lisburne. It was this nobleman, in all likelihood, who procured for Taylor that offer of an alternate lectureship at Lisburne, which, as appears by the following extract from a letter of Taylor to Evelyn, in reply to the proposal, excited no very pleasant sensations.

"Honour'd Sir,—I returne you many thankes for your care of my temporal affaires: I wish I may be able to give you as good account of my watchfulnesse for your service, as you have of your diligence to doe me benefit. But concerning the thing itselfe, I am to give you this account. I like not the condition of being a lecturer under the dispose of another, nor to serve in my semi-circle, where a presbyterian and myselfe shall be like Castor and Pollux, the one up and the other downe; which, methinkes, is like the worshipping the sun, and making him the deity, that we may be religious halfe the yeare, and every night serve another interest. Sir, the stipend is so inconsiderable, it will not pay the charge and trouble of remooving my selfe and family. It is wholly arbitrary; for the triers may overthrow it; or the vicar may forbid it; or the subscribers may die, or grow weary, or poore, or be absent. I beseech you, Sir, pay my thankes to your friend, who had so much kindnesse for mee as to intend my benefitt: I thinke myselfe no lesse obliged to him and you than if I had accepted it." * * * * * *

Yielding, however, to the dictates of prudence and the importunities of friendship, and cheered by the prospects of comfort which, he was assured, awaited him, he at length quietly resigned himself to this sentence of exile from all he most cherished.

He proceeded to his destination with the strongest letters of recommendation from Sir Wm. Petty and other persons of distinction. The persons to whom those letters were addressed were of equal distinction; amongst the rest, the lord chancellor of Ireland; the Lord Pepys; General Tomlinson;

the lord chief baron. Above all, Cromwell himself, either because he respected and admired the man, or because he was not unwilling that so stanch a loyalist should be removed from England, or more probably from both these motives, "gave him a passport and protection for himself and family under his sign manual and privy signet."

He sailed from England in June. In Ireland, he is said to have lived alternately at Lisburne and Portmore, which places were about eight miles from each other. It is conjectured, that he might have visited Lisburne merely to discharge his public functions; for, if we may trust the tradition of the family, he almost constantly resided in a house near the mansion of the Earl of Conway. He did not quite restrict the exercise of his ministerial functions to his lectureship; he is said to have sometimes addressed a little assembly of loyalists "in the half-ruined church of Kilulta."

The spot in which Taylor now lived must have been exactly suited to all the native tastes and dispositions of his mind. The noble mansion of his patron stood amidst scenes of romantic beauty; diversified with wood and water, hill and dale. Two lakes, Lough Neagh and Lough Bag, one larger, the other smaller, both of them decked with fairy islands, watered these princely domains. In these retreats, more especially Ram Island on Lough Neagh and a still smaller islet on the lesser lake, Jeremy Taylor, who here found all that could gratify his fancy or feed his passion for contemplation and retirement, frequently buried himself. "Poor and dependent as Taylor was," to adopt a natural and just reflection of his biographer, "this was probably the happiest part of his life."

His letters from this obscure, yet delightful retreat, are just such as might be expected from a literary man under such circumstances. He was still anxious to know what was occurring in that intellectual world, for a total seclusion from which even the most enchanting scenery of nature could hardly compensate. A single paragraph from his first letter to Evelyn will amuse the reader.

"Honoured Sir,—I feare I am so unfortunate as that I forgot to leave with you a direction how you might, if you pleased to honour me with a letter, refresh my solitude with notice of your health and that of your relatives, that I may rejoyce and give God thankes for the blessing and prosperity of my dearest and most honour'd friends. I have kept close all the winter, that I might, without interruption, attend to the finishing of the imployment I was engaged in: which now will have no longer delay than what it meetes in the printer's hands. But, Sir, I hope that by this time you have finished what you have so prosperously begun,—your owne Lucretius. I desire to receive notice of it from yourselfe, and what other designes you are upon in order to the promoting or adorning learning; for I am confident you will be as useful and profitable as you can be, that, by the worthiest testimonies, it may by posterity be remembered that you did live. But, Sir, I pray say to me something concerning the state of learning; how is any art or science likely to improove? what good bookes are lately publike? what learned men, abroad or at home, begin anew to fill the mouth of fame, in the places of the dead Salmasius, Vossius, Mocelin, Sirmond, Rigaltius, Des Cartes, Galileo, Peiresk, Petavius, and the excellent persons of yesterday?" * * * * * *

Taylor had not been long at Portmore before he found that nothing short of absolute solitude is a protection against calumny. A person named "Tandy," whose precise relations to Taylor's new patrons it is not very easy to ascertain, but who on some account was meanly jealous of Taylor's reputation, "denounced him to the Irish privy council as a dangerous and disaffected character."

Though the Earl of Conway took up the cause of his *protegè* with becoming spirit, Taylor was summoned before the council to answer to the accusations preferred against him. He was, in all probability, soon discharged; yet his journey to Dublin, undertaken in the midst of winter, occasioned a severe indisposition.

In his letters to Evelyn at the close of 1659, and the beginning of 1660, he declares his intention of visiting London in the coming April. This purpose he accomplished at a moment most opportune for his future advancement. He arrived in the metropolis in time to affix his name to the celebrated declaration of the loyalists, dated April 24, 1660, expressive "of their confidence in Monk and his government." This was a favourable introduction to the attention of the young monarch; to whom moreover he did not neglect to dedicate* his great work, then just completed, the "Ductor Dubitantium." In the same year appeared the "Worthy Communicant," to which was attached his funeral sermon for Sir George Dalstone.

The king must have been even more base and ungrateful than he afterwards proved to be, had he wholly overlooked the merits of such a man as Jeremy Taylor. He was accordingly nominated,

* This dedication, by the way, considering all the circumstances of this case, is by no means so adulatory as some of his other dedications.

on the 6th of August, to the bishopric of Down and Connor; and though he might naturally have expected a more splendid reward, in that distribution of the "good things" which the restored monarch had to bestow, his attachment to Ireland,—his adopted country, his refuge in poverty and trouble, and by this time sanctified by so many delightful associations,—doubtless reconciled him to this appointment. Shortly after his elevation to the episcopate, he was elected, at the instance of the Duke of Ormond, vice chancellor of the university of Dublin.

The duties which these situations imposed were exceedingly arduous. But Jeremy Taylor was no idler, and he therefore set about the discharge of them with vigour and perseverance. The affairs of the university, which had gone into sad confusion and disorder, he subjected to a complete revision, not only correcting many abuses, but digesting a complete body of statutes and regulations. This task, though heavy, was performed satisfactorily enough.

Though Bishop Taylor laboured with equal or even with greater diligence in the duties of his diocess, it is not to be wondered at that those labours were only partially successful. In that imbittered state of feeling, with which the different classes of religionists regarded one another, the character of a Jeremy Taylor on the one side or of a Howe on the other, could do comparatively little. The "odium theologicum" is always strong enough, even where nothing but controversy has inflamed it; but where, as in this case, the animosity of contending sects was aggravated by a long and ferocious civil conflict and by the remembrance of ten thousand mutual wrongs, hardly angelic virtue could have secured any man of any party from the suspicion and the hatred of the rest.

Whatever opinions may be formed of the ecclesiastical system of which Jeremy Taylor formed so great an ornament, and which was now restored, none who have studied his character and his writings can doubt, that he discharged what he deemed his duties, though with zeal and diligence, yet in the spirit of a christian,—with mildness, with gentleness, with charity. This his history tells us; but even if it did not, his character alone would be authentication sufficient. Happy had it been for the church of which he was so distinguished a member, had all her dignitaries displayed the same spirit of moderation, and the same conciliatory temper!

But though Taylor's efforts in his diocess were, as might be expected, only partially successful, they did unquestionably produce in due time a powerful effect; and, indeed, while human nature remains what it is, such conduct and such a spirit as his will necessarily do more towards the real subjugation of mankind, than the utmost force of the most perfect despotism. Tyranny may be defied; but persevering kindness, how few can long resist!

Jeremy Taylor was now placed in a situation where he would be necessarily exposed to all the annoyances arising from extensive religious differences; a situation which would put his principles of toleration to a severe practical test. Under these circumstances, he has sometimes been charged with having abandoned, or, at all events, seriously qualified, some of the principles laid down in his "Liberty of Prophesying;" more especially in his "Sermon before the two Houses of Parliament," preached on the 8th of May, 1660. This charge we shall briefly examine in a subsequent part of this Essay.

The cup of honours and dignities was not yet quite full. In the following February, he was made a member of the "Irish privy council;" and in April, was commissioned to undertake, together with his own diocess, the neighbouring one of Dromore. The reason assigned in the writ under the privy seal for this appointment, was an illustrious tribute to his worth and excellence. He was chosen, it stated, "on account of his virtue, wisdom, and industry."

His "Sermon before the Parliament," his "Consecration Sermon," and a little manual for his clergy, were all that Taylor sent to the press during the first year of his episcopate; and considering his manifold labours, even these were more than could have been expected. That there were moods, in which he looked back with regret to the delights of the retirement he had lost, and in which, had it been consistent with duty, he would gladly have laid down the oppressive honours of the mitre in exchange for the studious quiet of his former life, may not only well be conceived from his passion for solitude and abstraction, but seems almost implied in the language he employs in a letter to his old friend Evelyn, written somewhat more than a year after his installation. It is dated Dublin. "Sir," says he, "I am so full of publicke concernes and the troubles of businesse in my diocess, that I cannot yet have leisure to thinke of much of my *old delightful* employment. But I hope I have brought my affaires almost to a consistence, and then I may returne againe."

Scarcely any thing is known of Taylor's private life during the few years he adorned the mitre. It is certain he had a house and farm at Portmore, his old and much-loved retreat, where he lived in intimacy with his friend and former patron the Earl of Conway. It was perfectly natural that he should make this his favourite place of residence.

The works which Taylor published between his elevation to a bishopric and his death, were "Via Intelligentia;" a sermon preached before the university of Dublin, 1662; Χρισις Τελειωτικη, "A Defence and Introduction to the Rite of Confirmation;" three sermons delivered at Christ Church, Dublin; a "Funeral Sermon" for Archbishop Bramhall, all of which appeared in 1663; and his "Dissuasive from Popery," which he had undertaken, though reluctantly, at the desire of the whole body of Irish bishops. This last work appeared in 1664, about three years before his death.

The domestic afflictions which imbittered the close of Taylor's life, were more severe than any which had befallen him at an earlier period. The only remaining son by his second marriage, Edward, he had lost in less than a year after his elevation to the see of Dromore. But this was the least part of his misfortunes. The two surviving sons by his first marriage died about this time, and, as already intimated, under the most distressing circumstances. The elder, who was a cavalry captain in the king's service, was killed in a duel with a brother officer; (an event which, as one of the family assures us, nearly caused the death of the father;) the younger, originally intended for the church, and actually educated at Dublin university with this view, became, as there is too much reason to fear, decidedly vicious. He at all events more than justified such suspicions, by becoming the companion of the licentious Buckingham, at whose house he died of a decline, in 1667.

This event occurred only a few days before Taylor's own death; and the good bishop was in all probability spared the pain even of hearing of it. He was attacked on the third of August, 1667, by a fever, which proved fatal in little more than a week. He died in the fifty-fifth year of his age; and was buried in the church of Dromore.

His funeral sermon was preached by his ancient friend Dr. Rust, whom he had invited over into Ireland in 1661, and who succeeded Taylor in the see of Dromore. That sermon is prefixed to the present edition of Taylor's works, and furnishes some valuable information with respect to the character and habits of the deceased prelate, though it is not always expressed in the happiest manner, nor distinguished for unimpeachable accuracy.

Taylor is said to have possessed much personal beauty; and if his portraits speak truth, (and there is no reason to doubt it,) we may well believe this. The countenance is singularly expressive of the man; his gentle melancholy, the half ascetic turn of his mind, his love of contemplation, are all strongly indicated in his features.

Such is a very rapid sketch of the principal events of Jeremy Taylor's life. Those who wish to see a fuller account of him, so far at least as the scanty materials which time and death, and fire and flood, have left,—for all these have, *it appears, made havoc of the memory and remains of Jeremy Taylor,—will do well to read Bishop Heber's life of this great man. The naked facts stated with all brevity, is all that could be attempted within the compass of the present design. The authority of Bishop Heber's work has in all doubtful matters been followed in the present sketch; a confidence which is fully warranted by the accuracy and care which distinguish it, by the patience of investigation with which the excellent author explored every source of information, and the singular sagacity which he has often displayed in putting together scattered hints and fragments, and in reconciling conflicting statements.

Having given this brief account of Jeremy Taylor's life, it is time to proceed to the principal object of the following pages,—an analysis of his character.

It may be truly affirmed that there have been few men of any note in the annals of literature, whose intellectual character is more difficult of exact analysis, than that of Jeremy Taylor. It is true, indeed, that some of his more prominent peculiarities are stamped on all his productions, even on those which are the least valuable. That surpassing splendour and richness of fancy, with which he adorns even his most ordinary conceptions, are not only obvious to his most negligent readers, but is apt to incapacitate them for a perception of the less dazzling, but scarcely less extraordinary peculiarities of his intellect; peculiarities which render it, in the opinion of the present writer, one

* See Heber's life, p. cxxv.

of the most complex which was ever submitted to the analysis of intellectual philosophy. Never perhaps, was there a man, in whom qualities so heterogeneous existed in such intimate combination, or who possessed excellences so rare, in such close neighbourhood with such glaring defects. From one end of his works to the other, he alternately charms and provokes us by unparalleled beauties and the most unpardonable faults; he now fills the whole firmament with light and glory, and is now labouring in the darkest and most disastrous eclipse; he is one moment soaring in "the highest heaven of invention," and the next, sinks at once "ten thousand fathoms down" into the nethermost abyss of extravagance or absurdity.

Not a few of the readers and admirers of Jeremy Taylor think all this eccentricity and inequality of genius sufficiently accounted for, by affirming that there was an *immense disparity* between his powers of reasoning and his imagination. This explanation will not bear a close examination; for in the first place, the alleged fact is not true, and even if it were, it would not account for the phenomena. First, the alleged fact is not true. It is far from the intention of the present writer to affirm that Taylor's powers of reasoning are equal to those of his imagination; but it may be safely affirmed, and will be conceded by every careful student of his writings, that there is not that *immense* interval between them which many imagine. But secondly, it may be denied that this vast inferiority of reason, if it really existed, would solve the phenomena of Taylor's mental eccentricities, at least, if by powers of reasoning be meant, what is generally meant, an aptitude for *logical illation.* It would not account even for his *inequalities as a reasoner*, much less for those inequalities which characterize almost equally the exercise of all his other faculties. If he had feeble powers of reasoning, this would indeed sufficiently account for the instances in which he has reasoned ill, but can never account for those instances, and they are far from few, in which he has displayed consummate acuteness and ingenuity; much less can it account for the inequalities, which, as already intimated, and as we shall hereafter have abundant opportunity of showing, characterized alike all the movements of his intellect. These inequalities,—inequalities not between one faculty and another, or in their relative proportions, but in the exercise of all alike,—are not to be accounted for by supposing any very considerable disparity between any two of them; but by supposing the absence of that principle of harmony, usually called judgment in respect of the reason, and taste in respect of the fancy, which alone could secure uniformity and regularity of action. Abstractedly, Jeremy Taylor appears to have possessed nearly all the elements of the highest order of minds, but in the actual exhibition of each, is marked by the same inequality. This view of his intellectual character his works abundantly confirm. He has said many of the profoundest, and some of the most foolish things; he has constructed some of the most acute and ingenious trains of reasoning, and he has fallen prostrate before the most miserable fallacies; he has dragged truth from some of its darkest and most obscure recesses, and has stumbled into the most obvious errors in the light of noon-day; he has often unravelled the most intricate and grasped the most comprehensive questions, and at other times has managed to lose his way in the straightest road, and to miss the object of his search when it lay just under his eye; he has delighted us with the most glorious visions which ever unfolded themselves to an uninspired imagination, and has offended us with the wildest rhapsody and bombast; he has sometimes employed his boundless learning with admirable skill, and for purposes of adequate importance, and has at others lavished it on a prodigal illustration of the most trivial themes. His excellences and his faults are not only equally great, but often dwell close together, nay in the compass of the very same sentence; as though the supreme and only perfect Being had intended to teach us by a very peculiar and affecting exhibition of human frailty, that man "at his best estate is altogether vanity."

On the hypothesis, then, here maintained, Jeremy Taylor's was not a *mutilated* intellect; it possessed all the requisite parts and members separately taken, and that, too, on a gigantic scale, but they were ill compacted, and consequently incapable of harmonious or uniform action; or he might be compared to those unhappy victims of epilepsy, who, though they possess all the faculties of body and of mind, and ordinarily exercise all the functions of life aright, are sometimes suddenly, and without any apparent cause, seized with paroxysms which distort every limb and feature into hideous deformity.

Jeremy Taylor's mind, as actually displayed in his writings, reminds one of some yet unfinished work of Phidias; the outline of more than mortal grace and beauty is half transparent through the still rugged and imperfectly chiselled marble.

There are many, it is true, who would demur to the statement that Jeremy Taylor's mind, as originally constituted, possessed, in high degrees of excellence, almost all the qualities which usually distinguish the loftiest order of genius. While willingly admitting his transcendent brilliancy of fancy, they would deny that he possessed any considerable force of reason. But the contrary of this is in our opinion conclusively proved by the fact, that there are in his works many *insulated* trains of reasoning marked by a closeness, originality, and acuteness, not often equalled, and seldom surpassed, and for which nothing but great native aptitude for argument can account.

Such passages might be easily multiplied from his "Treatise on Transubstantiation;" his "Dissuasive from Popery;" and above all, from every part of his "Ductor Dubitantium." We cannot refrain from vindicating our representation by citing two or three passages. Take for instance the following from Section XI. of the Treatise against Transubstantiation. He is showing, let it be observed, that reasoning on the very premises on which the papists absurdly affirm that the bread is changed into Christ's body, they are inconsistent in affirming, as they are compelled to do, that the apparent qualities, or, as they term it, the accidents of bread, still remain.

"First; I shall lay this prejudice in the article, as relating to the discourses of reason; that in the words of institution, there is nothing that can be pretended to prove the conversion of the substance of bread into the body of Christ, but the same will infer the conversion of the whole into the whole; and therefore of the accidents of the bread into the accidents of the body. And, in those little pretences of philosophy, which these men sometimes make to cozen fools into a belief of the possibility, they pretend to no instance, but to such conversions, in which, if the substance is changed, so also are the accidents: sometimes the accident is changed in the same remaining substance; but if the substance be changed, the accidents never remain the same individually; or in kind, unless they be symbolical, that is, are common to both, as in the change of elements, of air into fire, of water into earth. Thus when Christ changed water into wine, the substances being changed, the accidents also were altered, and the wine did not retain the colour and taste of water; for then, though it had been the stranger miracle, that wine should be wine, and yet look and taste like water,—yet it would have obtained but little advantage to his doctrine and person, if he should have offered to prove his mission by such a miracle. For if Christ had said to the guests; 'To prove that I am come from God, I will change this water into wine;' well might this prove his mission: but if, while the guests were wondering at this, he should proceed and say, 'Wonder ye not at this, for I will do a stranger thing than it, for this water shall be changed into wine, and yet I will so order it, that it shall look like water, and taste like it, so that you shall not know one from the other:' certainly this would have made the whole matter very ridiculous; and indeed it is a strange device of these men to suppose God to work so many prodigious miracles, as must be in transubstantiation, if it were at all,—and yet that none of these should be seen; for to what purpose is a miracle, that cannot be perceived? It can prove nothing, nor do any thing, when itself is not known whether it be or no. When bread is turned into flesh, and wine into blood, in the nourishment of our bodies, (which I have seen urged for the credibility of transubstantiation,) the bread, as it changes his nature, changes his accidents too, and is flesh in colour, and shape, and dimensions, and weight, and operation, as well as it is in substance. Now let them rub their foreheads hard, and tell us, it is so in the holy sacrament. For if it be not so, then no instance of the change of natural substances, from one form to another, can be pertinent: for, 1. Though it be no more than is done in every operation of a body, yet it is always with change of their proper accidents; and then, 2. It can, with no force of the words of the institution, be pretended, that one ought to be, or can be, without the other. For he that says, this is the body of a man, says that it hath the substance of a human body, and all his consequents, that is, the accidents: and he that says, this is the body of Alexander, says (besides the substance) that it hath all the individuating conditions, which are the particular accidents: and therefore Christ, affirming this to be his body, did as much affirm the change of accidents as the change of substance; because that change is naturally and essentially consequent to this. Now if they say, 'they therefore do not believe the accidents of bread to be changed, because they see them remain;' I might reply, 'Why will they believe their sense against faith?' since there may be evidence, but here is certainty; and it cannot be deceived, though our eyes can: and it is certain, that Christ affirmed it without distinction of one part from another of substance from his usual accidents. 'This is my body:' 'Hoc,' 'Hîc,' 'Nunc,' and 'Sic.'—Now, if they think their eyes may be credited for all the words of our blessed Saviour, why shall not their reason also? or is it nothing so certain to the understanding, as any thing is to the eye? If, therefore, it be unreasonable to say, that the accidents of bread are changed against our sense, so it will be unreasonable to say, that the substance is changed against our reason; not but that God can and does often change one substance into another, and it is done in every natural production of a substantial form; but that we say it is unreasonable, that this should be changed into flesh, not to flesh simply, for so it is when we eat it;—nor into Christ's flesh simply, for so it might have been, if he had, as it is probable he did, eaten the sacrament himself,—but into that body of Christ, which is in heaven; he remaining there, and being whole, and impassible, and unfrangible, this, we say, is unreasonable and impossible: and that is now to be proved."

Or take the following exposure of a sophism of his popish antagonist, from the "Introduction" to the "Second Part" of his "Dissuasive." Jeremy Taylor had asserted in the first part of his work that certain doctrines, in later times alleged to be catholic and essentially necessary, could

not have been so in earlier times, inasmuch as we have the decided dissent of two or three eminent fathers against them; and in such a case the dissent of two or three is, it is alleged, sufficient.

"Against this J. S. hath a pretty sophism, or, if you please, let it pass for one of his demonstrations. 'If one or two denying a point, which many (others) affirm, argues that it is not of faith; then, 'à fortiori,' if one or two affirm it to be of faith, it argues it is of faith, though many others deny it.' This consequent is so far from arising from the antecedent, that nothing in the world destroys it more. For, because the denial of one or two argues a doctrine is not catholic, though affirmed by many, therefore it is impossible that the affirmation of one or two (when there be many dissentients) should sufficiently prove a doctrine to be catholic. The antecedent supposes that true which therefore concludes the consequent to be false; for, therefore, the affirming a thing to be catholic, by two or three, or twenty, does not prove it to be so, unless all consent, because the denying it to be catholic (which the antecedent supposes) by two or three, is a good testimony that it is not catholic. J. S.'s argument is like this; if the absence of a few makes the company not full, then the presence of a few when more are absent, 'à fortiori,' makes the company to be full. But because I must say nothing but what must be reduced to grounds, I have to show the stupendous folly of this argument, a self-evident principle, and that is, 'Bonum,' and so, 'Verum' is 'ex integra causa, malum ex qualibet particulari;' and a cup is broken, if but one piece of the lip be broken; but it is not whole, unless it be whole all over. And much more is this true, in a question concerning the universality of consent, or of tradition. For J. S. does prevaricate in the question, which is, whether the testimony be universal, if the particulars be not agreed: and he instead of that thrusts in another word which is no part of the question: for so he changes it, by saying, 'The dissent of a few does not make but that the article is a point of faith;' for though it cannot be supposed a point of faith, when any number of the catholic fathers do profess to believe a proposition contrary to it; yet possibly it will by some of his side be said to be a point of faith, 'upon other accounts;' as upon 'the church's definition,' or the 'authority of plain Scriptures;' but this will be nothing to J. S.'s hypothesis; for if a part of the catholic fathers did deliver the contrary, there was no irrefragable, catholic, oral tradition of the church, when so considerable a part of the church delivered the contrary as their own doctrine, which is not to be imagined they would have done, if the consent of the church of that age was against it. And if we can suppose this case, that one part of the fathers should say, 'this is the doctrine of the church,' when another part of the fathers are of a contrary judgment,—either they did not say true, and then the fathers' testimony, speaking as witnesses of the doctrine of the church of their age, is not infallible;—or if they did say true, yet their testimony was not esteemed sufficient; because the other fathers, who must needs know it, if it was the catholic doctrine of the church then, do not take it for truth or sufficient. And that maxim which was received in the council of Trent, that 'a major part of voices was sufficient for decreeing in a matter of reformation; but that a decree of faith could not be made, if a considerable part did contradict,' relies upon the same reason; faith is every man's duty, and every man's concern, and every man's learning; and, therefore, it is not to be supposed that any thing can be an article of faith, in which a number of wise and good men are at difference, either as doctors or as witnesses."

The next shall be an admirable passage from the same introduction, in which he most admirably explodes the absurd theory of his opponent,—that the fathers were infallible.

"It is false that 'the testimony of the fathers, speaking of them properly as such, is infallible.' For 'God only is true, and every man a liar;' and since the fathers never pretended to be assisted by a supernatural miraculous aid, or inspired by an infallible spirit; and infallibility is so far beyond human nature and industry, that the fathers may be called angels much rather than infallible; for if they were assisted by an infallible spirit, what hinders but that their writings might be canonical Scriptures? And if it be said they were assisted infallibly in some things, and not in all, it is said to no purpose; for unless it be infallibly known where the infallibility resides, and what is so certain as it cannot be mistaken, every man must tread fearfully, for he is sure the ice is broken in many places, and he knows not where it will hold. It is certain St. Austin did not think the fathers before him to be infallible, when it is plain that in many doctrines, as in the damnation of infants dying unbaptized, and especially in questions occurring in the disputes against the Pelagians about free-will and predestination, without scruple he rejected the doctrines of his predecessors. And when, in a question between himself and St. Jerome, about St. Peter and the second chapter to the Galatians, he was pressed with the authority of six or seven Greek fathers, he roundly answered, that he gave no such honour to any writers of books, but to the Scriptures only, as to think them not to have erred: other authors he read so as to believe them, if they were proved by Scriptures or probable reason. Not because they thought so, but because he thought them proved. And he appeals to St. Jerome, whether he were not of the same mind concerning his own works. And for that St. Jerome hath given satisfaction to the world, in divers places of his own writings: 'I suppose Origen is, for his learning, to be read as Tertullian, Novatus, Arnobius, Apollinarius, and some writers, Greek and Latin, that we choose out that which is good, and avoid the contrary.' So that it is evident the fathers themselves have no conceit of the infallibility of themselves or others,—the prophets, and apostles, and evangelists only excepted; and, therefore, if this be an avowed doctrine of the Roman church, there is no oral tradition for it, no first and self-evident principle to prove it; and either the fathers are deceived in saying they are fallible, or they are not: if they be deceived in saying so, then that sufficiently proves that they can be deceived, and, therefore, that they are not infallible; but if they be not deceived in saying that they are fallible, then it is certain that they are fallible, because they say they are, and in saying so are not deceived. But then if in this the fathers are not deceived,

then the church of Rome, in one of her avowed doctrines, is deceived, saying otherwise of the fathers than is true, and contrary to what themselves said of themselves."

One more shall suffice; it shall be a short passage from the "Ductor Dubitantium." He is opposing that sad sophism of many of the Roman casuists, that a judge might give sentence even against his conscience, provided his sentence was according to law. It is only a small part of a very long and acute train of reasoning.

"It is true that a judge hath a double capacity, and he hath offices proportionable; some as a man, some as a judge; that is, he hath some natural and essential obligations, some which are superinduced upon his office. And therefore, I refuse to use this distinction as it is commonly used, and so made more subject to mistake and abuse. In this case the judge is not to be considered as a public man and a private man; for private is as much superinduced as public, and his other relations are as much to yield to his essential duty, as that of a judge: such as are the relation of a husband, of a father, of a tutor, of a master; and, amongst these, the more private is often tied to yield to the more public. But therefore in this case the judge is to be considered as a judge and as a man; and in this case the duties are sometimes disparate, but never contrary; and when there is a dispute, the superinduced must yield to that which is original; for whatsoever is his duty as a man, the judge may not prevaricate; for it is the man that is the judge, in the man that office is subjected, and the office of a judge is bound upon him by the conscience of the man. If the judge had two consciences, and two real persons, then it were to be granted that they were to be served and attended to in their several callings; but it is not so: they are but two persons in fiction of law, but materially, and to all real events, the same: it is the same conscience ministering to divers duties: and therefore as the judge is always that man, so his conscience is the conscience of that man; and because as a man he must not go against his conscience,—so when that man is a judge, he must not go against the man's conscience, for the judge is still that man ruled by that conscience. The essential duty of a man cannot by any superinduced formality be dispensed with. Now to go according to our conscience and knowledge is the essential rule and duty of a man, which he cannot put off by being a judge. The new office superinduces new obligations, but none contrary, no more than he can cease being a man by being a judge. 'Certe prior anima quam litera, et prior sermo quam liber, et prior sensus quam stylus, et prior homo quam philosophus et poeta;' He is first a man, and then a philosopher, a poet, or a judge; and that which is first, cannot be prejudiced by what is superinduced. And if the judge go against the conscience of the man, pretending to do according to the conscience of the judge, the man shall be damned,—and where the judge shall then appear, any child can tell. If the bishop of Bayeux, as earl of Kent, will rebel against his prince, the earl of Kent shall lose his head, though the bishop of Bayeux may plead his clergy. For in this there is a great mistake. To be a man and to be a judge, are not to be compared as two distinct capacities of equal consideration. To be a bishop and to be a judge are properly such, and have distinct measures: but to be a man is the subject of the two capacities, and cannot be laid aside as either of the other may; and therefore the distinction is vain and sophistical: and if it could be admitted in metaphysics, (in which yet it appears to have an error,) yet it can never be suffered to pass to real events. This being the ground of all the contrary opinion, and being found false, the superstructure must also fall to the ground."

These specimens might be easily multiplied; but there is no occasion. It is not pretended that these are the best that might possibly be selected; still less that the topics all required such elaborate logic. They have been selected principally on account of their being of convenient length; but though short, they afford sufficient proof that Jeremy Taylor's logical powers were worthy of what we have said of them.

The mere existence of such passages incontrovertibly demonstrates, that his frequent errors of reasoning are not to be imputed to any original feebleness or inferiority in the powers of reasoning themselves, but to some intervening causes, which for the time appeared to paralyze them, and which, as already stated, have dimmed the lustre of his fancy as frequently as they have disturbed the exercise of his reason. Effects must, at least, have proportionate causes; and though where a power exists, we can account for its suspended exercise or frequent perversion, we cannot, upon the supposition that it does *not* exist, account for any one of its appropriate effects. A man who lifts a certain weight, must at least have strength proportioned to the task, even though at other times he may give but feeble indications of his possessing any such strength.

One cause for the very general impression of the comparative feebleness of his reasoning powers, which pervades the minds of Jeremy Taylor's readers, may be readily imagined; his most successful argumentative efforts are to be found in his *controversial* works, and these are little read in comparison with his practical and devotional writings. In these last, of course, impressive sentiment and beautiful imagery are not only more frequent than subtlety of reasoning, but more appropriate.

"As a reasoner," says Bishop Heber, "I do not think him matchless." Few, it is presumed, would be inclined to dispute this position. In originality, continuity, accuracy, and comprehensiveness of reasoning, he is vastly inferior to Locke, or Chillingworth, or Barrow. All that is now

maintained is, that he naturally possessed powers of argument, which, if sedulously cultivated and thoroughly disciplined, would have raised him to a rank amongst logicians, little inferior to that which he has attained in the class of imaginative writers.

It is impossible, however, not to feel that Taylor's powers of reasoning, whether originally feeble, as some think, or strong, as in the opinion of the present writer, never had fair play.

They were often unquestionably overborne by the united influence of his ever-active fancy and his stupendous learning. Strong as his native aptitude for argument might be, it must have been far stronger still, to have maintained any thing like a decided and uniform ascendancy against the combined influence of these disturbing forces. It is true there have been some few men, (but Jeremy Taylor was far from being one of them,) who have been distinguished by a happy harmony between reason and imagination; in whom, the latter has been content to hold the place only of a ministering spirit; never tempted into an ambitious contest for the dominion of the mind; waiting in patient silence the result of the most tedious processes of investigation or reasoning, and still unoffended, though the judgment, in its anxiety to present some train of argument in the closest and most forcible forms, should reject her choicest ornaments or put away in scorn her proffered flowers.

Where, however, the imagination is very vigorous, and the reason not possessed in more than equal measure, it is seldom that the former aspiring faculty will not be sometimes tempted into a contest for the supremacy; and even when in the main subdued, will, by frequent revolt, occasion a divided and distracted empire. This sufficiently accounts for the rarity of those instances in which mutual subordination and harmony are maintained throughout all the movements of the mind; as well as for another fact, that those men have been the greatest as reasoners, and indeed in every other department of intellectual eminence, who have been remarkable for the ascendancy maintained by some particular faculty. There, and there alone, can there be that intense concentration of the mind on one subject—that constancy of purpose—that undivided attention and that perseverance, which are essential to unrivalled excellence in any pursuit whatever.

Not that even where the reason and the imagination are so harmoniously adjusted, as to insure to the former its just prerogatives, and to keep the latter in its due subordination, will the full force of great powers of argument be so likely to be perceived by those who can appreciate it at all, as where those powers exist almost alone. When the argument is denuded of all the ornaments of fancy, then it is that the powers of reasoning it displays will be likely to be best appreciated by the comparatively few who can thoroughly relish it,—because seen alone. Imagination necessarily breaks in on the continuity and restrains the impetuosity of the argument; it tempts to digression; it introduces matter not essentially necessary to the expression of the reasoning; and though by all this, it often renders the reasoning not less, but more intelligible to the *generality* of readers, who could not have comprehended it at all in a more condensed form, yet it disguises and conceals the acuteness of the argument considered merely *as such*. Thoroughly to appreciate the complex excellence of acute and continuous reasoning expressed in the forms of poetry, implies a power of analysis which comparatively few possess; not to mention that it will always *seem* easier, and in some respects is so, to express an argument in the diffusive style, which pleases the imagination, than in the severe methods which a close logic would require. Where the premises and the conclusions immediately deduced from them are logically stated, and all this in as small a compass and with as much brevity as possible,—the powers of the reasoner are likely to be most strongly seen, at least by those who in such a shape can relish his argument at all; though it may still be quite true, that for the bulk of mankind it would be far better to dilute every page of such quintessential logic in ten pages of looser matter. Reasoning, in the above naked shape, resembles the leafless tree of winter; every branch is clearly defined against the sky. It is when the anatomist has laid bare the nerves and muscles, and all that complication and intertexture of parts, which make up that mystery of harmony and beauty, the human frame, that he enters upon those demonstrations which would otherwise have perplexed the student.—Even where Jeremy Taylor's reasoning is most powerful and original, invested, as it always is, with the lavish ornaments of his uncontrollably active fancy, it is, from the causes above specified, often difficult to estimate it at its full value. His beautiful illustrations, his ingenious apologues, his long similes, often extended into allegory, all tend to conceal the strength and sinew of the reasoning; and not only to divide the admiration of the reader, but often to fix on the illustrations alone a great part of the admiration which is justly due to the reasoning also.

In Jeremy Taylor's case, however, we do not lay very much stress on this circumstance. Some allowance, indeed, ought justly to be made for it, as must always be the case where argument is conveyed in the language of poetry. But in estimating his character as a reasoner, it is not the *apparent* injury it may have sustained from the mere profusion of his imagination, which chiefly demands attention. It is the *real* injury, which, in many instances, it has sustained from this, as well as from other causes,—more especially his boundless and ill-digested erudition. The mere exuberance of his fancy, or the excessive copiousness of his style, may *conceal* from the reader the strength of his reasoning when just, but cannot render it unsound. They may impair its effect on the mind of a severe thinker, but cannot diminish its intrinsic validity; nay, in some cases may even enhance its practical worth. Unhappily, however, in Jeremy Taylor's case, they have often done more than this. There can be no doubt that in many instances, the prodigality of his fancy and the vastness of his learning have oppressed his reasoning powers, and made them not only appear less vigorous than they are, but really made them as feeble as they appear. They have often occasioned *positive inaccuracy* in reasoning, and still more frequently rendered his reasoning, even when radically sound, so *obscure* as to be almost unintelligible. That they often occasioned positive inaccuracy will appear wonderful to none, who consider how fruitful of fallacies and ambiguity must be that excessive employment of figurative language, and that loose and copious diction, which were the inevitable result of an imagination so ardent and a range of reading so boundless. But even where he is really or probably sound in his reasoning, the same causes often render him so obscure as to be nearly or wholly unintelligible. He so overlays his thoughts with words—wanders into such frequent episodes—takes up so much of extraneous matter in the course of his argument—indulges in such rhetorical exaggerations—dazzles and confounds by such incessant flashes of imagination—and overwhelms and wearies the reader with such an array of learned quotations, with such a waste of needless and ill-sorted erudition, that to trace some of his trains of arguments is like tracing the course of some river which gradually loses itself in a morass. The stream, it may be, is clearly defined for a short distance; but the lazy waters soon begin to ooze through the dissolving banks, and gradually diffusing themselves over a boundless expanse of mud and reeds, stream and bank at length both disappear, and you feel that if you follow you are inevitably lost. Just so it is oftentimes in tracing the progress of Jeremy Taylor's reasoning. His preliminary propositions, it may be, seem clear enough; but he soon wanders into such an immensity of poetical ornament and learned citation, indulges in so many digressions, enters on so many extraneous topics, and expresses all in such a vast *quantity* of words, that you begin to be utterly perplexed; the channel of the argument at length almost disappears, and you find yourself on the brink of an unfathomable gulf, of that

> "Serbonian bog,
> Where armies whole have sunk."

These extreme cases are, we admit, comparatively rare, but he who wishes to see our observations exemplified by a particular instance, has only to turn to the "Chapter on the Law of Nature," in the "Ductor Dubitantium." We feel persuaded, so far as we are able clearly to penetrate his meaning, that Taylor's fundamental principles are correct and sound; yet he has managed to wrap them up in such a mass of words—has here and there reasoned on such apparently contradictory principles—has qualified and seemingly retracted so much of what he had previously affirmed—that it is no easy task to trace the exact course of his argument, or to perceive the entire consistency of his opinions. Precisely the same observations apply to several other passages in the same work; as for instance, his very dubious speculations, as to "the lawfulness of public men sometimes doing evil for public necessity." Similar instances occur in his other works, more especially in his "Unum Necessarium."

His ardent fancy was a source of occasional inaccuracy and of frequent obscurity in reasoning, in another less direct manner. The inevitable tendency of a very imaginative mind, is to exaggeration and undue strength of expression. Thus in the utterance of a present feeling, or in giving strong expression to what is deemed an important truth, such a mind is very apt to pass the cautious bounds which the severity of logical truth has imposed; and if such language be interpreted, (as in controversial pieces it generally is, and ought in strict justice to be,) with any degree of literality, the author may often be supposed to advocate most pernicious error, where he is in fact

only stating a sentiment substantially true in too unqualified a manner; and if, as often happens, he has expressed himself with equal want of caution when treating the same topics under other aspects, he may be even charged with actual contradictions. This is remarkably the case with Jeremy Taylor; no one can less afford to be interpreted literally, or by single passages, than himself; and the observation now made will go far to account for many of the apparent contradictions which are to be met with in his writings. It is far from being asserted, indeed, that many of these discrepancies are not *real* as well as apparent; for such was the intensity with which Jeremy Taylor felt any *present* view of a subject, that he sometimes falls into extravagances of sentiment as well as of expression. No more is affirmed, than that a fair interpretation of his sentiments, with a candid reference to the above-mentioned peculiarities of his intellectual character, will sufficiently account for many of the seemingly contradictory statements with which he has been charged.

The reader may very easily conceive the apparent errors into which Jeremy Taylor's unguarded strength of expression and rhetorical exaggerations might often lead him, from a very simple illustration. And it the better answers our purpose that, in this case, he *could* not be misunderstood. In his "sermon" on the "Foolish Exchange," when expatiating in a strain of magnificent eloquence on the inconceivable *worth* of the soul, he affirms that, "besides that this was a donation of intelligent faculties, such as we understand to be perfect and essential, or *rather the essence* of God;——!"

Now here he cannot be misunderstood; he cannot for a moment be imagined to mean literally what his words convey. Every one therefore would easily perceive, and as readily admit, that he was merely indulging in a rhetorical amplification. But if he had expressed himself thus strongly where the *subject itself* did not secure him from misinterpretation, (as he often does,) he would very probably be suspected of some dangerous error, even though his meaning might be equally innocent. Nay, even in such a plain instance as the one above, there have not been wanting theologians in former ages, so uncandid, so ready to avail themselves of an opponent's indiscretion, that they would have been pleased to interpret even such an obvious hyperbole to Jeremy Taylor's disadvantage, and probably affected to believe that he had embraced certain wild doctrines of some of the ancient philosophers and mystics!

In the *general conduct* of a train of argument, it need hardly be said, that the causes already specified as affecting his character as a reasoner often produced like ill effects.

It may, moreover, be observed, that some of these causes must have exerted no mean influence on the early development of his mind. The activity of his fancy and his appetite for knowledge must have effectually precluded that thorough discipline which in his case was so peculiarly necessary.

The nature and extent of the influence of these disturbing causes on his character as a reasoner, are fully apparent, if we compare his usual style of argumentation with that of the great masters of the art. Such men are chiefly characterized by exactness and precision in the use of terms, the utmost conciseness and brevity of diction, the strictest continuity of reasoning, and as it regards the general management of their subject, a judicious selection of proofs, and a stern rejection not only of every unsound, but of every questionable argument. Compared in all these points, Jeremy Taylor's defects become immediately apparent. There are few men who more frequently dispense with exact and rigid definitions of terms; few who introduce new ones with greater license, or who vary the old with less caution; few who use them in a more ambiguous or indeterminate manner. As to copiousness of diction, he is faulty almost to a proverb, not only using many words where a few would suffice, but oftentimes actually darkening his meaning by excessive amplification, and instead of endeavouring to make it clear by one perspicuous and unexceptionable expression, vainly striving to effect it by a wearisome repetition of what is dubious and obscure.

But as it is in the nice selection and judicious arrangement of arguments really decisive of the question, and the rejection of every thing either unnecessary or extraneous, that the most powerful reasoners have chiefly manifested their skill, so it is in these points that Jeremy Taylor most frequently shows his inferiority to them. It is true, indeed, that in all reasoning which depends solely on moral evidence, the conclusion must depend on a calculation of separate probabilities; and as each of these probabilities—often drawn from the remotest sources—forms a distinct argument, there may undoubtedly be cases in which these several probable arguments are so nearly balanced in force as to make it difficult to say which shall be retained and which rejected, or to render it necessary to adduce them all. In general, however, this is not the case. Such instances form the exceptions. In all ordinary cases

there are sure to be a few arguments of a magnitude sufficient to decide the question in debate; and these are the arguments on which a judicious reasoner will always fix; which he will endeavour to put in the strongest light, and on which he will willingly suspend the fate of his reasoning. And in order that they may be seen in the most favourable light, he will not only think it undesirable to say all that *might* be said on the question, but will say not a word more than is absolutely necessary. He knows that a few such arguments, (more luminous and perspicuous for being stated alone,) will have more effect than if combined with a number of inferior considerations, of little intrinsic value. He knows very well, that unless he were reasoning with minds of uncommon compass and comprehensiveness, (which cannot generally be the case,) minds which can distinguish between the relative values of different arguments, and allot to each its due place in the final calculation; which can reject an argument which appears inconclusive, without suffering it to impair the force of others; and which, if all are sound, can comprehend them all,—he would be likely to injure rather than benefit his cause, by adducing, in complicated cases, every argument which *might* be adduced. The generality of mankind would rather be bewildered than enlightened by such scrupulous exactness, and by such a minute and elaborate induction of particulars. Ordinary reasoners, like the ancient Pharisees, would forget the "weightier matters" in this laborious tithing of "mint and cummin;" or at best, the attempt to calculate such infinitesimal arguments, would impair the force of the more important and decisive ones, by distracting and dividing the attention of the reader; not to say that in many cases—and we could adduce several from the "Ductor Dubitantium" alone—they would extend to such length and magnitude as to produce, when the mind has traversed them all, only a vague and unsatisfactory impression. They have all been seen, it is true, but few are distinctly remembered; the whole have passed under review in detail, but the mind is baffled in the attempt to calculate them all; the very number of the arguments has transformed what might have been a well-appointed army into an indistinguishable rabble. Their very strength has been the cause of weakness. Moreover, if any argument be not only not seen to be conclusive, but supposed to be dubious, it will extend suspicion to the rest. It will not be, as in all fairness it ought to be, simply *deducted.* Nor can this be avoided, so long as the generality of men are not only gifted with a feeble reason, but enslaved by prejudice. The judicious reasoner, therefore, will, except in very remarkable cases, (as when the arguments are all of nearly equal value, or when he is writing for a peculiar class of readers,) confine himself to those topics which are really decisive of the question. By lopping off the superfluous branches, he knows that the strength and majesty of the trunk will be only the more apparent. Having accurately stated the larger sums, he will not descend into a piddling calculation of fractions and farthings.

This, too, he will do not only for the purposes of general conviction, but from the force of his own logical habits. *Proof* is what he seeks, and in his estimation, the most direct road to it is the best. He will not be satisfied with less than conclusive reasons; and he does not ask for more.

If the mere multiplication of *unnecessary* or *simply inconclusive* arguments has a tendency to impair the force of a train of reasoning, much more, of course, is this the result of the injudicious introduction of arguments actually unsound. We need not mention that they give the caviller and the sophist at least *something* to refute; success which often encourages such disingenuous reasoners to pretend that they have refuted every thing, though the main parts of the argument, it may be, remain as irrefragable as ever. We find by experience, that such unwise intermixture of arguments, sound and unsound, has a most unfavourable effect even on the mind of the fair and honest reader; at all events, unless he be a person not only of unusual candour, but of unusual perspicacity too. It is true that, in all reason, an unsound argument, as already stated, ought merely to be detached from the rest, and then the force of the remainder calculated as though such unsound argument had never been introduced; but we find in fact that it is not so; nor can it be so, so long as human beings are not pure intelligencies, but creatures of passion and prejudice. They inevitably extend their ordinary rules of judgment and conduct to cases in which they do not apply. The discovery of a few acts of fraud and treachery shall chill the ardour of general benevolence, and lower the estimate of human virtue. In a similar manner, the unequivocal detection of a few fallacies in a train of argument, is sure to infect the rest with suspicion; to engender a belief that as some have been found hollow, sophistry lurks under all; and that it only requires closer attention or a keener perspicacity to penetrate their disguises. Or if the writer be still supposed sincere and honest,

the caviller objects, that a mind which could be imposed on by such convicted fallacies is not trustworthy in his other statements. Probably most men have been more or less conscious of the influence of these contagious doubts, when following a train of argument of very varying merit. The reader is apt to feel, at least unless he possesses a much larger share of intelligence and much severer logical habits, than characterize the generality of mankind, that an invalid argument cannot be merely subtracted from the series to which it belongs; strong association spreads from one part to another, until they are inseparably viewed as a whole. They are not a mere aggregate of still perfectly separable parts; they are held together, if we may so speak, not merely by proximity, but by a sort of chemical union; by the strong affinity of mental association. They remind one of the mixture of two fluids which enter into intimate combination with each other, a combination from which no ordinary process can release them; nor is it an uncommon thing to see a person of feeble reason, viewing with suspicion, through his whole life, a really *valid* argument, from strong recollection of certain ludicrously *weak* arguments with which it was associated, and which probably he had been long accustomed to laugh at.

We have been the longer on this point, because it serves to illustrate not merely a prominent, but, it may be affirmed, the *most* prominent defect in the character of Jeremy Taylor as a *reasoner*. There is no man, so far as we know, who (as has been already remarked) is so deficient in a principle of selection and judicious arrangement of his proofs; no man who is so apt to diminish the force or injure the impression of his reasoning by an absurd intermixture, not only of questionable arguments, but sometimes of the most unpardonable fallacies; no man who more fatally mingles his "iron with clay."—But Jeremy Taylor is not only guilty of the frequent employment of sound and unsound arguments in the establishment of the same proposition, but he often places arguments of most various value in the closest juxtaposition in his series of proof. The weak are not put by themselves, with a wise caution that they are merely thrown in as some slight additament of probability; no such thing. He carries his gold and his baser metal all in one purse.

The fact is, often he seems to have marshalled his arguments in the order in which they first suggested themselves; and thus the rawest recruits are often seen side by side with the best disciplined in the troop. Illustrations of these defects will immediately offer themselves to the attentive reader of his works.

These peculiarities are in great measure to be attributed to his vast and ill-digested learning, and the credulous regard to authority and antiquity which was the result of it. Hence he frequently seems to estimate his arguments rather by number than by weight, and to adduce not such as his deliberate judgment would approve, but such as his multifarious reading has supplied. No matter how suspicious the source from which an argument is obtained or how insufficient the grounds on which it rests, it is sure to be adduced if it answers a present purpose. The most problematical, nay, the most evidently fabulous facts in physics or history, are not unfrequently pressed into the service, not merely as illustrations, but as grave analogical arguments. A curious instance of this occurs in his correspondence with his friend Evelyn. Evelyn, it appears, had been troubled with some doubts on the subject of the separate existence of the soul after death. In a long, and on the whole a very admirable letter, Jeremy Taylor endeavours to solve them; and amongst many other much sounder arguments gravely urges on his friend a consideration of the following absurdities.

"But to the thing. That the felicity of christians is not till the day of judgment I doe believe next to an article of my creed: and so far I consent with you: but then I cannot allow your consequent; that the soul is mortal. That the soule is a complete substance, I am willing enough to allow in disputation; though, indeed, I believe the contrary; but I am sure no philosophy and no divinity can prove its being to be wholly relative and incomplete. But, suppose it: it will not follow that, therefore, it cannot live in separation. For the flame of a candle, which is your owne similitude, will give light enough to this enquiry. The flame of a candle can consist or subsist, though the matter be extinct. I will not instance Licetus his lampes, whose flame had stood still 1500 years, viz. in Tullie's wife's vault. For, if it had spent any matter, the matter would have been exhaust long before that: if it spends none, it is all one as if it had none; for what need is there of it, if there be no use for it, and what use if no feeding the flame, and how can it feed but by spending itselfe? But the reason why the flame goes out when the matter is exhaust, is because the litle particle of fire is soon overcome by the circumflent aire and scattered, when it wants matter to keepe it in union and closenesse: but then, as the flame continues not in the relation of a candle's flame, when the matter is exhaust, yet fire can abide without matter to feed it: for itselfe is matter; it is a substance. And so is the soule: and as the element of fire, and the celestial globes of fire eat nothing, but live of themselves; so can the soule when it is

divested of its relative, and so would the candle's flame, if it could get to the regions of fire, as the soule does to the region of spirits.

Questionable facts in ancient history are still more frequently employed as argument, than doubtful facts in science. It must be admitted, however, that they occur chiefly as illustrations. To this point we shall recur again in a subsequent part of this Essay.

It has been already stated, that it is not meant that Jeremy Taylor's reasoning is *generally* characterized by the defects which have now been pointed out. We only mean that they are of no unfrequent occurrence, and, in a greater or less degree, impair the effect of all his controversial writings.

We know not whether in the above remarks we have always succeeded in clearly expressing our meaning, but any reader who will carefully compare any portions of Jeremy Taylor's elaborate "Dissuasion from Popery," or his "Treatise on Transubstantiation," with those portions of Chillingworth's great work, "The Religion of Protestants," which treat of the same topics, may easily find an illustration of it.

It will be recollected that we have in a former part of this Essay contended that Jeremy Taylor possessed far greater *native* powers of reasoning and speculation, than probably the generality of his readers would be willing to admit; and we have attributed their partial failure and their almost habitual perversion to the operation of specific causes. If it be asked which of those two great elements of the philosophical character he possessed in the higher degree,—compass or subtlety of mind; an aptitude for a comprehensive investigation of premises or for logical illation, it might be replied that he appears to have originally possessed both in a nearly equal degree, but in the exercise of these qualities has exhibited all his characteristic inequality. Thus he frequently displays, more especially in his controversial writings, an acuteness which startles the reader with delight and surprise, by eliciting inferences at once the most unexpected and just, from some trivial or well-known premises; while, at other times, he is deceived by an ambiguity that would hardly have imposed on the most unexperienced tyro. Again, he often manifests in the discussion of intricate questions,—such, for instance, as frequently occur in his "Ductor Dubitantium," a reach and comprehensiveness of mind seldom equalled. All the arguments that could by the remotest possibility affect the decision of the question are adduced from every conceivable source and from every region of speculation.* But, at other times, he will found important conclusions on the most partial and contracted data imaginable.

It may be observed, however, that his comprehensiveness is rather that of a *learned* man, than of a man possessed of very strong original powers of observation; of one who was accustomed to accumulate the materials of reasoning, than of one whose mind spontaneously suggested them; of one who had ransacked every source of evidence, than of one accustomed to digest, discriminate, and select. Even his most extensive investigations, and his most elaborate trains of reasoning, probably contain few propositions or arguments, which might not be found in some writer or other, although often collected from the obscurest sources and from the literature of every country and of every age. Indeed he generally puts this matter beyond doubt by quoting some author or other, for at least the germ of his thoughts; thoughts, by the by, which but for him might have lurked for ever, without the slightest risk of quotation, within the profound recesses in which his most discursive and multifarious reading first discovered them. In this respect his honesty (if, indeed, it were not rather simple-hearted love of learning) is well worthy of general imitation. If he had availed himself of his erudition to the full extent, he might, in innumerable instances, have obtained the praise of greater originality than the simplicity of his nature coveted; for all that he had to do was simply to adopt the thoughts of others without acknowledging the source from which they were derived: in very many instances there would have been little danger of his being convicted of plagiarism. The *forms* of reasoning he has adopted are of course characterized by the peculiarities of the age. Its outward fashion is that of the schoolmen, whose barbarous technicalities, formal divisions, and parade of logical method, he abundantly employs. This was in some measure to be expected; and, in such

* The reader may see a striking instance of these observations, in Taylor's remarks on the Provinces of Faith and Reason, in Rule III. Chap. II. of his "Ductor," which contain many passages conceived in the noblest spirit of philosophy; and a still more striking one in Rule VIII. of the same chapter, in which he is discussing the alleged lawfulness of a judge's giving sentence against his conscience, if that sentence be according to law.

an age, a slight infusion of such terms of art merely to preserve a more severely logical method, to secure greater brevity and compression, or to obviate the necessity of lengthened explanations, might be pardoned in treatises intended for the learned alone, or on philosophical or metaphysical subjects. Nothing, however, can be more ridiculous than the ostentatious employment of them, in which not Jeremy Taylor alone, but almost all the divines of the age indulged; and that too, not merely in erudite treatises, but in "sermons" and "discourses," professedly intended for the vulgar. Nor did the matter rest here. It had been well for the divines of that age, if they had suffered only thus far from their familiarity with the schoolmen; if it had merely rendered some of their writings comparatively obscure or unintelligible, from peculiarities of method and expression. But such familiarity necessarily led in some measure (though perhaps, for reasons hereafter to be stated, this was less the case with Jeremy Taylor than with most of the divines of his age) to an adoption of the methods of reasoning and the style of speculation, which had characterized the schools, and the influence of which was still far from inconsiderable on the existing systems of theology. Not that the schoolmen by any means deserve the indiscriminate censure and ridicule which are so often poured upon them; as the slightest actual investigation of their writings cannot fail to convince any impartial man. Their grand error, an error which, it must be confessed, vitiates so large a portion of their speculations, consists in the frequent assumption of their premises; an error of prodigious magnitude. Yet in their mere trains of deductive reasoning from those premises, they often exhibit a subtlety and acuteness, which few even of the most exact reasoners have reached. On this point, Bishop Heber has justly remarked that some of their works deserve to be regarded "as models of fair and patient investigation; the works of men whose errors are rather from their imperfect means of knowledge, than from any defect in (what they principally professed) their mode of arranging knowledge already acquired." In this respect, and this alone, are they entitled to our admiration;—when viewed in relation to truth, and the only rational methods of acquiring it, they are too often utterly worthless.

Now though it is true that in the seventeenth century the principles of inductive science were not only generally recognised, but had done much to purify several branches of natural philosophy, and to restrain that license of speculation which had been the characteristic of preceding ages, the influence of the scholastic philosophy was far from small. It has been already stated, that philosophers and theologians not merely borrowed from it its technicalities and its forms, (a circumstance which alone would tend to maintain it in a certain degree of influence,) but from early familiarity with it, unconsciously imbibed somewhat of its spirit and *habit*. And thus it is, that many of the writers of the seventeenth century, both philosophical and theological, exhibit precisely the character which might be expected to result from a nearly equal discipline in the old and the new schools; an alternation of dogmatism and caution; they now catch a strong glimpse of the recently elicited principles of inductive science and maintain a rigid adherence to them, and now relapse into all the absurdities of an exploded philosophy. This was natural; the errors of ages are not to be rectified in a day. When the limbs have been long galled with fetters, they will, even when restored to freedom, still fall into the unnatural movements which long constraint has imposed; *οἱ πολὺν χρόνον δεθέντες, κἂν λυθεῖεν, οὐ δυνάμενοι βαδίζειν, ὑποσκελίζονται· ὑπὸ τῆς πολυχρονίου τῶν δεσμῶν συνηθείας.*

All great revolutions in the history of the human mind must, it is obvious, be effected slowly, and through a long series of intermediate stages. Now, if the dubious character above described clings even to many of the *natural* philosophers of the seventeenth century; if they, like the first christian proselytes from judaism, were so apt to revert to the "beggarly elements" of ancient dispensations of philosophy, which had "grown old" and were fast vanishing away; if even in Bacon, for instance, the first systematic expositor of the principles of a purer philosophy, we sometimes see such a strange oblivion of his own principles; if even *he* can indulge in assumptions as dogmatical as any he condemns,—how much more might the same inconsistency be expected in writers on theology; a department of science which the inductive philosophy has been the last to purify, if, indeed, it may be said to be even yet purified. Nor is it matter of wonder, that it should have yielded more slowly than the several branches of physical science, to the ascendancy of more accurate principles of philosophizing; for though it does not justify, it necessarily affords scope to far greater license and rashness of speculation than any other science. Here the human mind could lose itself even in its most eccentric flights and its most presumptuous moods. Amidst the infinite, the

invisible and the eternal, it could construct innumerable theories, which, though utterly destitute of proof, had at least one advantage;—they could safely defy *direct* confutation. When a purer philosophy therefore began to diffuse itself, it might be anticipated that in these realms of speculation the spirit of presumptuous dogmatism would hold dominion longest; that these seats would be the last from which the " parting genius" should be

" with sighing sent."

Those who had speculated and dogmatized for so many ages on all the profound mysteries which such a field supplies; who had penetrated the boundless regions, not only of " entities," but of " possibilities;" who had speculated not only on what God had done, but on what he might do and could do; who had amused themselves in their sublime science of " angelography," as they termed it, with most exact descriptions of the invisible world; who had settled all questions of order and precedence amidst the celestial hierarchies; who had ascertained the number, the ranks, the nature, and the occupations of angels; who, in a word, had determined with infallible certainty all those questions relating to the future world, about which the human mind is so intensely curious, but which Scripture has wisely left in total darkness, could hardly be expected to relinquish without reluctance this vast territory of speculation, this world of phantoms and illusions: nor can we be surprised that when they first saw the new-born light of a better philosophy shooting into the bosom of night, and invading and circumscribing the sphere of their shadowy dominion, they should have felt like that " anarch old," whom Milton describes as trembling for the empire of chaos, and murmuring at those usurping glories of creation which threatened to hurl him from his throne.

There is, indeed, no reason why the same severe system of induction should not be adopted in theology, which has already been applied in the various departments of physical science. The Scriptures stand in the same relation to the theologian as the world of matter to the natural philosopher, and whatever cannot be proved from them either directly or by undeniable deduction, has no title to be considered any thing more than conjecture and hypothesis; conjecture and hypothesis, it may be, sustained by very high degrees of probability, but conjecture and hypothesis still.

The reverence for the scriptures which the principles of the Reformation inspired, and the paramount authority which was soon attached to their decisions, first introduced more sober views of theology; still the remains of the " inveterate evil " were seen, more or less, throughout the whole of the sixteenth and greater part of the seventeenth century.

In Jeremy Taylor it occasionally discloses itself in an indolent acquiescence and credulous *assent* to some of the dubious speculations of the schoolmen; or, still more frequently, in a hesitating *dissent* from them. Still, upon the whole, Jeremy Taylor indulged as little in that speculative theology which was the delight of the schools, as any divine of his day. Indeed, it is wonderful, considering their vast compass, that his writings should contain so little of this nature. It is to be attributed chiefly to the eminently practical character of his theology; the great mass of his works are of a devotional or ethical character; while such of them as are strictly controversial, are almost wholly on subjects which afforded little temptation to the introduction of those topics which are most dear to the spirit of speculation. A mere glance at any index of the contents of Taylor's works will immediately serve to show how very large a proportion of them is purely practical. He was more apt by far to fall into errors connected with the erroneous *physics* of the schools, than into those connected with their speculative theology.

There was one department of philosophy to which Jeremy Taylor devoted himself more than any other, and which he was well qualified to prosecute with success; we mean that of *morals*. It was the one undoubtedly which he most sedulously cultivated and in which he found his chief delight: and it may be remarked, that when the question is not one of pure speculation, it is hardly possible to have a safer guide; nay, he is very rarely wrong in his final decisions, even when his reasoning by which he arrives at his conclusion, may not be in all respects sound. But then in all *such* discussions, he had something above and beyond his reason to guide him; he had that which in *this* department of philosophy will often do more than the most subtle logic or the most vigorous powers of speculation;—a mind enamoured with goodness; a soul imbued with the sublime spirit of christianity. Hence it is we see in him so much of that intense and ennobling love of ideal excellence, that sublime enthusiasm in the cause of virtue and goodness, which pervade the writings of Plato,

and which so often lead him practically right, even where his metaphysical speculations are wrong. These feelings, (both in the case of Plato and Jeremy Taylor,) conjoined with a powerful imagination, and in the latter case purified and exalted by the spirit of christianity, shed over their writings an ineffable grandeur and beauty, for the want of which no severity of method, no exactness of definition, no cold accuracy, no closeness of reasoning, could have atoned. In morals, a susceptible conscience and a love of goodness will often lead, by a short cut, to the profoundest philosophy; a philosophy, which if it has in some measure dispensed with the guidance of reason, has exchanged it for what rivals the certainty of instinct. These qualities, and these alone, can impart to ethical speculation, what frigid reason can never supply; that glow of feeling, that enthusiasm and ardour, which can alone impress and touch the heart, and without which, indeed, ethical speculations are of all the dryest and the least interesting. None but such minds as those of Jeremy Taylor, can ever clothe the meagre skeletons of moral philosophy in their proper dress of immortal grace and beauty. Other men may *anatomize* virtue; these alone can *paint* her.

Accordingly we find in Jeremy Taylor, more than in any writer of his age, the most ravishing descriptions of every species of moral excellence, whether separately or in combination, and the most terrible delineations of all the varieties of moral deformity. In his "Great Exemplar," his "Holy Living and Dying," his "Sermons," and his "Ductor Dubitantium," are to be found numberless passages on these subjects for which we shall in vain seek parallels in the whole compass of English literature;—no, not even in the pages of Hooker or of Barrow.

The next quality of Jeremy Taylor's intellect which demands our notice, (we say the next, because though the first in his own mind, it is second in value and importance in the order of intellectual excellence,) is his *imagination*. Here a very few paragraphs may suffice; for, who that can read only a few pages of the works of this wonderful genius, can be ignorant that this was the faculty by which he was distinguished above almost every other individual of his species? In viewing this part of his mental constitution, there is no necessity for the nice discrimination and analysis, which are necessary in determining the relative value of his powers of reasoning, and the place they ought to occupy in an estimate of his whole intellectual character. *This* was not, as was the case with his reason, repressed by other more powerful faculties. On the contrary, it bound all the rest to its chariot wheels and rode through the whole of his writings in one long triumph. The severe discipline of reason could not tame, nor could floods of learning quench it. In estimating the astonishing vigour and exuberance of this faculty, we are to take into account not only the incessant, the prodigal display it is ever making, but the unpromising topics which it has often succeeded in adorning, and the obstacles in defiance of which it has exerted itself. As to topics, he seems to afford conclusive proof, that to a mind in the highest degree imaginative, there is no subject of speculation, out of the pure mathematics, which may not be enriched with poetical ornament; scarcely any materials so hard that they cannot be wrought into forms of beauty. It would be difficult to conceive any subjects more unpromising, or more sterile, than those of which his controversial writings treated, and still more those with which his great work, the "Ductor Dubitantium," is occupied; subjects in which the generality of casuistical writers have, it must be admitted, adopted a style of writing, which most exactly harmonizes with the repulsiveness and dryness of the topics themselves. With Jeremy Taylor it is altogether different; metaphor and simile, sparkling allusions and enlivening epithets, classical fable and ingenious apologue, relieve and adorn the pages, and present the reader, at every step of his toilsome pilgrimage, with unexpected offerings of fruits and flowers. His fancy to the reader is as refreshing as those aromatic odours, which stole on the senses of the wearied soldiers of Cyrus when toiling through the sandy desert of Arabia. We have said that there is scarcely a subject so hopelessly abstruse, that Jeremy Taylor cannot adorn it with grace, or clothe it with beauty. Even the frozen, the arctic circle of metaphysics and casuistry, is not beyond the magic touch of his all-subduing genius; when *he* treats these subjects, they are visited for once with the glow of a summer sun, and verdure and beauty, flowers and foliage, spring up in that region of perpetual snows; when *he* treats them, it may be said, "the winter is over and gone, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land."

But not only does the felicitous manner in which he has treated the most unpromising topics, demonstrate the unparalleled force of his imagination; it is as conclusively shown by another circumstance. He has exerted it with the utmost freedom, in defiance of the hebetating and deadening influences of his immense learning. Such was the extraordinary buoyancy of his fancy, that it dances lightly over the waters,

in spite of that vast mass of erudition with which his mind was laden, and under which any other would inevitably have sunk.

It is true there is no faculty, which, when possessed in any considerable degree, is distinguished by such irrepressible energy and elasticity as the imagination; but it may be added, there is none, the lustre of which may be so soon dimmed by an intense and prolonged attention to pursuits uncongenial with it. Nor must we consider merely how large a portion of Taylor's life must have been spent in the bare accumulation of knowledge; but what was the *kind* of knowledge to the acquisition of which he must have devoted by far the larger portion of his youth and manhood. It was precisely of that kind, which abstractedly is least congenial to such a mind as his. Yet his truly wonderful familiarity with the dull field of ecclesiastical, metaphysical, casuistical, and scholastic literature, still left his imagination perfectly unimpaired; it still seems to have possessed all its originality, freshness, and inventive power. Nay, his immense learning, unwieldy as it was, was the mere slave—the obedient minister of his boundless fancy. It is a chaos from which he is perpetually working up new creations and combinations; a collection of antique dresses and quaint devices, in which thought may sport itself in a thousand different shapes and masquerade it in perpetual change. Indeed, on this point, it may be observed, that though Jeremy Taylor's illustrations are gathered from every quarter, though he ranges through all nature and art, and in his idolatrous love of poetic forms, seeks for "similitudes" in which to embody the spirit of thought, from "things in heaven above, and in the earth beneath, and in the waters under the earth," yet they are drawn from history and those sources which nothing but his learning could supply, more frequently than from other sources. Analogies founded on ancient story and fable, on ancient ceremonies and rites, on ancient customs and opinions, abound in all his writings, and serve to show how the materials of the imagination may be augmented and multiplied by vast and eccentric learning, when the imagination itself is possessed of a proportionate vigour. The effects of learning on such a mind, remind one of the effects of certain narcotics on certain constitutions; what would instantly seal up the eyelids of one man in slumber, would on another only have the effect of quickening and expanding all the faculties, enlarging the sphere of their activity and their capacity of exertion.

It is curious to see with what address Jeremy Taylor will extract some of his most beautiful illustrations from the most worthless parts of his multifarious reading. The most absurd fictions of classical mythology, or the equally absurd legends of ecclesiastical writers, the most extravagant fable ancient and modern, the oddest, the most eccentric matters, which any other mind would have thought it toil to read at all, and almost a sacred duty to forget, are carefully treasured in his memory, and then are felicitously employed, just as they are wanted, to adorn some important doctrine or some beautiful moral truth. These analogies are often gathered from sources so remote, that one is perplexed to conceive how they should ever have occurred to his mind, or by what eccentric freak of association they were suggested, while they leave us in a maze of admiration and wonder at the unwearied activity of the imaginative faculty which they display. So frequent are the illustrations of this kind, that not the slightest particle of his learning seems to be useless; not the most insignificant fact his memory has treasured up, is wasted like the mud left by the inundation of the Nile, it is all rich with the promise of a golden harvest. Thus he compares the "false tongue," to those looking-glasses in the temple of Smyrna, which represented "the best faces as crooked, ugly, and deformed." When he wishes to illustrate the fact, that the "splendour and the zeal" which often mark the early career of a young convert, "are apt to turn, the first into pride and the second into uncharitableness," he beautifully reminds us of what "Homer said of the Sirian star," "it shines fiercely and brings fevers." If he has read in some strange legend book, that "in the tomb of Terentia, certain lamps burned under-ground many ages together, which as soon as ever they were brought into the air, and saw a bigger light, went out never to be re-enkindled," he beautifully applies it to illustrate the melancholy fact, that "so long as we are in the retirements of sorrow, of want, of fear, of sickness, or of any sad accident, we are burning and shining lamps; but when God lifts us up from the gates of death and carries us abroad into the open air, that we converse with prosperity and temptation, we go out in darkness; and that we cannot be preserved in heat and light, but by still dwelling in the regions of sorrow." When he would illustrate the folly of those presumptuous men, who sin with less fear, "because there have been some men who have fallen into fearful crimes, and yet by the grace of God have recovered, and repented, and lived," he reminds us of what "Diagoras said to them who showed to him the votive garments of those that had escaped shipwreck, upon their prayers and vows to Neptune,—that they kept no account of those that prayed and vowed and yet were drowned." These are a few slight specimens of a

class of illustrations perpetually occurring in his works. His boundless learning is constantly supplying some rare and striking analogy.

In almost every form of imaginative expression he seems to take equal delight; nor is there any, of which his principal works do not supply innumerable specimens. The compact metaphor, the formal simile, the ingenious apologue, are all to be found in every few pages; while not unfrequently his figures, extending to a vast number of points of resemblance, and consisting not so much of one analogy as of a series and complication of analogies, run out into brief allegories. This is very frequently the case when he introduces them with the phrase, "so have I seen;" this is generally the signal for the reader to expect some very lengthened illustration. Thus, when speaking, in the beautiful sermon entitled, the "Return of Prayers," of certain causes which often mar the "good man's" supplications, he thus illustrates the effects of discomposure of spirit.

"For prayer is an action, and a state of intercourse and desire, exactly contrary to this character of anger. Prayer is an action of likeness to the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of gentleness and dove-like simplicity; an imitation of the holy Jesus, whose spirit is meek, up to the greatness of the biggest example, and a conformity to God; whose anger is always just, and marches slowly, and is without transportation, and often hindered, and never hasty, and is full of mercy; prayer is the peace of our spirit, the stillness of our thoughts, the evenness of recollection, the seat of meditation, the rest of our cares, and the calm of our tempest; prayer is the issue of a quiet mind, of untroubled thoughts, it is the daughter of charity, and the sister of meekness; and he that prays to God with an angry, that is, with a troubled and discomposed spirit, is like him that retires into a battle to meditate, and sets up his closet in the out-quarters of an army, and chooses a frontier-garrison to be wise in. Anger is a perfect alienation of the mind from prayer, and therefore is contrary to that attention, which presents our prayers in a right line to God. *For so have I seen* a lark rising from his bed of grass, and soaring upwards, singing as he rises, and hopes to get to heaven, and climb above the clouds; but the poor bird was beaten back with the loud sighings of an eastern wind, and his motion made irregular and inconstant, descending more at every breath of the tempest, than it could recover by the libration and frequent weighing of his wings; till the little creature was forced to sit down and pant, and stay till the storm was over; and then it made a prosperous flight, and did rise and sing, as if it had learned music and motion from an angel, as he passed sometimes through the air, about his ministries here below: so is the prayer of a good man; when his affairs have required business, and his business was matter of discipline, and his discipline was to pass upon a sinning person, or had a design of charity, his duty met with infirmities of a man, and anger was its instrument, and the instrument became stronger than the prime agent, and raised a tempest, and overruled the man; and then his prayer was broken, and his thoughts were troubled, and his words went up towards a cloud, and his thoughts pulled them back again, and made them without intention; and the good man sighs for his infirmity, but must be content to lose the prayer, and he must recover it when his anger is removed, and his spirit is becalmed, made even as the brow of Jesus, and smooth like the heart of God; and then it ascends to heaven upon the wings of the holy Dove, and dwells with God, till it returns, like the useful bee, loaden with a blessing and the dew of heaven."

Another instance of figure carried out into allegory occurs in the same sermon, when speaking of the elevated piety required in him who undertakes to intercede for others.

"For a man of an ordinary piety is like Gideon's fleece, wet in its own locks; but it could not water a poor man's garden: but so does a thirsty land drink all the dew of heaven that wets its face, and a greater shower makes no torrent, nor digs so much as a little furrow, that the drills of the water might pass into rivers, or refresh their neighbour's weariness; but when the earth is full, and hath no strange consumptive needs, then at the next time, when God blesses it with a gracious shower, it divides into portions, and sends it abroad in free and equal communications, that all that stand round about may feel the shower. So is the good man's prayer; his own cup is full, it is crowned with health, and overflows with blessings, and all that drink of his cup and eat at his table, are refreshed with his joys, and divide with him in his holy portions. And indeed he hath need of a great stock of piety, who is first to provide for his own necessities, and then to give portions to a numerous relation. It is a great matter, that every man needs for himself,—the daily expenses of his own infirmities, the unthriving state of his omission of duties, and recessions from perfection,—and sometimes the great losses and shipwrecks, the plunderings and burning of his house by a fall into a deadly sin; and most good men are in this condition, that they have enough to do to live, and keep themselves above water; but how few men are able to pay their own debts, and lend great portions to others! The number of those who can effectually intercede for others to great purposes of grace and pardon, are as soon told as the number of wise men, as the gates of a city, or the entries of the river Nilus."

Another instance of that extension and complication of figure of which we have been speaking, may be quoted from the sermon entitled, "The Mercy of the Divine Judgments; or, God's Method in curing Sinners." He is speaking of the mercy which often lies concealed under the severest judgments.

"What wisdom, and philosophy, and perpetual experience, and revelation, and promises, and blessings, cannot do, a mighty fear can; it can allay the confidences of bold lust and imperious sin, and soften our spirit into the lowliness of a child, our revenge into the charity of prayers, our impudence into the blushings of a chidden girl; and therefore, God hath taken a course proportionable: for he is not so unmercifully merciful, as to give milk to an infirm lust, and hatch the egg to the bigness of a cockatrice. And, therefore, observe how it is that God's mercy prevails over all his works; it is even then when nothing can be discerned but his judgments: for as when a famine had been in Israel in the days of Ahab for three years and a half, when the angry prophet Elijah met the king, and presently a great wind arose, and the dust blew into the eyes of them that walked abroad, and the face of the heavens was black and all tempest, yet then the prophet was

most gentle, and God began to forgive, and the heavens were more beautiful than when the sun puts on the brightest ornaments of a bridegroom, going from his chambers of the east: so it is in the economy of the Divine mercy; when God makes our faces black, and the winds blow so loud till the cordage cracks, and our gay fortunes split, and our houses are dressed with cypress and yew, 'and the mourners go about the streets,' this is nothing but the 'pompa misericordiæ,' this is the funeral of our sins, dressed indeed with emblems of mourning, and proclaimed with sad accents of death; but the sight is refreshing as the beauties of the field which God had blessed, and the sounds are healthful as the voice of a physician."

But we might multiply instances of this kind without end. They will be found in almost all his "sermons," and in most of his practical works.

It cannot be denied, however, that though numberless instances of every *species* of figure are to be found in his writings, yet, that from peculiarities of mind which have been already noticed, and which will hereafter come more specifically under consideration, he is in *general* best pleased with the less compressed and energetic forms of illustration. His genius was abundantly more poetical and descriptive than oratorical; a fact which accounts not only for the general diffuseness and copiousness of diction, and the accumulation of epithets, but (the point we are now considering) for the fulness and amplitude of illustration in which he loves to indulge.

His tastes, in this respect, were any thing but severe. His ornaments are not plain and simple, but massive and costly, richly carved and enchased. His pictures are not mere outlines; a few hasty strokes, which leave much to the reader's imagination to fill up; they are all painted in the most finished manner, and coloured with the utmost splendour. It is curious to see how he very often adds what is, as respects the *sense*, a superfluous epithet or needless circumstance; not to render the analogy more complete, or the illustration more impressive; for in many of the instances now referred to, these purposes would be best answered by greater severity; but merely from his passion for description; to render it the more picturesque. To point out instances would be needless; they are to be met with in almost every page.

But though the imagination of Jeremy Taylor loves, it is true, to indulge in the utmost luxuriance of description, it is not meant that frequent instances may not be found, in which he has employed the most energetic metaphors with the most felicitous effect. Such are some of the brief and sparkling illustrations in which he will, now and then, convey important moral sentiments.—Such impressive apothegms, thus set, as it were, in gold, at once strike the attention, and, from their compactness, are easily retained in the memory. They are, if one may so speak, the jewels of philosophy, which she may always carry with her, possessing untold treasures of wisdom in the compass of a few sentences. Such is that beautiful expression, in which Taylor calls "chastity the enamel of the soul;" or that in which he describes "truth as the daughter of time;" or that in which, after condemning an excessive attention to curious but unprofitable speculation, he says, "not these matters, but practical are the hinges of immortality;" or that in which, when speaking of the all-pervading influence which religion should exercise over all the secular concerns of life, he tells us that such "a religion will reconcile Martha's employment with Mary's devotion."

It need not be said that an imagination, like that of Jeremy Taylor, was easily betrayed into extravagances. He is indeed almost proverbial for them; nor need we select specimens of faults, which are of but too frequent occurrence. Broken metaphors, and every form of exaggerated expression, (in numberless instances sinking into downright fustian and bombast,) are to be met with in most of his works. The same wondrous inequality which distinguishes the movements of every other faculty of his mind, eminently distinguished those of his imagination also.

Though there are few passages,—even those of the greatest beauty,—which are not alloyed by some faults of this kind, yet there are *some;* nor is it necessary to say, that these, which display all the riches of an imagination so transcendent without offending taste, breathe a spirit of almost superhuman eloquence. Such is the following brief passage, on "Prayer," from his beautiful little piece, entitled "Christian Consolations."

"But all that have a care to walk with God, fill their vessels more largely as soon as they rise, before they begin the work of the day, and before they lie down again at night; which is to observe what the Lord appointed in the Levitical ministry, a morning and an evening lamb to be laid upon the altar. So with them that are not stark irreligious, prayer is the key to open the day, and the bolt to shut in the night. But as the skies drop the early dew and the evening dew upon the grass,—yet it would not spring and grow green by that constant and double falling of the dew, unless some great showers, at certain seasons, did supply the rest; so the customary devotion of prayer, twice a day, is the falling of the early and the latter dew; but if you will increase and flourish in the works of grace, empty the great clouds sometimes, and let them fall

into a full shower of prayer; choose out the seasons in your own discretion, when prayer shall overflow, like Jordan in the time of harvest."

Of *wit* Jeremy Taylor appears to have possessed far more than he thought fit to employ. Whether this moderation resulted from the severity of his character, or from the gravity of the topics which, for the most part, employed his pen, or from both, we shall not determine. Even in his practical works we now and then meet with brief specimens of no ordinary wit; as when speaking of the besotting effects of habitual drunkenness, he observes, "that never since Joseph's cup was put into Benjamin's sack, was there a divining goblet." It is in his controversial pieces, however, and in his "Ductor Dubitantium," that his wit, as might be expected, most freely displays itself. The enormous errors of popery more especially he often exposes in a vein of very powerful irony. Take the following instance from his treatise on "Transubstantiation."

"By this doctrine of transubstantiation, the same thing is bigger and less than itself: for it is bigger in one host than in another; for the wafer is Christ's body, and yet one wafer is bigger than another: therefore Christ's body is bigger than itself. The same thing is above itself, and below itself, within itself, and without itself: it stands wholly upon his own right side, and wholly, at the same time, upon his own left side; it is as very a body, as that which is most divisible, and yet it is as indivisible as a spirit; and it is not a spirit but a body; and yet a body is no way separated from a spirit, but by being divisible. It is a perfect body, in which the feet are further from the head, than the head from the breast; and yet there is no space between head and feet at all: so that the parts are further off and nearer, without any distance at all; being further and not further, distant, and yet in every point. By this also here is magnitude without extension of parts; for if it be essential to magnitude to have 'partem extra partem,' that is, 'parts distinguished, and severally sited,' then where one part is, there another is not; and, therefore, the whole body of Christ is not in every part of the consecrated wafer; and yet if it be not, then it must be broken into parts, when the wafer is broken, and then it must fill his place by parts. But then it will not be possible, that a bigger body, with the conditions of a body, should be contained in a thing less than itself;—that a man may throw the house out at the windows: and if it be possible, that a magnitude should be in a point, and yet Christ's body be a magnitude, and yet in a point, then the same thing is in a point, and not in a point; extended, and not extended; great and not divisible; a quantity without dimension; something and nothing. By this doctrine, the same thing lies still and yet moves; it stays in a place and goes away from it; it removes from itself, and yet abides close by itself, and in itself, and out of itself; it is removed, and yet cannot be moved; broken, and cannot be divided; passes from east to west through a middle place, and yet stirs not; it is brought from heaven to earth, and yet is no where in the way, nor ever stirs out of heaven; it ceases to be where it was, and yet does not stir from thence, nor yet cease to be at all; it is removed at the motion of the accidents, and yet does not fall when the host falls; it changes his place, but falls not, and yet the changing of place was by falling. It supposes a body of Christ, which was made of bread, that is, 'Not born of the Virgin Mary;' it says, that Christ's body is there, without power of moving, or seeing, or hearing, or understanding; he can neither remember nor foresee, save himself from robbers or vermin, corruption or rottenness; it makes that which was raised in power, to be again sown in weakness; it gives to it the attribute of an idol, to have 'eyes and see not, ears and hear not, a nose and not to smell, feet and yet cannot walk.' It makes a thing contained bigger than the continent,—and all Christ's body to go into a part of his body; his whole head into his own mouth, if he did eat the eucharist, as it is probable he did, and certain that he might have done. These are the certain consequents of this most unreasonable doctrine, in relation to motion and quantity."

Again.

"By this doctrine, Christ's body is there where it was not before, and yet not by change of place, for it descends not;—nor by production, for it was produced before;—not by natural mutation, for Christ himself is wholly immutable, and though the bread be mutable, it can never become Christ. That which is now, and was always, begins to be; and yet it cannot begin, which was so long before. And by this doctrine is affirmed that, which even themselves judge to be simply and absolutely impossible. For if, after a thing hath his being, and during the first being, it shall have every day many new beginnings, without multiplying the beings, then the same thing is under two times at the same time; it is but a day old, and yet was six days ago, and six ages, and sixteen. The body of Christ obtains to be what it was not before, and yet it is wholly the same, without becoming what it was not. It obtains to be under the form of bread; and that which it is now and was not before, is neither perfective of his being, nor destructive, nor alterative, nor augmentative, nor diminutive, nor conservative. It is, as it were, a production, as it were a creation, as a conservation, as an adduction; that is, it is, as it were, just nothing; for it is not a creation, not a generation, not an adduction, not a conservation. It is not a conversion productive; for no new individual is produced. It is not a conversion conservative; that is a child of Bellarmine's: but it is perfect nonsense; for it is, as he says, a conversion, in which both the terms remain in the same place; that is, in which there are two things not converted, but not one that is; but it is a thing, of which there never was any example. But then if we ask what conversion it is? after a great many fancies and devices, contradicting each other, at last it is found to be 'adductive,'—and yet that 'adductive' does not change the place, but signifies a substantial change; and yet adduction is no substantial change, but accidental; and yet this change is not accidental, but adductive and substantial. 'O rem ridiculam, Cato, et jocosam!'"

The reader shall be presented with two other brief specimens from the "Ductor Dubitantium;" they are given rather because they are of convenient length, than because they are the most striking that might be selected. The following is the humorous manner in which he exposes the contradictions and absur-

dities into which the Roman canon lawyers have fallen, in their absurd extensions of the prohibited degrees in marriage.

" These laws were made by time and accidents, and were extended or contracted as it pleased the popes of Rome, who (as one observes) were, for a long time, ' iniquiores et invidi in maritos,' apt and easy to make all restraints upon marriages. If it were seasonable and fit, it were not useless to observe many instances out of the canon law to this purpose. But I forbear; that which I now observe, is, that the prohibition amongst them began with cousins-german ; then it went to the third and fourth degrees; then to seven ; then to four again ; sometimes to six, as in the synod at Cabaillon ; sometimes ' usque dum generatio agnoscitur, aut memoria retinetur,' ' as long as any memory of kindred remains ;'—and that will be very far in Wales, where they reckon eight degrees and special names of kindred after cousins-german, and then kin for ever: and truly these canonists proceed as reasonably as their principles would admit. For if cognation or consanguinity was the hinderance of marriage, wherever they could reckon that, they had some pretence to forbid marriage : but if they only forbade it upon the accounts of nature, or by the precedent of the Divine law given to Moses, they were to stop there where nature stopped, or the Divine law. But that they would not, as knowing it to be an easy thing to make laws at the charge of other men's trouble.

The reasons why the projectors of the canon law did forbid to the fourth or to the seventh degree, were as fit a cover for this dish as could be imagined. They that were for four, gave this grave reason for it: ' There are four humours in the body of a man, to which, because the four degrees of consanguinity do answer, it is proportionable to nature to forbid the marriage of cousins to the fourth degree.' Nay more; ' there are four elements ;' ergo, to which it may be added, that there are upon a man's hand four fingers and a thumb. The thumb is the ' stirps ' or common parent; and to the end of the four fingers, that is, the four generations of kindred, we ought not to marry, because ' the life of a man is but a span long.'—There are also four quarters of the world; and indeed so there are of every thing in it, if we please, and therefore abstain at least till the fourth degree be past. Others who are graver and wiser (particularly Bonaventure) observe cunningly, that ' besides the four humours of the body, there are three faculties of the soul, which being joined together, make seven, and they point out to us that men are to abstain till the seventh generation.' These reasons, such as they are, they therefore were content withal, because they had no better: yet upon the strength of these they were bold, even against the sense of almost all mankind, to forbid these degrees to marry.

The following is a striking and humorous mode of representing the impossibility, that the common people should ever understand the frivolous subtleties by which the Romish doctors vainly attempt to defend the abomination of image worship.

" And here for the common people to discern the niceties, and the intricate nothings, that their learned men have devised, to put a vizor upon this folly, is so impossible, that it will not be easy to make them understand the terms, though a learned man were by them at every cringe they make. They cannot tell whether the worship be to the image or the exemplar; which is prime and which is secondary; they cannot distinguish of ' latria,' and ' dulia,' and ' hyperdulia ;' nor can they skill in proper or improper worship, mediate and immediate, univocal, equivocal, and analogical, nor say how much is for this, and how much for that, or which is simple and which is allayed, which is absolute and which is reductive. And although men in the schools, and when they have nothing to do but to make distinctions which nobody can understand, can separate word from word, form from matter, real from notional, the shadow from the body, a dream from a vision, the skin from the flesh, and the flesh from the bone,—yet when they come to action, and clothe their theorems with a body of circumstances, he that attends the present business of devotion and desire, will not find himself able or at leisure then to distinguish curiously ; and therefore it was well said of Hesselius of Louvain ;—' Images were brought into use for the sake of the laity, and now for their sakes they are to be removed again, lest they give Divine worship to the image, or fall into the heresy of the Anthropomorphites :' (he might have added,) ' or lest by worshipping God by an image, they commit the sin of superstition and idolatry, breaking the second commandment.' For the same folly, which in the heathens, was reproved by the primitive christians, the same is done now-a-days, by christians to their images. I shall conclude this with a story out of an Italian, who wrote commentaries of the affairs of India :—When the poor barbarians of Nova Hispania, in the kingdom of Mexico, had, one day, of a sudden found their idols taken down and broken, they sent four principal persons of their country to Alphonso Zuasus, the licentiate, who had commanded it; they complaining of the injury, supposed also, and told him they believed it to be done without his consent and knowledge, as knowing that christians had idols and images of their own, whom they valued, and adored, and worshipped ; and looking up, and espying the image of St. Sebastian, whom Alfonsus had in great veneration, hanging by his bed-side, they pointed at him with their finger, saying, the same regard which he had to the image of St. Sebastian, the same they had to theirs. The governor being troubled with this quick and not barbarous discourse, turned him about a little, and at last told them, that the christians did not worship images for their own sakes, but as they represented holy persons dwelling in heavenly places; and, to demonstrate that, took down the image of St. Sebastian, and broke it in pieces. They replied that it was just so with them ; and that they were not so stupid to worship the images for their own regards, but as they represented the sun and moon, and all the lights of heaven. Alfonsus being yet more troubled, was forced to change the state of the question, by saying that the object was differing, though the manner was not ; that the christians did, by their images, pass honour to the great Creator of the world; but they did it to creatures, to evil spirits, and false gods : which was indeed very true, but it was a removing the question from the second commandment to the first. For, although, in relation to the first, the heathens have the worst of it; yet as to the second, these christians and the poor Indians were equal: and the wit of man cannot tell how they differ."

It is observable, however, that the *wit* of Jeremy Taylor is almost always tempered by good-nature, and an all-pervading spirit of charity. Biting sarcasm or severe satire is rarely found in his writings. His wit is like the harmless lightning which often plays in the summer-evening sky; not that which blasts and scathes as well as shines.

Of the immeasurable *learning* of Jeremy Taylor, incidental mention has been already made when estimating the influence which, in conjunction with other causes, it exerted on his powers of reasoning and imagination. And the wonder is that that influence should not have been far greater; that his mind should have retained so large a measure of its native elasticity as it did, under such enormous masses of erudition. Half the same quantity of learning would have suffocated the intellect of most men. Nay, the mere time expended in its acquisition would have left little leisure to the generality of mankind for the independent exercise of their own faculties. It is no small proof of the astonishing energy and power of Taylor's mind, that he should have been able to breathe and move at all under such corpulence of learning. The feats he performs under such circumstances reminds one of the achievements of the knights of chivalry, whose enormous weapons and massive armour would seem, at first sight, altogether unmanageable to men of merely mortal mould.

But while we may justly wonder that he had strength to wield such a mass of learning with any degree of facility, we can be as little surprised that even *he* should often be overborne by it. In the education and discipline of intellect, nothing is of more importance than to take care that the quantity of aliment shall be duly proportioned to the powers of digestion, and that the latter shall be strengthened as the former is increased. In this way, and in this only, can intellectual repletion be guarded against; and the mind, not merely provided with proper materials to operate upon, but rendered capable of using them. To digest, to arrange, to consolidate our knowledge, to render it fit for use, and to fit the mind for using it, demand as much time as the accumulation of knowledge; and more labour.

The ill effects which Jeremy Taylor's erudition often produced, have been already necessarily adverted to in a previous part of this Essay. In the first place, the mere accumulation of it left not sufficient time for the full development of his powers of reasoning, or for the adequate cultivation of his taste, or for systematically digesting his vast acquisitions. In addition to all this, it induced, in many instances, an excessive reverence for antiquity and precedent. It led him to acquiesce in many arguments supplied by his learning, which the independent and sober exercise of his own judgment would have rejected. It very frequently led to a childishly credulous assent to the merest fables, as grave matter of fact;* and what was worse than all, it led to an excessive copiousness of diction, and the introduction of an immensity of extraneous matter in most of his trains of reasoning. In a word, as already stated, there was but one faculty of his mind, that completely defied its influence;—his imagination. This existed in such plenitude and vigour, that even erudition like his could not bury it; it merely gathered fresh nourishment from the soil, struck its roots the wider and the deeper, and shot out branches in more luxuriant vigour.

Almost every kind of learning appears to have been cultivated by Jeremy Taylor, with nearly equal assiduity, if we may judge by the utterly worthless kind of books he often quotes. The strange want of taste and discrimination, which has so frequently been stated as the distinguishing peculiarity of his character, seems to have marked him here also. His appetite for knowledge was voracious; and like other voracious appetites, it was far from fastidious. It was a sort of intellectual *bulimia;* nothing came amiss to it; luxuries and carrion, sumptuous food and broken victuals, classical delicacies and the coarsest fare of the cloister and the schools, were all devoured with nearly equal eagerness, and digested apparently with nearly equal ease. He was not only familiarly acquainted with the whole range of classical literature—poets, orators, historians, and philosophers; with the civil and ecclesiastical history of all ages and nations; with all the principal fathers both of the Eastern and Western churches, and with the voluminous writings of the schoolmen, but he appears to have read a vast number of books, and fragments of books, on all sorts of subjects,—and more especially of martyrology, and monkish legends; while he had devoured an immensity of books of Romish casuistry and devotion. In addition to all this, he was very extensively versed in the philosophers

* This remark may be illustrated by the following observations of Bishop Heber. "Taylor's appetite for the marvellous may seem to have been sufficiently indiscriminate, when, in the same sentence, he refers, without the least apparent hesitation, to two such monstrous stories as those of the Egyptian Thebes, with its houses of alabaster, spotted with gold, and the city of Quinsay, with fourscore millions of inhabitants. It seems, however, to have been the common practice of writers in his time to assume as facts, for the purposes of argument, any thing which suited their turn, and for which a single authority could be given. I know scarcely any instance in which they have appeared to distinguish between the weight of different testimonies, or to make any difference in their manner of citing circumstances alleged by writers of different ages. If a fact were found recorded in any ancient historian, they received it without question, how small soever the means of acquiring information which that historian may have possessed, or however great the internal evidence of his credulity or mendacity." These observations are in the main correct, yet it can hardly be denied that Taylor possessed a more easy faith than most of his contemporaries.

of the day, such as they were, both physical and metaphysical. It is true, circumstances led him to cultivate some branches of learning more sedulously than others; yet to judge by the countless books he quotes on all subjects, one would be almost led to imagine that such determination of his taste was accidental. A vast number of the books he quotes are, it may be safely said, totally unknown, even by name, to the vast majority of *well-informed* modern readers.

And as few men have possessed such a measure of curious and various learning, so none assuredly, even of his age, prevalent as the fashion then was of advertising one's learning in "marginal stuffings," as Milton terms them, made a more prodigal display of it. In some of his pages there cannot be much less than a score of quotations, or learned allusions. This has often subjected him to the charge of pedantry; and if by pedantry be meant merely an unnecessary and absurd display of learning, then he is, no doubt, pedantic enough; but if, as is generally the case, it be meant to imply affectation or ostentatious vanity, then the charge can hardly be admitted to be true. Neither need his defence be rested simply on the universal custom of his age; for it must be granted that he far outsteps the license even of that wild age; but on this consideration,—that if ever there was a mind simple and unsophisticated, it was that of Jeremy Taylor. His lavish display of his learning arose purely from habit, and it may be added, from his forgetting,—a forgetfulness into which learned men are but too apt to fall,—that others were not quite so learned as himself.

Nothing, it may be admitted, can be more ludicrous than the exhibition which his erudition frequently makes; especially in his sermons, and his practical works. In such works his plain hearers and his plain readers may well be surprised to find him speaking of hard students "being as mute as the Seriphian frogs;" or of "clear and brisk discourse being as refreshing as the air of Campanian wines;" or of its being "necessary to some men to have garments made of the Calabrian fleece, and stained with the blood of the *murex;*" or "of the wrath of Susa," or of "the garments stained with the Tyrian fish;" or of the "tender lard of the Apulian swine." Yet such phrases as these are of perpetual occurrence.*

Such is the activity of the suggesting faculty, that the most common-place sentiment, the most trivial truism, is often accompanied by a body-guard of several parallel passages. Points which no man ever thought of disputing, Jeremy Taylor hardly thinks safe, except under the protection of half a dozen learned authorities.

In quotation for the mere purpose of *illustration,* he is often inaccurate; either fixing the citation on a wrong author, or completely altering the meaning of the passage. Some curious instances of this are given by Mr. Pitman in the late edition of his works, which we quote for the amusement of the reader.

"Bishop Taylor's very lax mode of referring to classical authors is specified, more than once, in the latter volumes of this edition. To the instances there adduced, and to others which the classical reader will discover, may be added the two following: 1. Arrian, ridiculing those who affect the stiff appearance and gait of philosophers, contemptuously asks, 'Why do you strut about, as if you had swallowed a *spit*?' Τί οὖν ἡμῖν ὀβελίσκον καταπιὼν περιπατεῖς; which Bishop Taylor (vol. v. p. 518) renders, 'We walk by the *obelisk*, and meditate in piazzas.'—2. 'Some nations used to *eat* the bodies of their friends (vol. iv. p. 567):' Bishop Taylor thus assigns to the *relations* the office, which Cicero (to whom he alludes) describes as performed by *dogs*. (Tusc. Q. i. 45.)"

This occasional inaccuracy, however, is only seen where he quotes merely for purposes of illustration. In quotations which seriously affect his argument, he is generally exceedingly careful and accurate. Some singular proofs of this may be seen in the "Second Part" of his "Dissuasive from Popery." He there shows his great superiority to his Romish antagonists, in intimate knowledge of the fathers and of ecclesiastical antiquity generally.

In these parts of his writings, he affords evidence that his learning was throughout genuine and solid; that he was no index hunter, as were many of the pedants of his day; many of whom, there is reason to believe, by their ingenious artifices, frequently sustained a considerable reputation for learning with a very small outlay of diligence. This praise is justified by the fact that he has adduced many citations, of the very existence of which his adversaries were utterly ignorant; several of which they denied were to be found in the authors to whom he imputed them; while some few they more than insinuated that he had manufactured for the occasion, "judging of others," as he tells us, "by the known practices of their own party." These quotations, he shows, were what they purported to be, and were to be found in the most correct editions of the works to which they were referred, though often dragged from the depths of such inaccessible recesses, and brought from sources so remote, that a mind less excursive and indefatigable than his own, had little

* Such allusions are perhaps most abundant in the Sermons on the "House of Feasting;" the "Apples of Sodom;" and the "Marriage Ring;" while long quotations and scraps of Greek and Latin are in every page.

chance of finding them. As many of these passages were of the last importance in this controversy, and were, for *that very reason*, struck out of the expurgated indices of the Romish church, and sometimes out of the text of those mutilated editions which that church had put forth, nothing but the profoundest learning could have enabled him to find them. To obtain some of his testimonies, he *must*, in many cases, have disembowelled the contents of many a bulky folio.

So stuffed is Jeremy Taylor's page sometimes with quotations from ancient authors,—poets, historians, philosophers, fathers, schoolmen, that it is impossible to find a single smooth, unbroken sentence. Pursued to this extent, and often for such unimportant purposes, the frequency of quotation, in many places, becomes a positive nuisance. Awkward formalities of quotation and strange names are perpetually interrupting the quiet course of thought, which flowing languidly over pages bestrewed with a thousand fragments of ancient erudition, remind one of those American rivers, whose sluggish waters it is said are half choked with the decaying foliage of unnumbered autumns.

Indeed such was Jeremy Taylor's familiarity with ancient literature, so deeply had it imbued his mind and all his habits of thought and expression, that he might be almost said to have lived in antiquity. Of the effect this circumstance had on his style and phraseology, there will be a better opportunity of speaking presently, when we come to make a remark or two on those subjects. It may be observed here, however, that his intimate and profound acquaintance with ancient learning, had an influence as striking in his habits of thought, as on his style. Not only is it true, as Bishop Heber remarks, that Taylor often contents himself with a mere allusion to some obscure fact or opinion, with which he takes it for granted his reader is as well acquainted as himself; and not only does he use words of foreign *derivation* in their foreign *sense*, and coins numberless new ones fresh from the Latin language, but he will often formally state and refute, in the midst of reasonings of great and universal importance, some absurd and long since entombed heresy, which no man has probably embraced for centuries; or some fantastic fable of the Jewish Rabbins; or some grave folly he has met with in his books of saintly legends; and then, after spending half a page on it, he will judiciously declare it unworthy of attention.* So absurdly do these things sometimes break in on the continuity of thought,—more especially where they ought to have been most carefully kept out, we mean in his sermons,—that, with a full admission of the eccentricity of his mind, and with a deep persuasion of the inequality with which it exerted itself, the reader can hardly help supposing that he often forgot that the antiquated errors he so gravely explodes, were now perfectly innocuous; and that the follies against which he inveighs, were nothing but phantoms which his own active imagination had evoked from the dead. The strenuousness with which he now and then contends against these dim shades of long departed heresies, reminds one of the inimitable description of the country parson, in the "Sketch Book," to whom, "shut up among worm-eaten tomes in the retirement of his antiquated study, the pages of old times were as the gazettes of the day."

The powers of acquisition with which Jeremy Taylor was gifted, must have been such as have fallen to very few men. His memory must have been almost preternaturally retentive and vigorous. Yet even in this respect, too, he displays the same strange and capricious irregularity, of which there has already been such frequent occasion to speak. While it was capable of tenaciously retaining such a vast accumulation of multifarious and curious learning, much of it from authors whose very names, and from works the very titles of which, would have been an insupportable burden to many minds, it is not uncommon to find him unaccountably oblivious in matters of the simplest nature: for instance, he sometimes makes the most glaring mistakes in the facts of scripture history, a book with every part of which Jeremy Taylor in general shows himself most laudably acquainted. Thus in one instance, noticed by Bishop Heber, he says, "We should fight as Gideon did with three hundred hardy brave fellows, that would stand against all violence, rather than to make a noise with rams' horns and *broken pitchers* like the men at the siege of Jericho!" —In another place we find him representing Joseph as having been sold into the hands of the merchants of *Amalek*, instead of Midian.

The style of Jeremy Taylor now demands a few observations. Of Jeremy Taylor (as of many of the celebrated writers of the seventeenth century) it may be observed, there is often a striking disparity between the *materials* of his style and its structure. As to the former, his vocabulary possessed all the compass, the variety, the richness, which might be expected from an imagination so inventive and splendid, united to erudition so extensive and profound; while, at the same time, the structure of the sentences is often exceed-

* See some remarkable specimens of this in the *third part* of the solemn sermon on "Christ's Advent to Judgment," and in his "Life of Christ," *passim*.

ingly rugged, and deficient in harmony. There are, it is true, innumerable passages which are even in these respects faultless; but to this topic we shall revert again when we have made a few remarks on the separate elements of his style.

Whatever deficiencies may be found in the writers of that age, in point of harmony and polish, it is to them we must, after all, look for the real opulence and power of the English language. They made it what it is; they first accumulated that wealth which has rendered it so copious. In the rich vein of their writings, we must look for that which it was left to succeeding ages to purify and refine, and to work up into all that is rare and beautiful in composition. They were the founders of the family; they accumulated our patrimony; they left us our rich inheritance. So long as a language is unsettled, so long, of course, it will invite constant accession, and afford the largest facilities for it; and it *will be* unsettled so long as a nation is very rapidly advancing in knowledge and intelligence; it must, therefore, receive accessions adequate to the new exigencies of thought. The prohibitory laws of criticism against innovations in language, (always of very limited authority and influence,) must, like all other prohibitory laws, be totally ineffectual, till the language has resources within itself at least sufficient to provide for the *necessities* of thought, and in some measure to satisfy luxury too. The application of the severer canons of criticism and taste presuppose a language, not only formed, but settled, and to a considerable extent copious; just as grammar presupposes a language of some kind or other.

The first thing intellect demands is adequate expression, and if the poverty of a language will not supply it, men will seek it from foreign sources. If there are no manufactures of home growth, they will import artificial textures from abroad. They justly think that the most outlandish garb is better than nakedness, and that, though we may tarry for polish and elegance, our necessities must be supplied at once. Thus, till a language is at least equal to all the more pressing exigencies of thought, writers will defy all the restraints of a minute and superficial criticism. Such criticism ought not to prevail, even if it were possible; and, indeed, it is not possible it should even if it ought.

Thus, whenever the writers of the seventeenth century—that memorable era in which the human mind suddenly outgrew the scantiness of language, and knowledge increased with a rapidity altogether unprecedented—found terms which more exactly expressed their meaning, or were more energetic, impressive, or brilliant than those which the as yet straitened vocabulary of their own tongue supplied, they did not hesitate instantly to appropriate and anglicise them; often, it is true, with such slight alterations and so little regard to the analogies of the language into which they were naturalized, that the words themselves indicated, in their very appearance, their foreign origin.

So extensive were these importations, that there are comparatively few terms of much force or beauty that are not to be found in some rough shape or other in the works of writers of the first half of the seventeenth century. The great task of succeeding ages has not been to accumulate; there was abundance of unwrought metal already in their possession; it was to purify, to polish; to reject the ore that would not pay for the refining labours of the furnace, and to mould the terms they reserved and consecrated to perpetual use, into greater harmony with the general analogies of the language; to file off asperities, to abolish awkward terminations and inflections, superfluous syllables and every species of redundance, and to impress on the whole language greater grace and elegance, ease and beauty. It is to the elder writers, however, we must look, as the great benefactors of the language.

Of this license of innovation, as might be suspected from one so thoroughly tinctured with ancient learning as was Jeremy Taylor, he availed himself to the utmost; so much so, indeed, that not only are many words of his manufacture now totally obsolete, but in all probability were never used except by himself, and even then only once. The simple fact is, his mind was so imbued with classical and ancient literature, that, as we have already stated, he might be almost said to *think* in a foreign language as much as in his own, and consequently, while he has adopted many terms as forcible and beautiful as they were new, he has indulged in this license of innovation far beyond the demands of necessity. The following, among many others, which we have noticed in perusing his works, we cite in illustration of the above remarks.* "Funest" for "sad;" "effigiate" for "conform;" "respersed" for "scattered;" "deturpated" for "deformed;" "deordination" for "confusion;" "clancularly" for "secretly;" "rate" for "ratified;" "ferority" for "fierceness;" "correption"† for "rebuke;" "immorigerous" for "disobedient;" "flexures"‡

* Perhaps there is hardly any writer, except Sir Thomas Brown, who has indulged in this practice to an equal extent.

† "Faith in Christ—hope of eternal life—fraternal *correption*."

‡ "Prudent and wise *flexures*."

in the sense of "compliances;" "intenerate" * for "render soft." These instances might easily be multiplied.

But his familiarity with Greek and Latin leads him, in numberless cases, beyond this; he not only uses foreign words before unknown to the language, merely giving them an *anglicised* form and termination, but he very frequently uses words of foreign derivation, already appropriated to a different meaning, in their original or foreign sense. The following are a few specimens:—"Immured" † as an active verb for "encompassed;" "remarked" for "rendered remarkable;" ‡ "extant" in the sense of "standing out;" § "insolent" for "unusual;" ‖ "irritation" for "making void;" ¶ "contrition" for a "bruise." ** Many more such instances might be adduced if it were necessary, but these specimens, it is presumed, will be sufficient.

To the above may be added one which Bishop Heber has noted, and which has a most ludicrous air; —"excellent" for "surpassing." In this sense of the word, Taylor in one place speaks of an "*excellent* pain."

To the same cause—his being so thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the classic writers as to adopt unconsciously their habits of thoughts and their style of expression—are to be attributed many of the bold and unusual combinations of phrase we so often meet with in his writings; belonging rather to the idioms and laws of other languages than of that in which he wrote; some of them, indeed, we should expect to find only in the choruses of the Greek tragedians, and they are scarcely to be justified any where else. Such, for instance, is the expression, that "slander, like an earwig, creeps into the ear, and makes a *diseased noise* and a *scandalous murmur*."

Amongst these peculiarities of style may be also mentioned Jeremy Taylor's frequent use of the abstract and the concrete, or of bold metaphorical phrases and sober general terms within the same clause, as well as his frequently qualifying his substantives not by simple adjectives, but by the use of other substantives, expressing the force of them in the abstract. The following instances will convey a slight idea of our meaning:—"Prevents the rivulet from swelling *into rivers and a vastness;*" "it makes a fraction of the species by *incrassation and a shadow;*" "it is confined into a *prison of darkness and a cloud;*" "is changed into the *scorchings and little images* of hell;" "it is just in God to seal the *cisterns and little emanations* of the creatures from thee;" "being thrown from his *pride and attempt* of passing towards the seat of the stars." But such expressions as these might be multiplied without end. We are aware that in presenting them in this dislocated form, we are hardly doing Taylor justice. Seen in their connexion, and rendered familiar by frequent perusal of the writings of this great man, they often strike the mind as exceedingly beautiful and expressive.

Another peculiarity of Jeremy Taylor's style which may be noticed, is the liberty which he takes in forming plurals. Many of the writers of his day used, it is true, considerable latitude; yet few went his length. "Strengths," "dissolutions," "prudencies," "aversenesses," are such as few would have thought themselves justified in employing.

In this enumeration of Jeremy Taylor's more striking idiomatical peculiarities, it would be unpardonable not to mention his very frequent use of the comparative degree without the *forms* of comparison. This form is often exceedingly striking; as in the expression, "so when a Libyan tiger drawn from his *wilder* foragings." Such expressions are of perpetual occurrence.

These peculiarities, taken together, make up much of what are usually called Jeremy Taylor's extravagances of style, and which are so often imputed to the eccentricities of his ungovernable imagination. This, when the peculiarities are merely those of style and expression, appears to us erroneous. Such peculiarities, in by far the greater number of instances, are rather to be imputed to his having so completely imbibed the manner and air of his classical models. The idiom is often purely Greek and Latin, not English. Now, however repulsive such peculiarities may justly be, viewed simply in relation to the laws of that language in which Jeremy Taylor wrote, they are by no means altogether displeasing to one

* "*Intenerate* the stubborn pavement."

† "And when God had given himself a name, and *immured* it with dread and reverence."

‡ "With which God hath *remarked* your family and person."

§ "All sorts of representations, (speaking of the prohibition of images of God,) flat or *extant*, painted or carved."

‖ "But these (speaking of certain rare instances) are *insolent* examples."

¶ "But they may not violate them by *irritation*."

** The use of this word is, in one instance, exceedingly ludicrous: "For so serpents, as they are curious to preserve their heads from *contrition* or a bruise."

who has formed a strong taste for classical literature. In the eyes of such a man, the style of Jeremy Taylor

"Is rich with barbaric pearls and gold;"

and though he would be sorry to see such license taken by writers in general, he is willing to extend his indulgence to this remarkable genius, the eccentricity of whose thoughts seems to harmonize with the fantastic garb in which he has dressed them; not to say that this transfusion of the idiom of the Greek and Latin into our own language, serves to give the enthusiast in the classics a more vivid idea and a clearer perception of the peculiarities he has so often admired in the great writers of antiquity.

Though there is no part of our copious language of which Jeremy Taylor was not master, yet his profound and intimate acquaintance with the learned languages, leaves little room for surprise that his style should be characterized by a much larger infusion of words of Greek and Latin origin than of Saxon. There is a striking difference, in this respect, between him and an equally celebrated contemporary; of one, who though equally imbued with a love of classical literature, possessed, at the same time, unrivalled command over our expressive vernacular. The fact is, that Milton was far better acquainted than Jeremy Taylor with the early English literature,—with such writers as Chaucer, Spencer, and Shakspeare.

Though the style of Jeremy Taylor is characterized by so large an infusion of classical idioms, it is a fact that the *structure* of his sentences is far less Latinistic and involved than that of most of the great writers of his own or of a preceding age; far less so than that of Bacon or Hooker, Milton or Barrow. Indeed it may be generally affirmed that they are constructed in a very simple manner, and in a great majority of instances have in this respect nothing to offend the ear even of the most fastidious modern reader. Though his sentences are often very long, yet each clause has a distinct meaning independent of the rest, and is joined to the others by the simplest connectives. His favourite, and by far most common, mode is to connect them by the copulative conjunction, "and." Take the following brief specimen out of a vast number which might be easily collected from his writings.

"But when christian religion was planted, and had taken root, and had filled all lands, then all the nature of things, the whole creation, became servant to the kingdom of grace; and the head of the religion is also the head of the creatures, and ministers all the things of the world in order to the Spirit of grace: and now 'angels are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for the good of them that fear the Lord;' and all the violences of men, and things of nature and choice, are forced into subjection and lowest ministries, and to co-operate, as with an united design, to verify all the promises of the gospel, and to secure and advantage all the children of the kingdom: and now he that is made poor by chance or persecution, is made rich by religion; and he that hath nothing, yet possesses all things: and sorrow itself is the greatest comfort, not only because it ministers to virtue, but because itself is one, as in the case of repentance; and death ministers to life, and bondage is freedom, and loss is gain, and our enemies are our friends, and every thing turns into religion, and religion turns into felicity and all manner of advantages. But that I may not need to enumerate any more particulars in this observation, certain it is, that angels of light and darkness, all the influences of heaven, and the fruits and productions of the earth, the stars and the elements, the secret things that lie in the bowels of the sea and the entrails of the earth, the single effects of all efficients, and the conjunction of all causes, all events foreseen and all rare contingencies, every thing of chance, and every thing of choice, is so much a servant to him whose greatest desire, and great interest is, by all means, to save our souls, that we are thereby made sure, that all the whole creation shall be made to bend, in all the flexures of its nature and accidents, that it may minister to religion, to the good of the catholic church, and every person within its bosom, who are the body of him that rules over all the world, and commands them as he chooses."

In this simple structure of sentences, as well as in many other respects, Jeremy Taylor's style remarkably resembles that of Chrysostom. Nor were these the only or the most important points in which these wonderful men were like each other.

We remark that Jeremy Taylor's frequent use of archaisms and of classical idiom impairs scarcely at all the simply English *structure* of his style. Of this it would be easy to accumulate instances. The following from his beautiful sermon, entitled "The Mercy of the Divine Judgment, or God's Method of curing Sinners," (as well as many of the extracts which have been already made, may serve) to illustrate these observations. The passage is as musical, and as full of rhythm, as the smoothest that could be selected from the pages of the most accomplished modern writer.

"At first we cannot serve God but by passions and doing violence to all our wilder inclinations, and suffering the violence of tyrants and unjust persons: the second days of virtue are pleasant and easy in the midst of all the appendant labours. But when the christian's last pit is digged, when he is descended to his grave, and hath finished his state of sorrows and suffering; then God opens the river of abundance, the rivers of life and never-ceasing felicities. And this is that which God promised to his people: 'I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.' So much as moments are exceeded by eternity, and the sighing of a man by the joys of an angel, and a salutary frown by the light of God's countenance, a few groans by the infinite and eternal hallelujahs; so much

are the sorrows of the godly to be undervalued in respect of what is deposited for them in the treasures of eternity. Their sorrows can die, but so cannot their joys. And if the blessed martyrs and confessors were asked concerning their past sufferings and their present rest, and the joys of their certain expectation, you should hear them glory in nothing but in the mercies of God, and 'in the cross of the Lord Jesus.' Every chain is a ray of light, and every prison is a palace, and every loss is the purchase of a kingdom, and every affront in the cause of God is an eternal honour, and every day of sorrow is a thousand years of comfort, multiplied with a never-ceasing numeration; days without night, joys without sorrow, sanctity without sin, charity without stain, possession without fear, society without envying, communication of joys without lessening: and they shall dwell in a blessed country, where an enemy never entered, and from whence a friend never went away."

As a preacher it may be safely affirmed, that Jeremy Taylor's genius was too poetical to permit him to obtain the very highest excellence. Great reputation it is true he could not but obtain; unbounded admiration and applause would necessarily wait on eloquence so sublime as his. Still if the severe principles of rhetoric be applicable at all to the pulpit, as they undoubtedly are,—if eloquence *there*, as in the senate or at the bar, be considered as the great instrument of *conviction* and *persuasion*, then there can hardly be a doubt, that whatever the rank Jeremy Taylor is fairly entitled to hold, it is less than that of some other celebrated preachers. Regarded in this point of view, he was far too *imaginative*.

It will be observed that we are not now speaking of the mere vices of style or manner, superinduced by circumstances or education; vices which were not so much his own, as those of the age in which he lived, and from which, therefore, scarcely any one was free. We are not speaking of the quaint conceits, the frivolous distinctions, the misapplied learning, the needless subdivisions, the quantities of learned quotation, with which his sermons abound; we are speaking of his genius for oratory *abstractedly*, and in relation to its original structure and native tendencies. Thus regarded, the excess of the poetical temperament is at once apparent. He delights in luxuriant description and ample illustration *for their own sake;* he never thinks of employing his imagination, as the orator always should, merely within the limits most likely to subserve the great practical purpose of oratory. And what is that object? It is not, like that of poetry, to please, to amuse, or even to instruct, alone; nor indeed at all, except in subordination to a higher end: its object is to convince and persuade, and to convince for the very purpose of persuasion. The eloquence of the orator is always practical; and has ever an important practical result in view. It follows from this, that the consummate orator will employ all the faculties of his mind, strictly with reference to this end; every thing in the shape of argument or of illustration, will be sternly subordinated to it. If this be the case, the imagination, like every other faculty, will of course be subjected to the same discipline and control, and will never be permitted to transgress those limits within which alone it can conduce to the proposed end. And if it be thus regulated, if it be thus constantly rendered subservient to ends higher than those of delight and pleasure, it will be always employed with moderation. Let us judge of this matter by those unerring practical maxims which nature inspires, and which we instinctively adopt in common life. When *really* intent on gaining some important object, when *really* under the influence of impassioned feeling, though the mind will often give utterance to deep emotion by figurative, aye, the most figurative language, it will never seek expression in far-fetched, ingenious, or prolonged similitudes. It is not in nature to do so. Such conduct would argue a coolness, a premeditation, a self-possession of mind, totally at variance with intense emotion, and would in general inevitably give the lie to every pretension to it. The imagination, therefore, so far as employed at all, will be employed to render argument more perspicuous or striking by appropriate illustration, and, within certain just limits, even to adorn it; that is, where the pleasure it imparts may be made directly subservient to the great purpose of persuasion: but even then the true orator will let it appear that it is subsidiary, and not principal; that it is his servant, not his master. When it flashes, it will flash like the lightning, to consume, and not to play in the heavens like the beautiful meteors of a northern sky. Its exhibition, therefore, will be uniformly characterized far more by force than by beauty, by energy than by elegance; and will be restrained within the compressed forms of metaphor, never permitted to expand into the luxuriance of prolonged or laboured simile.

The success of the few who have obtained the highest rank as orators, and we may also add the comparative failure of the many, who have, notwithstanding, been justly accounted, in a subordinate sense, very eloquent, go to prove that the chief elements of the most effective eloquence, that is, of the eloquence which is most likely to *persuade*, are—vigorous reasoning, animated by intense passion, and that a profuse employment of the imagination is absolutely unfriendly to the orator's real object. Such is the character of that eloquence, which, of all that has been uttered, is alone entitled to be denominated *perfect;*—we mean that of Demosthenes. It may be granted, indeed, that the exuberance of an excessive imagination

will often procure for the orator more admiration and more enthusiastic demonstrations of applause, than the most successful efforts of a more practical eloquence, and consequently render a speaker in one sense more *popular*. But then it is to be considered that so far as the *professed* end of the orator is concerned,—the actual persuasion of his audience to a certain course of conduct,—all this is a very questionable test of his skill. This loud applause of his rhetorical qualities may be utterly worthless, nay in many instances absolutely detrimental; for it not unfrequently happens that while they have been admiring *him*, they are farther than ever from being suitably impressed with the truth and importance of the sentiments he has been inculcating, simply because their exclusive admiration of the *speaker* has had direct tendency to withdraw their attention from his subject. They have been attending a *spectacle;* they expected, they sought their end in the delight they should enjoy there: it will be admitted they have been very well amused; but it is now all over, and they are retiring to their homes, and to the serious business of life, and—as when retiring from the theatre—their first object is to forget what they have heard.

There may be, it is true, much dispute as to what constitutes an excessive use of the imagination in the orator; it may be justly contended that much will depend on circumstances; on the character of the times, on the habits of the audience, on certain intellectual peculiarities of the speaker. All this may be admitted without impairing the general truth of the preceding remarks; and general truth is all that is here contended for. Accordingly, it may be said, that whenever the prevailing feeling of an auditor, *at the time* he is listening to a speaker, would give utterance to itself in such words as these; "that is fine," "that is a beautiful illustration," "that is an ingenious thought," "that is a brilliant expression," there, however the auditor may admire the *man*, the *orator* has failed of his object; the audience are *really* doing homage to the speaker's powers only when they feel that what he is uttering is important truth, and are silently resolving to act upon it. An intense and overpowering interest in the subject, and a subsequent conduct influenced by what they have heard, or, at all events, resolutions that they *will* adopt such conduct,—these form the most conclusive test of the orator's eloquence. Success is his highest praise.

Not that the orator need fear that, if successful after this uninviting fashion, he will be defrauded of his fame, even though the audience, at the time he is addressing them, may not have a thought to waste on him. Yet, alas! it is this fear which in so many instances is the secret of false and ambitious eloquence; of an injudicious, and, if the orator be a preacher, the criminal attempt to employ to an undue extent those qualities, which shall fix admiration immediately on the speaker. To act thus is to abandon the substance to grasp at a shadow.—But though the orator need not fear lest he should be defrauded of his fame, it will not flow in upon him *at the very moment* of his success; it is a reversionary possession: it is when he has effected his object, when the excitement of his audience has subsided, when they have been induced to act, or at least have *resolved* to act as he would have them, it is then, by making his eloquence the subject of distinct reflection or analysis, it is then that his powers will be felt and his merits appreciated.

The great principle which should regulate every orator in the general management of his powers, is, as we have already observed, best illustrated by the manner of men in ordinary life, when, little thinking that they are sustaining the character or performing the office of *orators*, they are sincerely and deeply anxious to persuade their neighbour to some important course of conduct; to perform some urgent duty, or confer some much needed benefit. The man, it is true, may want many of the qualifications of which undoubtedly no public speaker should be destitute; he may want education, copiousness of language, and correctness of style. Still, how does he unconsciously exemplify, in his conduct, all the great principles which ought to actuate the orator,—and which did actuate Demosthenes! How does he select just those arguments which in his opinion will be likely to prevail, and abstain from all of a questionable, or even useless character! With what impassioned earnestness, with what simplicity,—the infallible evidence of sincerity,—does he express them! If, as is likely when under the influence of intense emotion, he expresses himself figuratively, how few, how condensed such expressions are! All must have had opportunities of seeing *practical* illustrations, more or less striking, of these remarks.

But suppose all this reversed; suppose the conduct either of the too philosophical, or of the too imaginative orator, (who it must be recollected, profess to have precisely the same objects in view, only on a larger scale,) should be adopted in private life. If, for instance, a man, who wished to obtain an important benefit from another, instead of taking for granted that the same passions and sympathies, the same principles of action, dwelt in the bosom of his neighbour as in his own; instead of selecting those practical arguments which suggest themselves from the relations in which the parties stood to one another,

should enter into certain lengthened, refined, elaborate, and it may be metaphysical arguments,* to prove that benevolence is a duty; and after having thus proved what the man never doubted, (who in fact was only in doubt as to whether in this particular case he was called to exercise benevolence or not,) he should treat him to some elaborate disquisition on the sublimity of those principles he inculcates; and what is at least as bad as all the rest, express the whole of this edifying harangue, in the language of a florid and extravagant rhetoric, or in far-fetched, laboured, and fantastic imagery. What should we say? To say that the party addressed would listen to the whole with contemptuous coolness, and be possessed with a most absolute persuasion that the idle talker could have no practical object in view whatever, and cared not whether he obtained the benefit he sought or not,—to say that the speaker would infallibly fail of his object, and that he deserved to fail,—would be the least. We should pronounce him the most egregious fool imaginable. And yet he is not a greater,—not so great, if folly on a larger scale be greater folly,—as the orator who commits the very same errors in addressing a public audience.

It is not asserted, indeed, that so complete a departure from the principles of practical rhetoric, as the above, is often seen in a public speaker; or that even if there ever were such, it could, under such different circumstances, be equally glaring. That there are infinitely varied *degrees* within which such faults may display themselves, does not affect the general principles here laid down. In proportion as such faults exist, however, they must necessarily exert a pernicious influence, and in that proportion will they defeat the avowed and, indeed, the only *worthy* object of the orator.

Neither is it meant that nothing more is demanded of an orator than of any man in private life who endeavours *to persuade*. Far from it. The difference of the circumstances will, no doubt, dictate a proportionable difference of conduct; and the great complexity of intellectual effort, which efficient public speaking implies, requires unquestionably the highest order of genius. Still the general principles, somewhat modified, are in both cases the same. The most effective eloquence is always compounded of the same great elements, although they may be conjoined in very different proportions.

Whether, indeed, the peculiarities which distinguish the style of Demosthenes could ever be introduced into the eloquence of the pulpit, to the same extent as into that of the senate or the bar; or, if at all, to what precise extent they could be introduced, are questions which it is not necessary to discuss here. At the same time the writer cannot conceal his opinion that they might be adopted much further, not only than they ever have been,—for as yet they have scarcely been recognised at all,—but to a much greater extent than would at first sight probably be thought practicable.

It must be admitted, indeed, that since the eloquence of the pulpit has so much to do with the general principles of human character and conduct, and with topics which, though abstractedly of overpowering magnitude and sublimity, yet relate to the future and invisible world, far more of general reasoning and of imaginative description are pardonable in this than in any other species of eloquence. We concede, also, that the eloquence of the pulpit is in a great measure didactic; and, moreover, that it affords little scope for that intense emotion, those transports of passion, (at least of the more powerful kinds of passion,) which so generally accompany successful eloquence on merely secular topics. The strongest feelings of which it admits have little in common with those turbulent and tumultuous emotions in which, as immediately prompting to energetic action, human nature most delights, and the mere display of which tends to excite a sympathy so much more profound than the exhibition of those gentle and subdued feelings, which must ever reign in the bosom of the minister of Christ.

All these abatements, however, by no means imply that the eloquence of the pulpit is something totally and essentially different from eloquence of any other kind. They only indicate the modifications and limitations under which the same general principles must be applied. As long as it is admitted that the object of the christian orator is to convince and to persuade, and to convince that he *may* persuade—and that, moreover, to the most important conduct; as long as that nature on which he is instrumentally to operate is essentially the same; and as long as the same great conditions of persuasion must be complied with, so long must the christian preacher, if he would be successful, manage his tastes and habits and discipline his faculties, in accordance with the principles of universal rhetoric.

It is to be feared, that the true reason why the pulpit has in proportion produced so much less really effective eloquence than the bar or the senate, is to be sought not so much in the different circumstances in

* It will be at once seen that the writer has a reference more particularly to the pulpit, where the absurdities here supposed have been enacted a thousand times. But here *alone*. In no other orator,—in no political assembly—would such folly be tolerated for an instant.

which the preacher is placed, or to the peculiarity of the *subject-matter* of his eloquence, but to the melancholy fact,—universally characteristic of our fallen race,—that both the speaker and his audience *feel* less deeply the important truths of religion than the most inconsiderable topics connected with the present life. The remoteness and distance of these truths leave them comparatively little power to affect the mind: consequently the preacher has often been tempted to treat them in a cold and professional manner; and the audience, to demand curious disquisitions to please their reason or brilliant illustration to amuse and delight the fancy, rather than that which alone would satisfy them in other cases,—practical arguments to convince the understanding, and motives directly prompting to action.

But whatever the causes which have led to this result, certain it is, that the principles of the most effective eloquence have been far less influential in this department than in any other; and should a vast augmentation of piety, or more just principles of rhetoric in reference to this subject, or, which is more probable, the concurrence of both, lead to an entire revolution both of opinion and practice,—a revolution which in our opinion must take place before the eloquence of the pulpit can attain its proper ascendency or exercise its legitimate influence,—the great mass of printed sermons will excite the astonishment of the christian church.

Vast numbers of them, indeed, will be read and admired as much as ever, and justly: but they will be admired for being *what they are*, excellent dissertations on particular points of theological science; or wonderful specimens of metaphysical subtlety and profound reasoning, of acute criticism or ingenious speculation; of beautiful and impressive description; of rich and varied imagery: many of them will be regarded as well fitted for the closet, where even poetry, and the delight it brings, may often serve indirectly the offices of eloquence; as admirably adapted to the retired hours of a contemplative or meditative piety; but, whatever their merits in these or other respects, the great mass of "printed sermons" will be regarded as totally destitute of all the characteristics of "sermons," if by that term is meant,—what is generally meant,—a certain species of *persuasive discourses*. That they should ever have been delivered from the pulpit with such pretensions, and published under such a name, will justly appear the most astounding of paradoxes. Few and far between, indeed, along the vast range of pulpit literature, are those passages which fully exemplify the principles we have endeavoured to illustrate; at all events, though some favourable specimens might be selected from the compositions of most celebrated preachers, such passages have no sort of proportion to others. Perhaps Chrysostom is the man in whom, notwithstanding his general resemblance to Jeremy Taylor, such passages most frequently occur.

If the "sermons" of Jeremy Taylor be examined on these principles, the defects of his mind become instantly apparent. His peculiarities could not but disclose themselves; such an imagination as his would defy the control of the severest discipline. Though his sermons, therefore, are wonderful compositions, regarded in any other light than that of "sermons," they are not distinguishable, except by name, from his other devotional and practical writings. It is true, there are some few passages of great force and energy, as well as beauty, one or two of which we here select.

The first shall be from the impressive sermon, entitled, "Doomsday Book; or Christ's Advent to Judgment."

"And because very many sins are sins of society and confederation; such are fornication, drunkenness, bribery, simony, rebellion, schism, and many others; it is a hard and a weighty consideration, what shall become of any one of us, who have tempted our brother or sister to sin and death: for though God hath spared our life, and they are dead, and their debt-books are sealed up till the day of account; yet the mischief of our sin is gone before us, and it is like a murder, but more execrable: the soul is dead in trespasses and sins, and sealed up to an eternal sorrow; and thou shalt see, at doomsday, what damnable uncharitableness thou hast done. That soul that cries to those rocks to cover her, if it had not been for thy perpetual temptations, might have followed the Lamb in a white robe; and that poor man, that is clothed with shame and flames of fire, would have shined in glory, but that thou didst force him to be partner of thy baseness. And who shall pay for this loss? a soul is lost by the means; thou hast defeated the holy purposes of the Lord's bitter passion by thy impurities; and what shall happen to thee, by whom thy brother dies eternally?"

We shall indulge our readers with one other extract. It shall be from the discourse, entitled, "The Mercy of the Divine Judgments; or, God's Method in curing Sinners." The latter part of the following extract is exceedingly affecting.

"Let, therefore, every one of us take the account of our lives, and read over the sermons that God hath made us: besides that sweet language of his mercy, and his 'still voice' from heaven, consider what voices of thunder you heard, and presently that noise ceased, and God was heard in the 'still voice' again. What dangers have any of you escaped? were you ever assaulted by the rudeness of an ill natured man? Have you never had a dangerous fall, and escaped it? Did none of

you ever escape drowning, and in a great danger saw the forbearance of God? Have you never been sick (as you feared) unto death? Or, suppose none of these things have happened, hath not God threatened you all, and forborne to smite you? or smitten you, and forborne to kill you? That is evident. But if you had been a privado, and of the cabinet-council with your guardian angel, that from him you might have known how many dangers you have escaped, how often you have been near a ruin, so near, that if you had seen your danger with a sober spirit, the fear of it would have half killed you; if he had but told you how often God had sent out his warrants to the exterminating angel, and our blessed Saviour by his intercession hath obtained a reprieve, that he might have the content of rejoicing at thy conversion and repentance; if you had known from him the secrets of that providence which governs us in secret, and how many thousand times the devil would have done thee hurt, and how often himself, as a ministering spirit of God's "goodness and forbearance," did interpose and abate, or divert a mischief which was falling on thy head: it must needs cover thy head with a cloud of shame and blushing at that ingratitude and that folly, that neither will give God thanks, nor secure thy own well-being."

In general, however, his ungovernable imagination is perpetually leading him into diffuse and copious description, and into curious and fantastic images, which are only distinguishable from the highest poetry by wanting metrical arrangement; while his habits of mind are continually betraying him into the style of philosophical disquisition, and his fulness of knowledge into discussions and allusions foreign to the subject. The defects of Jeremy Taylor's pulpit style, so far as they flowed from his ungovernable imagination, have been well pointed out by a man whose vigour of mind, severity of taste, and intensity of passion would probably almost have raised him to the rank of Demosthenes of the pulpit, had it not been for certain defects, partly his own and partly common to his age. We mean South. The passage now referred to is so curious that we beg to cite it, not merely for the amusement of the reader, but to illustrate the preceding remarks on the vices of Taylor's oratory. Though there might be, and very probably was, somewhat of malice and envy lurking in his satire, it is at the same time full of important truth. Even though the phrases he ridicules had not been found in Jeremy Taylor's writings, they are so characteristic that the person, for whom the satire is intended, could not have been mistaken; they are, however, Taylor's veritable expressions, and are to be found in his "Sermons." The passage from South is cited from a sermon preached at Christ's Church, Oxford, 1668. The text was Luke xxi. 16. "For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist."

"And thus also it is with the most necessary and important truths; to adorn and clothe them is to cover them, and that to obscure them. The eternal salvation and damnation of souls are not things to be treated of with jests and witticisms. And he who thinks to furnish himself out of plays and romances with language for the pulpit, shews himself much fitter to act a part in the revels, than for a cure of souls.

"'I speak the words of soberness,' said St. Paul, Acts xxvi. 25; and I preach the gospel not with the 'enticing words of man's wisdom,' 1 Cor. ii. 4. This was the way of the apostle's discoursing of things sacred. Nothing here, 'of the fringes of the north star;' nothing of 'nature's becoming unnatural,' nothing of the 'down of angels' wings,' or the 'beautiful locks of cherubims:' no starched similitudes introduced with a 'thus have I seen a cloud rolling in its airy mansion,' and the like. No, these were sublimities above the rise of the apostolic spirit. For the apostles, poor mortals, were content to take lower steps, and to tell the world in plain terms, 'that he who believed should be saved, and that he who believed not should be damned.' And this was the dialect which pierced the conscience, and made the hearers cry out, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?' It tickled not the ear, but sunk into the breast: and when men came from such sermons, they never commended the preacher for his taking voice or gesture; for the pureness of such a simile, or the quaintness of such a sentence; but they spoke like men conquered with the overpowering force and evidence of the most concerning truths; much in the words of the two disciples going to Emmaus; 'Did not our hearts burn within us, while he opened to us the scriptures?'

"In a word, the apostles' preaching was therefore mighty and successful; because plain, natural, and familiar, and by no means above the capacity of their hearers: nothing being more preposterous, than for those who were professedly aiming at men's hearts, to miss the mark, by shooting over their heads."

It may also be remarked not only that the meditative character of Jeremy Taylor's mind, and the excess of his imagination, (the former in some measure the natural consequence of the latter,) were unfavourable to his reaching the highest excellence as an orator; but—and this was also in a great degree the result of his peculiar intellectual temperament—there was too little of passion in his nature; his feelings were altogether of the gentle, calm, and subdued kind. Of the deficiencies here pointed out, it is impossible to obtain a clearer idea than by comparing the style of Jeremy Taylor with the prose style of Milton,—a man who to an imagination scarcely less active than that of Taylor, and more lofty and sublime, added a larger portion of the terrible energy of Demosthenes, than any other man that ever lived. It is impossible for any intelli-

gent reader to peruse any considerable portion of the writings of these wonderful men, without perceiving the immeasurable superiority of the oratorical genius of the one to that of the other. Though Milton is almost as lavish as Jeremy Taylor in the use of his imagination, yet how much more severe are the forms it assumes, by how much more brevity are they characterized, and how much more energy do they possess! A metaphor, an epithet or two, often do the work of what would be, in Taylor, a long description.

The principal features of Jeremy Taylor's *moral and religious character* are such as cannot fail to secure him the reverence and the love of all who study his life and writings. His piety was sincere and eminently practical, his devotion in an unusual degree sustained and elevated, while benevolence and charity, candour and forbearance, and all the softer and more lovely features of the christian character, appear to have been in habitual exercise. In this as in every other instance, however, the aspect his religious character assumed was in great measure determined by the peculiarities of his intellect, original and acquired.—Religion was never designed to reduce all human character to the same uniform standard. Here, as in every other department of his works, God loves to afford, in the most prodigal manner, the most various exhibition of his power and wisdom; and for this, has made abundant provision in the original diversities of mental and moral structure, and the multiform discipline of human life. Almost innumerable combinations of christian excellence, some of them presenting the most marked contrasts and others differing by indistinguishable shades, are to be found in the members of the universal church. Religion is intended, it is true, to correct all vice and to remove all imperfections; but the kinds, and degrees, and modifications, and aspects of positive excellence are as numberless as the peculiarities of individual character. The productions which adorn the paradise of God, from the loftiest cedar of Lebanon, to the lowliest plant that flourishes beneath its shade, are all pervaded by the same great principle of spiritual life; are all sustained by the same influences of heaven and of earth; all imbibe living moisture from the same dew and shower, and rejoice in the genial radiance of the same celestial sun-shine; but they, at the same time, present endless varieties of form and structure, of fruit and flower, of leaf and fragrance. The waters of life, (if we may vary the figure,) as they exist in the bosom of each christian, may exhibit the same purity and crystalline clearness, and possess the same invigorating and refreshing qualities; and yet, in each case, may be marked by some slight tincture derived from those strata of character, through which they have been distilled into the heart.

To apply these general observations to Jeremy Taylor. His gentle melancholy; his ascetic tendencies; his brilliant imagination, and his consequent love of the picturesque in religion; his extensive erudition and the associations formed upon it, particularly his reverence for antiquity, imparted a peculiar tone and colouring to his religious sentiment and religious feeling. A word or two on each of these points.

It is obvious, that with all the admirable social qualities he possessed, he was characterized by a spirit of gentle melancholy, in some measure natural to him, but too surely confirmed by the sorrows of his life; and this, though it is evident that religion was not only his daily employment, but his daily delight, has impressed itself strongly on his devotional and practical writings. Had he lived in those early ages of christianity when the hermit's life was so eagerly sought, and could plead a strong apology for its extravagance in the severity of persecution, he would probably have buried himself in the solitudes of the desert, and retiring from the haunts of men and the engagements of active life, have abandoned himself to that love of contemplation which was undoubtedly his ruling passion. It may, however, be justly questioned, whether even then he would have fallen into any of the extravagances of the early devotees, or practised any of their self-denying austerities from the superstitions which so soon corrupted primitive piety. Amidst all his tendencies to asceticism, there was a large residuum of strong practical wisdom; and whenever he enters on the discussion of these topics in his works, he carefully distinguishes between the abstract worthlessness of all self-denying austerities in themselves, and their occasional uses in reference to the distinct ends of self-control and self-discipline; and *in general* discriminates the limits within which such austerities may be practised, and within which they ought to be restrained, with great precision and sagacity.

His habitual melancholy has given a peculiar tinge to all his devotional writings. His religion was full of "hope," but not of "joy;" gentle and tranquil, but a stranger to the rapture and triumph which have often characterized piety not more eminent. By this we by no means mean to imply that Jeremy Taylor was more in bondage to doubts and fears, as to his final state, than many other christians; for there is the most abundant testimony that he was not more troubled with these than any good man must expect to be, who knows himself, his fluctuating feelings and his many infirmities; nor can it be thought that a con-

fidence which never falters, which knows neither fears nor doubts, is the result of "the assurance of faith;" it is too often the fruit of ignorant presumption.—Of all this, however, we are not at present speaking. The present observations merely apply to the general tone and colouring which attach to the *expression* of his religious feelings.

It was doubtless this disposition to melancholy, which so often made Jeremy Taylor, in his meditations and devotional writings, dwell at such disproportionate length, and with such sad intensity of feeling, on the sorrows of life, on the vanity and nothingness of the world, on death, and on all the gloomy topics connected with it; topics which, judiciously tempered with the grand and inspiring consolations of the gospel, are admirably calculated to produce an abundantly beneficial impression; but which, in Jeremy Taylor's writings, are often indulged to excess because insisted on too exclusively. These observations are more particularly applicable to his "Holy Living and Dying" and his "Contemplations on the State of Man."

It has been already remarked that the activity of his imagination had no mean influence in the formation of his religious character. It predisposed his mind to a more incessant and intent contemplation of those sublime realities, and grand and imposing truths, which constitute the christian faith. Here he is at home indeed; and, in innumerable passages, the combined influence of ardent feeling and a glowing fancy has presented us with descriptions that are paralleled by nothing out of the volume of inspiration itself,—of the felicities and glories of heaven; of the sublime realities of the invisible and eternal world; of the Divine love as displayed in the gospel; of the profound wisdom which pervades its whole economy; of the beauty and mutual harmony of the principles of conduct which it enjoins, and the excellence of that immortal character which it is intended to develope.* When on such themes, he often pours forth strains of the loftiest eloquence, in a style not unworthy of the lyric muse; strains such as Pindar, had he written prose, need not have been ashamed to own. So uniform, indeed, so irrepressible is the energy of his imagination, that it often breaks out even in that species of composition in which it ought to have been most subdued, and the great charm of which consists in the most unadorned simplicity of expression;—we mean in his prayers and forms of devotion. That whenever this is the case, Jeremy Taylor is guilty of an egregious violation of taste, we need not state. Such instances, however, are not very frequent; his directly devotional style is usually characterized by all those qualities which place the liturgical compositions of his, and of a preceding age, at an immeasurable distance from those of more modern times; they are distinguished by that sublime simplicity, that deep solemnity of spirit, that harmony and music of expression, which we shall in vain seek in the devotional writings of later times.

It need hardly be remarked that the influence of the imagination, as well as of the "gentle prejudice of antiquity," as he himself calls it, led him to lay no mean stress on the *externals* of religion; on matters of a ritual and ceremonial nature. No one, indeed, could believe more firmly than he did, that the essence of religion did not consist in these things. Yet the *tendency* of his nature was evidently rather to overrate their importance than the contrary; so much is this the case, that probably nothing but a protestant education could have checked them;† while, if he had been born within the communion of the church of Rome, there is but little presumption in saying that his reverence for ancient customs, for rites and ceremonies, for fasts and festivals consecrated by the example of ages and invested by his ardent imagination with all that is striking and imposing, would have degenerated into the most abject superstition; and though we cannot believe that, even under such circumstances, Jeremy Taylor would have lost his characteristic mildness and spirit of charity, or that he would not have sustained a reputation worthy of comparison with that of a Fénélon or a Pascal, yet the combined influence of imagination and of his prejudices in favour of antiquity, would probably have rendered him one of the most strenuous champions of that very system, the main errors of which he has done so much to expose. If Jeremy Taylor erred, however, on the side of excessive attachment to matters of mere ritual, he erred no more than one of the most celebrated of his contemporaries erred on the opposite side; we refer to Milton. These great men in some respects more nearly resembled one another, and in others were more completely unlike, than any other men of the age. It is astonishing that any one with so much imagination as Milton, should have *finally* adopted a system of opinions on this subject at the remotest possible distance from all in which imagination delights, from all that

* See particularly instances of such passages in his "Preface" to his "Life of Christ;" Rules iii. iv. of Chap. i. Book II. of the "Ductor Dubitantium;" and in his sermons entitled "The Return of Prayers;" "The Faith and Patience of the Saints, or the Righteous Cause Oppressed;" "Of Growth in Grace;" and "The Miracles of the Divine Mercy."

† It was doubtless these tendencies, together with his ascetic habits, which fixed on him the suspicion of a leaning to popery; a suspicion, which, in spite of the clearest evidence to the contrary, continued to follow him throughout life.

appeals to the senses and the material part of our nature; which regarded man as a purely spiritual essence. Still more extraordinary is it that his imagination after rejecting its appropriate aliment, could sustain itself in such strength and vigour, on the few simple abstractions which, even at an earlier period, formed his creed; or that the poet should have been able to create such sublime and enchanting visions as are often presented in his prose writings, from such unpromising and unpoetic materials. We have nothing to do here, however, with the signal triumph of genius and imagination, which Milton has achieved; we are only concerned to point out the error of stripping christianity of every thing external; an error which, if generally adopted, and carried to the extent to which Milton carried it, in his latter days, would be far more fatal than the opposite error of his great contemporary. It is difficult to say with what excess of forms religion may still exist; but except in the instance of Milton,—and where is there another such,—it is difficult to say how it should exist at all in a mind that rejects all those circumstantials, which, as human nature is at present constituted, can alone effectually fix our duties on our memories; remind us of the times of their recurrence; render them more easy by rendering them regular and habitual; and bind upon us the performance of our devotions, by a powerful complication of associations;—a mind, which, under the vain apprehension of enslaving itself to the external and material, will observe no set hours or days for devotions, no outward signs, no particular postures, no stated place. Christianity, though the most sublimely spiritual system of religion, has availed itself of the aid which the external can minister to the immaterial, just so far as is compatible with the most efficient provisions against superstition. Its rites and ceremonies, its external observances of all kinds, are as few and as simple as possible; but still it is not without them. That divine philosophy which pervades the whole scheme of the gospel, and which has so exactly adapted it to the intricate mechanism of human nature, knew man too well, and understood too perfectly his dependence on the senses, the extensive influence of the material world on all his habits and associations, and the inevitable necessity that it should tend powerfully either to vice or virtue, to neglect so important a feature in his constitution.

The grand difficulty, however, is to maintain this middle path of wisdom. With that passion for extremes which is ever characteristic of human nature, we see in the age of Jeremy Taylor and Milton, two parties, one of which endeavoured to encumber christianity with a vast number of idle and fantastic ceremonies, and the other to strip it, to very nakedness, of all that is external. These tendencies existed in different degrees in different individuals. Jeremy Taylor, however, on his side carried the tendencies of his party to a much less fatal extent than Milton did on his.

But to proceed with the analysis of Taylor's religious character. It was remarked that the profound erudition of Jeremy Taylor, more especially his intimate acquaintance with all the writings of ecclesiastical antiquity, tended, in conjunction with many other qualities of his mind, to modify his religious character. This observation has been already partly illustrated in speaking of his excessive attachment to what was external and ceremonial in religion. This effect was in part the result of his imagination. It is observable, however, that his imagination sought no innovations; antiquity had already determined the direction it should take. The same cause, his familiarity with antiquity, has given a peculiar tinge to his religious phraseology, and probably, also, in some measure to his religious feelings. Thus we find him both in his controversial and his devotional writings perpetually adopting, and often apparently unconsciously, not only the religious terms and phraseology of early ecclesiastical antiquity, but of those devotional and casuistical writers of the Roman church, with which he was so profoundly acquainted. Sometimes, indeed, his mode of expression, borrowed from these sources, requires to be interpreted with candour, and will inevitably afford abundant room for suspicion and cavil to all those who have not made themselves familiarly acquainted with the general strain of his writings. But on this point we need say little; it having been already observed that there is no writer who can so ill afford to be interpreted by single expressions, or insulated passages. For instance, had he not frequently declared his belief, that the spirit of religion is something very different from external forms and ceremonies, and that the want of it can never be compensated by any frequency or diligence in acts of mere outward devotion, one would almost be led to think, from his occasional phraseology, that he imagined there was a species of mechanical efficacy in the mere number and assiduity of our prayers, fasts, thanksgivings, alms, and other acts of religion and of charity. Interpreted, however, by an enlarged view of his writings, and not by an exclusive attention to insulated sentences, and making due allowance for the peculiar tinge and colouring which all his habits of thought communicated to his style, we are persuaded there is little foundation for any such suspicions.

The religion of Jeremy Taylor was eminently influential on his whole nature; it is this which imparts

to his character its chief beauty and lustre, and to his writings their chief interest and value. He evidently took enlarged and sublime views of the character which the gospel is designed to form within us; of the purity and spirituality, elevation and simplicity of mind, which it inculcates; of the habitual benevolence, the charity, the meekness, the lowliness, the humility it enjoins; and of all those retiring but more difficult virtues on which all other systems of religion have poured scorn, as incompatible with magnanimity and greatness; but which the gospel more justly accounts amongst the most heroic and superhuman achievements of excellence. And as Jeremy Taylor formed these correct and sublime views of the objects and requirements of the gospel, so he habitually and diligently endeavoured to form himself after this model. It is this which gives such a peculiar value to his practical writings, and sets them so very far above his controversial. It is the general tone of these *latter*, however, that affords the most unequivocal displays of that elevated personal piety, which shines through all his writings. It is true that all his works breathe a delightful spirit of benevolence and charity; but in controversy he was called on to *display* and *maintain* its spirit. It may be fairly said that an amiable spirit in controversy, (which is so apt to influence, in a greater or less degree, the malignant passions, and which is so very rarely disjoined from them,) forms one of the most incontrovertible evidences of elevated piety; because it is precisely this point in which so many men of indubitable excellence have failed. These remarks are further strengthened by reflecting on the controversial spirit which characterized the age; an age of almost boundless licence in abuse and sarcasm. In that age many of the best men, if we may judge from their writings, seemed to consider controversy a province over which the charities of christianity, which extended to all things else in human character and conduct, was to have no influence. Jeremy Taylor is an honourable exception. It may, without hesitation, be asserted that, considering their extent and the haste with which many of them were composed, his controversial writings will sustain a comparison not only with those of most of the divines of his age, but of any age; nay, there are not only few,—very few, who can be compared with him in this respect, but very few who have equalled him; while we know of none who have surpassed him, unless it be the truly great Howe. Even in his controversies with the Romanists, the appalling consequences and the infinite absurdity of whose errors, and the eminent want of candour with which they carried on the controversy, would have excused some considerable asperity, Jeremy Taylor maintains in general an amiable spirit. There was but one instance in which he failed, and that was in his controversy with Dr. Jeanes, on the subject of "original sin." In this case, however, peculiar circumstances tended to inflame his passions; not to mention that he was *in the wrong*, a circumstance alone often sufficient to account for loss of temper.

Nor was it in controversy only that Jeremy Taylor manifested this amiable and lovely spirit. We have dwelt on this merely as affording the most signal proof of it. Throughout the whole of life, in all its relations, (and many of its scenes were of a peculiarly trying character,) he displayed the same spirit of unfeigned piety, humility, gentleness, and benevolence. The general spirit of his writings, and all the traditionary accounts of his character, attest his great personal and social worth,—his eminent excellence as a man and a christian.

There is one defect in Jeremy Taylor's practical writings, which deserves to be noticed; because, without any fault of his, they are liable to be misunderstood; and probably have been so by many a reader. It is this; that considering what the bulk of his readers probably would be, he has not brought forward with sufficient frequency those grand doctrines of the gospel upon which the whole superstructure of christian duty rests; doctrines which alone can furnish motives sufficiently powerful to secure obedience, or to transform the reluctant and servile spirit of duty into a service of freedom, of cheerfulness, and love. He seems to have taken it for granted, that his writings would be read principally by those (and they are indeed the parties calculated to derive most benefit from them) who are already experimentally acquainted with the gospel; impressed with all its great peculiarities; readers who would not need to be reminded at every step of those elementary principles, without which duty is slavery, and the spirit of peace and of joy impossible of attainment. Unless the readers of Taylor's practical writings should (as their author doubtless intended) habitually carry in their minds these principles, and interpret him by them, it is not improbable that they may form erroneous views of the excellent author's intentions; and, unless they be well established in just notions of the faith, extract poison from that which he designed for nourishment.

As a purely speculative theologian, Jeremy Taylor, for reasons which have been largely specified in a former part of this Essay, is very far from being worthy of implicit reliance. It has been observed, however, in a preceding page, that, considering the extent of his writings, he rarely touches on such matters. His works are almost wholly practical.

And, in matters *purely* practical, however complicated and difficult of decision the matters which come before him, he is almost always correct. Here he affords a striking exemplification of peculiarities already noticed in a previous part of this Essay. His general correctness in these questions is undoubtedly to be attributed to his strong perception of the principles of the gospel, and his paramount regard to them ; in other words, the elevation and activity of his *practical* piety, the love and the admiration of *goodness*. This philosophy of the heart, if we may use such an expression, this disposition to do what is *right*,—a disposition which the practical influence of christianity cannot fail to inspire even into understandings immeasurably inferior to that of Jeremy Taylor, is often as unerring as an oracle ; and will avail more than the acutest powers of speculation, in clearing up the intricacies of a subtle casuistry. Where such a spirit exists, the judgment will be always happily, nobly biassed to the side of virtue and goodness ; even where it errs in its decisions, it will always be in favour of the more religious, the more charitable view of the question ; since it will avoid not only " evil," but even the " appearance of it," and, therefore, will be always safe if not always right. Nor is it to be wondered at, that such a spirit should be generally *right*, since wisdom and goodness dwell eternally together, and righteousness and truth are twin sisters. That he who loves what is *right* should generally hit upon what is true, is but a fulfilment of the promise, " that he who doth the will of God, shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God."

In a curious, and we may add eloquent, passage in the " Ductor Dubitantium," in which Jeremy Taylor characterizes the merits of the earlier and the more modern writers on the subject of christian ethics, he has unconsciously drawn that very feature of his character which we are now considering. After balancing the greater speculative acuteness of the latter casuists, against the more simple-minded piety of the former, he seems disposed to think that altogether the superiority rested on the side of the ancients. He says,

" But to proceed in the comparing the ages : these latter ages have more heresies, but the former had more dangerous; and, although the primitive piety was high and exemplary, yet the effect of that was, that in matters of practice they were more to be followed, but not in questions of speculation ; these later ages are indeed diseased, like children that have the rickets, but their upper parts do swell, and their heads are bigger; " sagaciores in dogmate, nequiores in fide;" and if they could be abstracted from the mixtures of interest, and the engagement of their party, they are in many things better able to teach the people, than the ancients; that is, they are best able to guide, but not always safest to be followed."

Whether this representation of the two classes of writers Jeremy Taylor contrasts, is quite correct or not, it is certain that it affords a very striking view of some of his own peculiarities.

Of the practical writings of Jeremy Taylor it would be difficult to speak too highly ; but if asked precisely what was his *theological system*, it would be no easy matter to give a distinct answer.

As a theologian, he scarcely belongs to any particular *school*. For though there were some denominations with which he much more nearly symbolized than with others, he altogether agreed with none. There is, indeed, throughout the whole of his writings, an astonishing disregard of the precision and caution,—in a word, of all the chief peculiarities of systematic theology. Far be it from us to blame this popular style, in writings like his, the great bulk of which were *practical* and intended for popular use. It is, however, an inevitable result of such a style, that it will often be difficult to ascertain exactly what was an author's precise theory of doctrine ; not to mention that there will be many instances, in which he himself will forget it. In theological works of this kind, doctrines are introduced detached and in fragments ; and their connexion and harmony with the system of truth in the writer's mind, is not pointed out. If they are doctrines, whose theoretical consistency with others will only be apparent by the utmost caution of expression, the writer will often *seem* to be contradictory when he really is not ; not to mention, that when deeply impressed with the importance of some particular truth or when urging on men with holy vehemence some practical duty, theologians forget for a moment the cold and frigid system to which they are attached, and speak of that particular truth, which for the moment absorbs attention, with a degree of warmth and zeal apparently disproportionate to the other great truths with which it stands in connexion. This is nature ; and thus it is, that the Calvinist is often found *apparently* adopting the language of Arminianism, and Arminians that of Calvinism. At such moments, they forget the technicalities and subtle distinctions of their respective systems, and though all that they say may be, in their own minds, capable of being perfectly reconciled with those systems, they seldom, at such moments, enter into any such elaborate distinctions, nor are they often understood if they do. A truth may be stated with great power for all *practical* purposes, where there is any thing but the accuracy of systematic theology ; nay, often the more forcibly on these very grounds.

For example, the Arminian believes that it is true, in a certain sense, that man's salvation is wholly the fruit of Divine grace; and there is a sense in which the Calvinist believes that every man can be saved if he will, and that it is entirely his own fault if he be not saved; now whether the explanations and distinctions by which these theologians reconcile their sentiments to their systems, the main parts of which may *seem* so much at variance with them, be satisfactory or not, it is obvious, that when under the influence of strong and excited feeling, and solely intent on a practical exhibition of what they *feel* rather than perceive to be important truth, they will use nearly the same language and *appear* to occupy each other's ground. The subtle distinctions with which each, in a cooler statement of his opinions, reconciles his practice to his theory, are quite forgotten: each abandoning what is peculiar in his system, they must for a moment meet on that common ground where both parties are in the right.

The same remarks, to a considerable extent, apply even where there *is* in the author's mind a consistent system of doctrine. A perfect freedom from the precision of a system, eminently characterizes the sacred writings, which were intended to treat theology, not as it is taught in the schools, but in the most impressive form for all practical purposes; it is conveyed to us in fragments and detached parts, as present exigencies or peculiar circumstances suggested; and the consequence is, that the sacred writers often express themselves with a strength and energy, which at first sight, and without a careful comparison of such passages with others, would appear to be hardly consistent.

Jeremy Taylor's loose and popular phraseology, together with another circumstance already adverted to, the characteristic ardour with which he expresses himself on any topic which, for the moment, engages his attention, perpetually betray him into apparent discrepancies of statement, but which, in very many instances, are, we are persuaded, no more than apparent. This, however, will be granted only by those who possess an extensive familiarity with his phraseology, and a disposition to interpret it with candour.

But this apology, it must be admitted, only extends to certain points. It cannot be denied, that his works abound in many *real* as well as apparent discrepancies and misstatements, and show, as before stated, that he did not hold any consistent *system* of theological opinions. Thus, in the question of original sin, he was in some respects a Pelagian, yet (as Heber observes) these sentiments are at direct variance with numberless expressions in his practical writings. Again, that he was no Calvinist in theory, is certain; yet he often uses language which can by no possibility be made to quadrate with any opposite system of doctrine.

This Essay will be concluded with some very brief remarks on the general character of Jeremy Taylor's principal productions. Little or nothing will be said of his peculiarities of manner or style; enough, it is conceived, has already been said on these points in the preceding parts of the Essay. No author ever stamped his writings with the impress of his mind more strongly than did Jeremy Taylor.

In noticing his works, we shall generally take them in the order in which they were published, except when they are on the same or kindred subjects;—such will be classed together.

The first work which, according to this arrangement, demands attention, is his "Episcopacy Asserted;" published at the request of Charles I. in 1642. As the few observations to be made on this piece equally apply to his "Apology for Authorized and Set Forms of Liturgy," first published in 1646, and his "Discourse of Confirmation," which did not appear till 1663, they may all be classed together. On such subjects, Jeremy Taylor might have been expected to put forth all his powers; yet these works may be safely pronounced, on the whole, the least successful of his controversial writings. Some of his readers may probably impute this inferiority rather to the nature of the subjects, than to any fault in the writer. On this point, it is not for us to deliver a judgment. "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

The "Apology for Liturgies," however, is undeniably far superior to the other two. Of the "Discourse of Confirmation," even Bishop Heber is constrained to say, that he cannot consider it "a favourable specimen of Taylor's genius."

In these works, but especially the first and last, he has furnished most conclusive evidence of the correctness of certain remarks formerly made on his character as a reasoner, and of the influence his learning exerted over his logical powers. It was there remarked, that he is but too apt to measure his arguments more by *number* than by *weight*, and to furnish rather what his vast reading has supplied, than what his deliberate judgment could approve. This is obviously the case in the present instances. In his eagerness to make good, and more than make good his positions; to render unassailable, institutions which he so profoundly reverenced and admired;—he presses every argument, sound and unsound, into the service;

and, though he omits nothing that is really valid, introduces much that is perfectly worthless, and which no *judicious* advocates in the same cause, even in his own time, ever thought of employing. He who, in defending "*episcopacy*," could argue that the form of ecclesiastical government and polity which Christ intended for his church, must be purely matter of revelation, and who could then attempt to seek episcopacy in the New Testament, in all its parts, and in its fully developed form; he who could find, in the appointment of the twelve apostles and seventy disciples, the first institution of bishops and presbyters; he who, in defending the rite of confirmation, could allege the descent of the Holy Ghost on our Lord after his baptism, and our Saviour's declaration to Nicodemus, of the necessity of baptism by water and the Spirit, as *proof* that confirmation is a *divinely constituted rite*, can hardly be trusted as a *judicious* controvertist, however multifarious or profound his learning. Not seldom would he be likely to impair the force of arguments really sound, by mingling them with others so obviously absurd and puerile.

All these treatises, however, are full of learning; and in many parts distinguished by great acuteness and ingenuity of argument; while the "Apology for the Authorized and Set Forms of Liturgy," contains many splendid specimens of Taylor's characteristic eloquence.

The next considerable work which demands notice, and which first appeared in 1648, is his "Liberty of Prophesying." This, of all his controversial pieces, is the one by which his name is best known, and which has most endeared him to posterity. It is, as already stated, a defence of *toleration*, a doctrine then little understood and less practised.

Though one of the earliest, and by far the most eloquent work, that had as yet appeared on this much controverted subject, it was by no means the *first*. The independents, to whom undoubtedly belongs the immortal honour of having first advocated, and of having first attempted to carry into practice, the principles of toleration, had already published several tracts and sermons in defence of this doctrine.

It is true that Jeremy Taylor's work is *a defence of toleration*, yet those who should judge of it merely from a knowledge of other great works on the same subject, (more especially that of Locke,) would form a very erroneous conception of its nature. It differs from other works very materially, both in the nature of the arguments on which it lays the most stress and in the extent to which it advocates the doctrine itself. In some respects the toleration for which Taylor pleads, is far more limited than a just and enlarged view of the subject would demand, and in others more extensive than is contended for even by many of its advocates at the present day. A word or two on these points.

As to his arguments, he has chiefly insisted on those which other writers on the same subject have considered subordinate, while those which they justly regard as principal, he has nearly omitted altogether.

Thus, while the generality of those who have advocated toleration, at least since Locke's time, have founded their arguments principally on the *inalienable right* of all men to form their own opinions on the subject of religion, as irresponsible, except to the Supreme, for the exercise of their freedom of thought, Jeremy Taylor pleads for it principally on the grounds of the infinite difficulty, and, in many cases, absolute impossibility, of ascertaining what *is* truth; and the consequent expediency and duty of treating differences of opinion with enlarged charity and forbearance. *He* pleads for it from a deep compassion for human infirmities and frailty; *others*, from a consciousness that such freedom is an inalienable prerogative of our nature. It follows, of course, from his mode of exhibiting and defending the doctrine, that his toleration would only extend to those subordinate and non-essential points, in which it may be absolutely impossible or exceedingly difficult to ascertain the truth; and that, consequently, if there are any fundamental truths which may be deemed sufficiently plain to all, and about which there is little or no dispute, toleration is not to be extended to those who deny them. It is precisely within these limits that he constructs his theory.

In consequence, as it was necessary, on his hypothesis, to draw the line somewhere, he would extend toleration to all who agree in the belief of the prime articles of the christian faith, as embodied in the Apostles' creed, with the single exception of the clause respecting "Christ's descent into hell;" leaving all at perfect liberty to form their own opinions on all subordinate points of doctrine and of church government.

This theory, defective as it is, was, it must be confessed, an astonishing triumph of charity for that age, and, had it been fully acted upon, would, *in those times*, have been productive of as much practical benefit to the nation to which it was more immediately proposed, as a theory founded on principles far more comprehensive and abstractedly more just; and for this simple reason, that in that age there were few who *did not* agree in the fundamental articles of the Apostles' creed; all the more bitter and intolerant feeling was

displayed precisely on those points, on which Taylor would have left every man to the liberty of his own reason. Still, however, viewed as a theory of toleration, irrespective of the peculiarities of the age and nation, it must be acknowledged to be exceedingly imperfect. It was this which induced us to observe, that *in some respects*, the toleration for which he pleads is far more limited than it ought to be. It is obvious that his theory extends no indulgence to those who should deny any of the prime articles of the Apostles' creed, (a class of men who are now universally admitted to have as much right to toleration as any other classes of religionists,) still less to those who should reject christianity altogether, or to the professors of a totally different system of religion. There are many passages of the work, however, which indicate that Jeremy Taylor was not far from more comprehensive views of the subject, and that he often found himself shackled by the limits he had imposed on himself. This is clearly apparent in his apologies for the "anabaptists" and "papists," apologies which subjected him in many quarters to the severest censures.

It is not difficult to trace the causes which induced Jeremy Taylor to found his plea for toleration, rather on the pity due to human frailty than on the rights of reason. It was another of the many instances, —some of which have been already referred to,—in which his philosophy was the fruit of his benevolence, and in which the instincts of an ardent and unfeigned charity, in the absence of more enlarged and comprehensive speculation, led him at least a considerable distance on the road to truth.

But it has been remarked, that if in one respect Jeremy Taylor's theory was defective, and the toleration for which he pleaded too limited, in another it is far more extensive than many of its advocates in the present day would approve. He goes so far as to contend, (as indeed might be inferred from the title of the work,) that no communion ought to impose on its ministers the belief of any other articles, than those fundamental ones on which he bases his whole scheme of toleration. Into this view he was naturally led by considering the question not merely as an advocate of the *rights of men*, but as a theologian anxious for the growth and prosperity of the christian church. The mere advocate of the civil rights of men has done his duty on this great point, when he has vindicated their liberty to form and express their own opinions without reference to any particular system of religious belief. It is enough for him if no man imposes his peculiar opinions on his neighbour, and no communion its doctrines on another communion. But the christian, viewing the whole subject in relation to the principles of that religion he professes, would go somewhat farther. It is, indeed, a general truth, that every community of men has an abstract right to admit and exclude its own members on its own terms; but Jeremy Taylor would have these terms as few and as simple as possible; not multiplied beyond the most apparent necessity, nor beyond the candid interpretation of the great statute-book. Such a man would argue thus for the sake of the union and the consequent progress of the universal church.

Whether Jeremy Taylor's principles can ever be acted on to the fullest extent, with respect to the admission or exclusion of the ministers or stated members of any particular communion, may admit of question; but there is little hazard in asserting, that they ought at least to regulate the intercourse of the ministers and members of *differing* communions, with one another. Viewed in this light, his system exhibits a profound knowledge of the great principles of evangelical charity, and forms an illustrious instance of the extent to which a sublime and eminently practical piety can sometimes overbear all the prejudices of a particular age and country, and anticipate that better order of things,—that reign of universal forbearance and love,—to which all things are tending. It may be confidently affirmed that the views of Jeremy Taylor on this subject are rapidly diffusing themselves in the present day. While religious communions continue to stand sullenly aloof from one another on points which they all mutually admit to be non-essential; while their ministers refuse all interchange of offices; so long must they, when judged by the enlarged principles of the gospel, be accounted *intolerant*, whatever liberty they may allow to one another. They may not wish to impose their creed on other denominations of christians; but so long as there is no sympathy, no communion, no interchange of kindness between the differing parties, so long are they violating the great principle of christian toleration. They may retain their different opinions; they may, they *must* form separate communions on those differences; but whenever those differences are confessedly non-essential, it ought not to prevent, and the time is coming when it will not prevent, a truly fraternal intercourse. Then, and not till then, will they be *truly* tolerant.

Jeremy Taylor, after he had attained the honours of a bishopric, was charged with having at least partially abandoned the principles maintained in the "Liberty of Prophesying," in certain public discourses, more especially in his "Sermon," preached at the opening of the Parliament in Ireland. It ap-

pears, however, to the present writer, as to Bishop Heber, that Taylor cannot be justly charged with having materially modified any of his main opinions. The supposition has very probably flowed from the altered *tone* which Jeremy Taylor adopted. We all know that a total change of circumstances will make a wonderful difference in the mode of stating certain sentiments we still hold, as well as in the degree of zeal with which we defend them. It was not in human nature that Jeremy Taylor (and with all his excellencies, he was by no means exempt from our common frailties) should express himself, when raised to a bishopric, and, above all, severely annoyed by those very differences of religion for which he had claimed toleration, with the same earnestness and eagerness with which he expressed himself, when his own church was under a cloud, and a suppliant for that indulgence which she, in common with other communions, had so long denied to others.

The " Liberty of Prophesying " is introduced by a beautiful dedication to Hatton, in which the writer briefly but most eloquently expounds the principles of the work. The work itself is divided into twenty-two sections. The first two are occupied in explaining the general principles on which his scheme of toleration is founded; the following seven, in showing that there is no *certain* judge of controversies; neither " scripture," from the differing views of its interpreters; nor " tradition," nor " councils," nor " the pope," nor the " fathers or writers ecclesiastical," nor the church " in its diffusive capacity." The next three sections are employed in discussing the " authority of reason," and " the causes which render errors innocent in pious persons." The thirteenth and fourteenth enjoin the conduct to be pursued " towards those who differ from us ;" the fourteenth is a noble chapter on the origin of persecution. From the fifteenth to the twentieth sections, the author is engaged in showing within what limits the principle of toleration should be adopted by churches and governors, with an apology for the anabaptists and Roman catholics. The last two sections are thus entitled; " The duty of particular churches in allowing communion," and, " That particular men may communicate with churches of different persuasions, and how far they may do it."

Such is the general character and such the outline of this great work. There are some subordinate statements with which few would in this day agree, but which cannot be specifically noticed in the narrow limits of the present Essay. The whole work abounds in learning, and is full of Taylor's sublime and characteristic eloquence.

The next work of any considerable magnitude was, his " Life of Christ, or the Great Exemplar." As the " Holy Living and Dying," (which was published very shortly after it,) and the " Contemplations on the State of Man," are all mainly of a practical and devotional character, they will here be classed together, as they have many of the same general features of resemblance, and were intended to serve precisely the same great ends.

To these works, more especially, are applicable certain observations which were made some few pages back, when speaking of Jeremy Taylor's religious character. It was then mentioned, as a matter of regret, that the pious author did not always give sufficient prominence to those cardinal doctrines of the gospel, which lie at the basis of the whole christian system; and, without which, precepts may be enjoined, indeed, but will never be fully obeyed. That Jeremy Taylor firmly believed all this; that he was deeply impressed with the beautiful and symmetrical structure of the gospel, and the mutual subordination of all its parts,—is evident from numberless passages of his works; still he is apt, in the works now under consideration, to introduce the grand and inspiring topics of the christian faith with too great a rarity; to insist on many*

* These observations apply not so much to the " Great Exemplar," however, as to the " Holy Living and Dying," and the " Contemplations on the State of Man." As a brief illustration, we may point to the following observations in the section on " Contentedness in all Estates and Accidents." We should like to know whether a bereaved parent or friend was ever very effectually consoled by such considerations as these.

" To cure which, [sorrow for a departed friend,] we may consider, that all the world must die, and therefore to be impatient at the death of a person, concerning whom it was certain and known that he must die, is to mourn, because thy friend or child was not born an angel; and, when thou hast awhile made thyself miserable by an importunate and useless grief, it may be thou shalt die thyself, and leave others to their choice, whether they will mourn for thee or no: but, by that time, it will appear, how impertinent that grief was, which served no end of life, and ended in thy own funeral. But what great matter is it, if sparks fly upward, or a stone falls into a pit; if that which was combustible be burned, or that which was liquid be melted, or that which is mortal do die? It is no more than a man does every day; for every night death hath gotten possession of that day, and we shall never live that day over again; and when the last day is come, there are no more days left for us to die."—" But (as concerning thy own particular) remove thy thoughts back to those days in which thy child was not born, and you are now, but as then you was, and there is no difference, but that you had a son born: and if you reckon that for evil, you are unthankful for the blessing; if it be good, it is better that you had the blessing for a while, than not at all; and yet, if he had never been born, this sorrow had not been at all."

of the very subordinate motives to obedience, at a length very disproportioned to their relative magnitude and importance; and now and then, though not very often, to enforce great duties, or inculcate self-control, moderation, severity of manners, and contempt of the world, by a profuse employment of arguments, not false in themselves, but totally inefficacious; arguments which would better befit the pages of those stoical moralists, whom he so lavishly quotes, than those of a christian theologian; arguments which, if they are worthy of mention at all, might be glanced at with the utmost brevity; so inconsiderable is the influence they exert, compared with those grand and overpowering motives which the gospel supplies, which ought ever to be the principal incentives to "Holy Living and Dying," and the never-ceasing subjects of those who would teach the way either to the one or the other.

It may also be observed, that a more cautious style of *expression* would have been eminently desirable in many instances, to guard his readers against the error and the danger of supposing that there is some meritorious efficacy in their good deeds, or that heaven may be purchased by a certain amount of prayers and alms. It is certain, that Taylor's fixed and often repeated opinion was, that a christian's obedience flows simply from an unfeigned reception of the cardinal doctrines of the gospel, and derives its whole value from the efficacy of Christ's work. It was stated in a preceding page that Jeremy Taylor was apt to express himself with extraordinary latitude and want of caution, and the causes of this peculiarity were pointed out; there are, perhaps, few of the instances of incautious expression referred to in the above work, which, when interpreted, as in all fairness they ought to be, by comparison with other portions of his writings, are not susceptible of a sound solution. Still there are some instances in which he cannot be vindicated from inconsistency of statement; while there are many others, in which, though he may have meant well, he has not expressed himself wisely.

To him, however, who peruses these works with correct views, and who habitually applies to them, as he goes on, the grand principles and doctrines of the gospel, there are few pieces of practical theology which may be rendered more profitable. They are evidently the productions of one who had attained very exalted views of that elevation and purity of character, which it is the object of christianity to form in all who embrace it; who himself panted to attain it; and who habitually, and diligently, and prayerfully used all those holy "arts," and "instruments," and "methods," which Infinite Wisdom has enjoined for the conservation and increase of piety. They are the works of one who knew much of human nature—of its infirmities, and its temptations; and of the whole science (and it is a profound one) of christian experience.

The "Life of Christ, or the Great Exemplar," is as characteristic both of Jeremy Taylor's peculiar excellences, and his peculiar defects, as any of his works; and it may be added, that it is one in which the former appear in the most attractive, and the latter in their least repulsive, forms. The chief excellences of Jeremy Taylor do not, as is well known even to his most superficial readers, consist in continuity of thought, or regularity of method, but in detached passages of exquisite beauty. Now, as the work in question is, in fact, nothing more or less than a number of devout meditations on the principal incidents of our Saviour's life, the qualities above mentioned are not much missed, because not much wanted.

The title of the work, "The History of the Life of Christ," can give the reader but a very imperfect, or rather an *erroneous*, idea of its nature or its contents. The "Great Exemplar," by which it is generally known, gives a much more correct impression. It is, as already stated, a series of devout reflections and meditations on the principal events in our Saviour's history. It is almost wholly practical, and has scarcely an observation of a critical nature in it. Nay, the author not only makes no attempt to elucidate the critical difficulties of the gospel narrative, or to harmonize apparent discrepancies, or to arrange the events of Christ's life in chronological order, but avails himself of the accounts, often most fabulous and absurd, which the traditions of the early ages have preserved respecting our Lord, his family, and his disciples.

Many of these "Discourses" are amongst the most beautiful and impressive specimens of Jeremy Taylor's eloquence. And it may be remarked, as a proof of the exuberance and fertility of his mind, that many of those "sections," which are on subjects apparently the most barren, are rich in vigorous thought and beautiful illustration. It is impossible not to admire, with what felicitous art,—with what originality,—he will often found, on the most trivial fact of sacred history, a train of the most impressive reflection. The reader may easily see an illustration of this remark, by turning to discourse the first, section third, on the "Duty of nursing Children in Imitation of the blessed Virgin Mother;" or the discourse, section fourth, entitled "Considerations of the Epiphany of the blessed Jesus by a Star, and the Adoration of Jesus by the Eastern Magi;" and to the thoughts on "Meditation," which, by the by, with the exception of

one or two incautious expressions, are characterized throughout by the profoundest wisdom, and the highest, because a sanctified and truly christian philosophy.

The next work was the "Holy Living and Dying;" it is probably the production by which he is best known. Its object, as appears by the dedication, was to furnish the members of the church of England ("then under a cloud") with a "help" to their piety and devotion, while unable to attend the regular ministrations of their own communion. It has very little in it, however, (and in this it resembles Jeremy Taylor's other practical writings,) which is not equally fit and equally unfit for every communion.

The "Holy Living" is divided into four chapters; the first is occupied with the "Consideration of the general Instruments and Means serving to a holy Life;" the second is on "Christian Sobriety;" the third on "Christian Justice;" the last on "Christian Religion." There is obviously some peculiarity in this arrangement, which is, however, easily accounted for. The very title of the second and third chapters shows that Jeremy Taylor never intended that *christian religion*, taken in its widest sense, is something exclusive of christian sobriety and justice; which are, in fact, only particular exhibitions of christian principles, in relation to certain personal and social duties. All the difficulty is avoided, by bearing in mind that Taylor here uses the word "religion," merely to designate its immediate acts and appropriate offices; all those which relate to the intercourse between the soul and God.

There is one false and pernicious speculation in this work, (at least so the present writer deems it,) which deserves specific mention. Jeremy Taylor's views on the subject of the sabbath were not such as have generally been held by the most sound divines. He believed that the command to observe any such day ceased with the Jewish dispensation; and that it is no longer matter of positive institution. He still contended, however, that such observance was a christian *duty*, resting it on apostolic precedents, on the usages and sanction of christian antiquity, and on ecclesiastical authority. Such an admission as this neutralized, in his particular case, all the mischievous effects which might otherwise flow from such an opinion. The same view of the subject is defended at greater length in the third book of the "Ductor Dubitantium."

The "Holy Dying" is divided into four chapters; the first is entitled, "A general Preparation towards a holy and blessed Death, by way of consideration;" the second, "A general Preparation towards a holy and blessed Death, by way of exercise;" the third, "Of the State of Sickness, and the Temptations incident to it, with their proper Remedies;" the fourth, "Of the Practice of the Graces proper to the State of Sickness, which a sick Man may practise alone."

The "Contemplations on the State of Man in this Life, and in that which is to come," is a posthumous work, and by no means equal to the "Life of Christ," or "Holy Living and Dying." It contains many passages of great splendour and beauty, but a more than usual display of vicious taste, a perverted rhetoric, and ill-applied learning. It is distributed into two books, corresponding to the great general divisions of the subject. Each book is prefaced by an address to the reader.

A portion of his Ενιαυτος, or year of sermons, was his next publication of any considerable size. The observations now about to be made, apply equally to all his discourses.

The "Sermons" of Jeremy Taylor are amongst the most valuable,—perhaps it might be affirmed that altogether they are the most valuable, of his writings. The reader has, however, been already fully forewarned that they are not strictly to be regarded as "*sermons*" at all. Of the deficiencies of Jeremy Taylor's genius in relation to pulpit eloquence, enough has been already said. If the remarks previously made be well founded, it could not but be expected that, considered strictly as discourses *intended to convince and persuade*, his sermons should be marked by very glaring defects. But the fact is, there is scarcely a single peculiarity of the *sermon* in them; there is no attempt at adaptation to a public audience. Nothing except the name, distinguishes them from compositions intended for the closet or the study.

There is not one of them, it is true, which does not contain much that is admirable and impressive, and which no audience could hear without profit; yet not only is there no special adaptation of *such matter* to a public discourse, not only might it with just as much propriety be introduced *unaltered* into theological disquisitions intended for private reading; but it is almost always combined with matter that ought by no means to be found in *sermons* at all. In none does he refrain from the most prodigal display of his erudition; Greek and Latin strew the pages (more particularly those of the sermons entitled the "Marriage Ring," "Apples of Sodom," and the "House of Feasting") as plentifully as in his works intended more especially for the learned. In none does he abstain from incidental discussion of the most profitless subjects of speculation, if they chance to suggest themselves amidst more important matter.

It has indeed been plausibly conjectured by Bishop Heber, that the "sermons" of Jeremy Taylor were not delivered precisely in the form in which they were printed; that, in at least one respect, they were somewhat modified previous to publication. So profuse are his quotations from learned authors, that his biographer thinks it impossible that any man could be guilty of the absurdity of adducing them in the hearing of an illiterate audience;* that they must, therefore, have been suppressed on the actual delivery of the "sermons," and introduced only when they were given to the world. It may be admitted, indeed, that there is considerable plausibility in this conjecture; and if we were to measure the habits of that age by our own, or even by the dictates of common sense, the conjecture would appear abundantly probable. But so universal was the practice of learned quotation in those days, so infinitely absurd the tricks which profound erudition could play in the pulpit, that there appears nothing incredible in the supposition, that Jeremy Taylor interlarded his discourses, even when first delivered, with all the edifying scraps of Greek and Latin which are now found in them. Nor is he, after all, more frequently guilty of this practice (in proportion to his learning) than the generality of the preachers of the age. They, so far as we may judge by their writings, never spared their Greek and Latin any more than did Jeremy Taylor; the only difference appears to have been, that they could not afford to be so profuse. They quoted up to the measure of *their* learning, and he up to the measure of *his*.

If, then, we may judge by the universal practice of Taylor's contemporaries, the hypothesis of Bishop Heber is not sustained by sufficient proof; unless, indeed, we also imagine—of which there is not the vestige of any evidence, but decisive evidence to the contrary—that his contemporaries also restrained the flow of their learning when in the pulpit, and merely indulged it when preparing their discourses for the press.

The most astounding fact connected with this practice is yet to be mentioned. There is but too conclusive proof, that in many instances the taste of the audience was as vicious as that of the preacher. They were often not content with "sermons," unless they were adorned with the spoils of at least two or three learned languages, nor thought themselves fully edified, unless they heard a few things which they could not understand.

Probably, the preachers of that day thought it a sufficient excuse for the practice, that the quotations with which they bedizened their sermons were generally *translated* as soon as uttered. Jeremy Taylor has almost universally adopted this custom in his printed sermons, and indeed in almost all his writings. This was, it may be conceded, some palliation of the folly; but nothing can be urged as a sufficient justification of it. It is truly wonderful that it should have prevailed so generally and lasted so long.

Jeremy Taylor's "sermons," however, as already stated more than once, are not to be viewed as sermons, but as eloquent theological disquisitions, adapted to practical purposes and to private reading; and in this point of view, they are well worthy of frequent and earnest perusal. They are, on the whole, probably more thoroughly imbued with his characteristic excellences than any of his other writings, and have no more than the usual portion of his defects. As to these latter, some of the observations made on his "Life of Christ" apply with equal force to his "sermons." In these short pieces his irregularity of method and his abrupt transitions of thought, are of less consequence than in his larger works.

The "sermons" of Jeremy Taylor are sixty-four in all: of which the fifty-two which compose the Ενιαυτος, and three of the "supplementary sermons," (published some time after the yearly course appeared,) are on general subjects. The remaining nine were all preached on special occasions.

All these sermons abound in detached passages of the sublimest and loftiest eloquence, on all those topics which, as already intimated in a previous part of this Essay, Jeremy Taylor was so peculiarly well qualified to treat. Though not free from occasional inaccuracies, and in some instances chargeable with serious inconsistencies of statement, they are full of the noblest christian philosophy; of the most captivating descriptions of the grandeur and glory of the gospel, as a system for the renovation and purification of our nature; of its tendencies to elevate and ennoble humanity; of the beauty and glory of spiritual excellence in all its forms; of its universal harmony with the well-being of all intellectual existence. Nor has he shown himself less profoundly acquainted with all the deformity and obliquities of that depraved heart which the blessed system of the gospel was designed to renovate. He has furnished us with the most deeply affecting descriptions, not only of the more appalling exhibitions of wickedness and vice, but of those more subtle forms under which it lies hid in the recesses of the soul, and not unfrequently under the mask of a

* These sermons were preached at Golden Grove, in Wales.

spurious virtue, or even in close alliance with excellence that is real. He has also, as in his other practical works, shown himself deeply skilled in christian experience, and in a knowledge of all the instruments and methods of spiritual discipline, for attaining greater elevation of piety and higher degrees of holiness.

The most splendid and eloquent of these wonderful discourses are, "The Miracles of the Divine Mercy;" "The Faith and Patience of the Saints, or the righteous Cause oppressed;" "Doomsday Book, or Christ's Advent to Judgment;" "The descending and entailed Curse cut off;" "The Mercy of the Divine Judgments, or God's Method of curing Sinners;" "The House of Feasting, or the Epicure's Measures;" "The Apples of Sodom, or the Fruits of Sin;" and "The Foolish Exchange."

Amongst the most beautiful and impressive may be classed the "Return of Prayers;" "The Flesh and the Spirit;" "The Righteousness evangelical described."

But those which, perhaps, are the most edifying and *uniformly* excellent of the whole, are the sermons "On Growth in Grace, with its proper instruments and signs," and "Growth in Sin, or the several states and degrees of sinners, with the manner how they are to be treated." It is singular that his biographer has mentioned the latter of these with distinct approbation, but not the former; whereas, as it appears to us, the former are far more excellent, though not perhaps quite so striking. They exhibit greater sobriety of style, as well as more uniform excellence of matter, than any other discourses in the whole series.

The sermons on "Christian Prudence," more especially the first and second parts, and those on "Christian Simplicity," are full of practical wisdom and of a truly sanctified philosophy. In the last sermon on "Christian Prudence," he has an amusing opportunity of *exemplifying* the principles for which he is contending. In his advice as to "choosing a religious guide," he has, of course, occasion to refer to the peculiarities of many of the sects of the day: in so doing he has followed his own advice given in a preceding part of the discourse, "that we should not by an indiscreet zeal cast ourselves into a needless danger," and that we should often reprove the errors of others, not by a distinct mention of those who hold them, but by "categorical propositions and abstracted declarations."

By the way, we may observe that this sermon has one not very complimentary reference to Milton. Amongst the imitators and successors of the Nicolaitans, the Carpocratians, the Gnostics, and "all their impure branches," he reckons those who maintain, "that we are not tied to the law of commandments; that the law of grace is a law of liberty; and that liberty is to do what we list; *that divorces are to be granted upon many and slight causes.*"

Perhaps the sermons most characteristic are those entitled "The Marriage Ring, or the Mysteriousness and Duties of Marriage," and the "House of Feasting, or the Epicure's Measures."

Of the sermons preached on special occasions, it is not necessary to say any thing further. That on the "Gunpowder Plot" was his earliest publication, and though it has some fine passages, it is, as might be expected, far more strongly marked by his characteristic extravagancies and his florid rhetoric, than his subsequent productions.

The "Real Presence and Spiritual of Christ in the blessed Sacrament," first published in 1655, and his "Dissuasive from Popery," which was the last considerable work of his life, but is introduced here as belonging to the papistical controversy, are by far the most successful of his polemical efforts. The former will more than sustain comparison with any of the works published on the much controverted subject on which it treats; and the latter is probably surpassed by no work in our language, if we except Chillingworth's "Religion of Protestants."

The former of these able treatises is divided into thirteen sections; the points he endeavours to establish are these: that "transubstantiation is not warranted by scripture;" here he enters into a very full and acute examination of all the passages alleged in the controversy; "that it is against *sense;*" "that it is wholly without or against *reason;*" and "that it was not the doctrine of the primitive church." The most powerful sections are the fourth, fifth, and sixth, in which he examines the "words of institution;" the ninth, in which he shows, from the universal language of scripture, that the words of institution are not to be interpreted literally but figuratively; the tenth and eleventh, in which he shows that the doctrine he controverts is alike contradicted by the senses and by reason; and the twelfth, in which he most triumphantly proves that transubstantiation was not the belief of the primitive church. Here his immense learning is displayed to great advantage.

It is a pity, however, that Taylor should have introduced the word "*real*" into his treatise at all.

Though the innocence of his meaning is shown by the most abundant explanation, yet it is not true in any tolerable sense of the word "*really*," that Christ's body is *really* in the sacrament. All that he means is, as himself contends, that Christ's body is *figuratively* there; which is just as much as admitting that he has used the word "really" in an improper sense.

The "Dissuasive from Popery," as already intimated, was published, after Taylor's elevation to the episcopal chair, at the request of the whole body of Irish bishops, who thought that some able and popular treatise on the subject might be useful to the common people, and tend to abate the nuisance of popery. In requesting *Jeremy Taylor* to write such a treatise, they surely forgot either the object they had in view, or the character of the man to whom they applied. It was as though a deputation had waited on Sir Isaac Newton, with a request that he would be pleased to compile an elementary book of arithmetic for the use of the lower forms in schools. Even if Jeremy Taylor had produced the treatise they wanted, at the best it would have been only what a far inferior genius might have supplied quite as well. But admirable as Taylor's genius was, it was not in his nature to write any thing of an "ad populum" cast on such a subject.

The result was such as might have been expected. The "Dissuasive" is a conclusive work on the subject on which it treats, but fit only for the learned; and as little capable of being understood or appreciated by vulgar readers, as the "Ductor Dubitantium." It is divided into two parts; the second is prefaced by an introduction, in which he replies to the animadversions of an anonymous popish antagonist, who had published some strictures on the first part. The first part consists of three chapters, in the first of which he shows that "The doctrine of the Romish Church, in the controverted articles, is neither catholic, apostolic, nor primitive;" in the second, that "The Church of Rome, as it is at this day disordered, teaches doctrines, and uses practices, which are in themselves, or in their true and immediate consequences, direct impieties, and give warranty to a wicked life;" in the third, that "The Church of Rome teaches doctrines, which in many things are destructive of christian society in general, and of monarchy in special; both which, the religion of the church of England and Ireland does, by her doctrines, greatly and christianly support." Of these, the first chapter, as might be expected, shows Taylor's immense reading to the best advantage; though the second is, perhaps, on other grounds, the most powerful. Those sections which are entitled "On the Doctrine of Indulgences;" "Purgatory;" "Public Prayer denied to the common people in a language they understand;" "On picturing God and the Trinity;" "The Roman Doctrines of Repentance, Penances, and Satisfactions;" "The Roman Doctors differ as to the efficiency of Indulgences;" "Roman Errors in reference to Prayer;" "Effects of worshipping Images;" are, perhaps, the most admirable.

The second part is divided into two books, in which he views many of the same subjects under other aspects, and reiterates and confirms former statements. The sections on "Traditions;" "Of the sufficiency of the Scriptures;" "On the expurgatory Indices in the Roman Church;" "On auricular Confession;" are all excellent.

The style of these treatises on the Roman catholic controversy is very superior to that of his other polemical pieces. It possesses both more polish and more vigour; while the dull learning and dry argument are relieved by much vivacity, wit, and humour. Some passages, as specimens of these qualities, have already been cited in a former part of this Essay.

"The Doctrine and Practice of Repentance," as its very title imports, is partly theological and controversial, partly practical. In pursuance of this design, each section of the work is followed by some appropriate meditation or prayer.

It is this work which contains Taylor's singular speculations on the subject of original sin. They form the seventh chapter. On this chapter a few remarks will be made, after the general merits and defects of the work have been briefly pointed out.

To none of Jeremy Taylor's pieces are those remarks which have been already made on Taylor's character, as a theologian, more completely applicable, than to the present; it is most strongly marked both by his peculiar defects as a speculative writer and by his excellences as a teacher of practical piety. Much of what is purely controversial and doctrinal is false, or, at best, dubious; while the large portion of what is practical is calculated to be eminently useful. So much is this the case, that even his errors, with respect to the doctrine of "original sin," are in a great measure neutralized, by the strong admissions which, when simply inculcating the lessons of piety, he often makes of human weakness and depravity, and of the absolute necessity of the illumination and influences of divine grace, to renovate and purify our

nature. Under the deep and humbling consciousness of human infirmity he forgets, or seems to forget, his speculative theology.

The work is divided into ten chapters, the first of which treats of the "Foundation and Necessity of Repentance;" the second, "Of the nature and definition of Repentance; and what parts of duty are signified by it in Holy Scripture;" the third, "Of the distinction of Sins, mortal and venial; in what sense to be admitted; and how the smallest sins are to be repented of and expiated;" a chapter in which he explodes, in an admirable manner, the absurd distinctions of the papists; the fourth treats of "actual single sins, and what repentance is proper to them;" the fifth, "of habitual sins, and their manner of eradication and cure, and their proper instruments of pardon;" the sixth and seventh, on "concupiscence and original sin; and whether or no, or how far, we are bound to repent of it;" the eighth, "of sins of infirmity;" the ninth, "of the effect of repentance; namely, the remission of sins;" the last, "of ecclesiastical penance, or the fruits of repentance."

Of these, the first, the second, third, fourth, and eighth, are decidedly the best. Section the second, of the first chapter, "of the possibility or impossibility of keeping the precepts of the gospel," is on the whole exceedingly acute, and contains statements and admissions which, pursued to their legitimate consequences, virtually refute his theory on the subject of original sin. Most of the other chapters contain many things which are decidedly erroneous; many others which must be received with caution; and many more still, which are stated with that want of precision which has so often been represented as characteristic of this great writer, and as demanding, in every reader who would do him justice, eminent candour, an enlarged acquaintance with his works, and a liberal interpretation of particular points.

The *manner* in which he introduces the subject of "original sin," in this treatise, a subject which might, at first sight, appear to have no immediate connection with its principal topics, is sufficiently apparent from the statement just given of its contents. The slightest glance at that statement shows how the seventh chapter is connected with the rest. Taylor was led into the discussion by the desire of ascertaining whether original sin be a "*sin*" in the *ordinary* sense of that word, and whether, as a consequence, man is or is not obliged to *repent* of it.

That "original sin" is not "sin" in the ordinary sense of the word; that in this connection it is used in a peculiar and technical sense; that it is not the best word that could have been employed for the purpose; and that, as "original sin" is not sin in the ordinary sense, no man can repent of it in the ordinary sense of repentance,—are points, which are now almost universally conceded by theologians on both sides of this intricate question. And, perhaps, a candid interpretation of the language of those whom Taylor opposed, might have convinced him that, even in his day, there was sufficient agreement on these points, to absolve him from the necessity of discussing such a topic in a "Treatise on Repentance." He appears, however, to have thought otherwise.

The principal cause of Jeremy Taylor's errors on this subject are sufficiently apparent from a careful perusal of his treatise. It is evident that he was driven to adopt the extreme opinions by his horror of those who had *really*, or as he imagined, pushed the doctrine of original sin to pernicious and dangerous consequences; especially those who contended that even infants might be eternally condemned for the transgression of our first parents. That there have been some theologians who have maintained this fearful paradox, we admit; and such men Jeremy Taylor has satisfactorily confuted, by arguments which, it need not be said, have nothing to do with his peculiar theory of original sin. That there have been a still greater number of theologians, who have expressed themselves with most eminent want of caution, and even with culpable negligence on this subject, we are as little disposed to deny. Still we cannot help thinking that, *in the majority of instances*, carelessness and negligence are all with which they are chargeable, and that they would have recoiled, as cordially as did Taylor himself, from the horrible consequences which he attaches to their doctrine. This seems evident from the fact that, if we may judge from the general strain of their writings, they by no means contend that Adam's posterity are condemned *irrespectively* of their own moral state, or the actual development of the evil tendencies of our common nature; clearly showing, that when they say that all are condemned in Adam as the federal head of his race, they only mean that, as all his posterity morally resemble him, it is just to treat them as he is treated; that he is with propriety regarded as a specimen of the class; that, consequently, if any individual of our race could be found, who had lived in undeviating obedience to the Divine law, he would in no sense be condemned for Adam's sin; in other words, *that none are finally condemned for Adam's sin alone.*

This great truth is, we believe, now generally admitted both by Calvinists and Arminians. If there are

any who deny it, it may be freely conceded that they fall under the triumphant arguments by which Jeremy Taylor has refuted this enormous error.

If Taylor had stopped here, he would have done well; but in the prosecution of his argument he has gone much further. In his eagerness to vindicate the Divine government, he has been betrayed into speculations by no means necessary to the refutation of the errors which filled him with such indignation; speculations equally at variance with Scripture and with fact; and which, even if admitted to be founded in truth, would leave this stupendous difficulty just where they found it.

His theory is briefly this:—that man's nature is totally untouched by the fall: that he now enters the world in precisely the same state in which Adam first came from the hand of his Creator; with neither more nor less of moral excellence; with an equal power of standing or of falling; that the great advantage which Adam possessed was not in any original superiority of nature, but in certain "*supernatural*" communications of grace bestowed, so long as he continued obedient, over and above all those native endowments which belonged to him as a creature: that, on his fall, these supernatural communications were withdrawn, and have never been vouchsafed to his descendants. Of this reasoning, it may be safely affirmed, first, that the *premises* are all pure assumptions; and secondly, that even if they were not so, they would leave the main difficulties of the question still unsolved.

As to the *premises*,—it is needless to remind the reader that the Scripture says not one syllable of these "supernatural endowments," with which God is supposed to have succoured the *originally* infirm nature of our first parent; a nature which, on Taylor's hypothesis, God himself is supposed to have created as weak as our own. This supposition, as will be hereafter shown, has as disastrous an aspect on the Divine attributes of goodness and benevolence, as the errors which, on these very grounds, it was Taylor's avowed object to confute.—It may, moreover, be remarked, that the general strain of Scripture, fairly and honestly interpreted, inevitably leads to the supposition that the nature of Adam was *originally* transcendently superior to what it was after his fall, or than that which any of his descendants have possessed since.

But these *premises*, even if facts, would leave the main difficulties of the question just where they were.

In the first place, it may be observed that if obedience is, as Taylor contends, impracticable, *impossible*, without such *supernatural* aids as Adam possessed; in other words, if man is created with such a nature as that his disobedience is inevitable, unless he be succoured with such "grace" as God has not vouchsafed, then it will be to the full as difficult to vindicate the justice and goodness of God in having created such a being, and still more in punishing him for disobedience, to him inevitable, as in the conduct which the more received hypotheses on the subject of original sin impute to the Divine Being. Secondly, it is evident that Taylor's hypothesis really supposes man's nature as deeply injured by the "original transgression," as does that of his opponents; for if, as he imagines, those supernatural aids which were vouchsafed to Adam, were sufficient to compensate for all the deficiencies of nature, and that they *would* have been vouchsafed to his descendants, had he not fallen, it is obvious that the injury inflicted on them is as great as though their very nature had received the shock which it is truly supposed to have received. So long as man is placed by Adam's fall in circumstances which render his sinning *inevitable*, (as Taylor admits,) it little matters whether this is immediately occasioned by an *external* or an *internal* injury; by the withdrawal of preternatural graces or by an actual depravation of our native faculties.

Indeed, so long as the great fact is admitted, (as it now usually is,) that man, by the fall of Adam, is such or so situated, that he will as surely sin as that he exists; the great difficulty remains where it was, whatever hypothesis be formed as to the *mode* in which the injury has been sustained. That difficulty is,—to show how it can consist with justice and equity, that the moral state of one being should be inevitably determined by his dependence on another. That such is the case with man, is abundantly proved by *fact*, and is confirmed by a thousand analogous cases, which present themselves throughout the whole of created nature, the great law of which is *mutual dependence*. The virtue and the vice, the joys and the sorrows, the happiness and the misery of this lower creation are intertwined in one inextricable web. The difficulty is evidently to be met, not by the construction of any such unsatisfactory hypothesis as that of Jeremy Taylor. The only answer of which the case admits,—and even in our present imperfect state of knowledge, it is sufficient to confirm our faith, if not to satisfy our curiosity,—is, that no man will be condemned for original sin alone, but for sins which, even with all our infirmities and all our natural depravity, it was our duty to have avoided and our guilt that we have committed.

Precisely the same observations apply to the controversies which have been carried on with respect to

the *extent* of the injury sustained in consequence of the original transgression. The question of the "more or the less" is surely of little importance, so long as all admit, that the injury is of *such* a nature as inevitably leads to a state of transgression, which, without the redeeming efficacy of the gospel, will for ever exclude us from the favour of God. An aggravation of *this*, it might be imagined, it would be not very easy to conceive; and as to any extenuation of it, while this tremendous consequence remains, —all that can be offered is less than the dust in the balance. On this point we cannot refrain from citing the judicious observations of Bishop Heber.

"The fact is, indeed, that with the allowances which all these divines have made,—the difference between their view of man's corruption, and that which is taken by the Calvinists, is not, as to any practical consequence, worth disputing. Both sides allow that man is so far fallen as to be unable, without grace, to rise to heaven or escape everlasting punishment; and Taylor, in particular, has, in many of his argumentative and all his devotional passages, admitted, in the humblest language, his vileness, his helplessness, his worthlessness. But, if the ruin be effectual, it signifies little whether it be total; and if man is by nature the heir of wrath, it is a question of very inferior importance, whether there may or may not be some scattered good qualities yet remaining about him, which may make a difference in his final lot, so far at least as a mitigation of punishment."

In attempting to get rid of the main difficulty against the hypothesis that our nature is still just what it was before the fall,—namely, the *universal* wickedness of human nature, Jeremy Taylor falls into an amusing fallacy. He reasons in a circle. He argues that this *universal* wickedness is the effect of "evil education and immoral examples;" as though these were any thing more than particular *exhibitions* of that very depravity of which they are offered as a sufficient solution, or, as though an effect could be the cause of itself. At the very best, such a statement only removes the difficulty one step further back, reminding one of that sage system of Indian cosmogony, in which the earth is represented as upborne on the back of an elephant and the elephant on an enormous tortoise. The question immediately returns, "And what supports the tortoise?" In like manner, it may be asked in the present case, What causes that *universal* prevalence of evil education and evil example, which are supposed to account for the universality of human wickedness?

It has been already remarked, that this incautious speculation was of little consequence in Taylor's particular case; his deep and unfeigned humility, his habitual and profound consciousness of his own infirmities, and of the difficulties which impede all progress in holiness and virtue, prevented the pernicious effects which might otherwise have followed from his system, and serve to show how far asunder a man's speculative belief and his practical sentiments may often be. In this instance, he reminds one of what he himself beautifully observes of certain classes of religionists, in his sermon on "The Miracles of the Divine Mercy," "that they are often innocently and invincibly mistaken, and mean nothing but truth; and that while in the simplicity of their heart they talk nothing but error, in the defiance and contradiction of their own doctrines, they live according to its contradictory."

The "Ductor Dubitantium, or Rule of Conscience," which is the last work which demands any particular observations, is the most voluminous of all Jeremy Taylor's productions, yet of inferior practical utility to almost any of the rest. It is that on which he expended most time and labour; that in which his great genius and his prodigious learning are most prodigally displayed; above all, it was the work to which he himself looked as the basis of his fame, and which he accordingly elaborated with the most unwearied diligence.

In this expectation he completely deceived himself; for there is not a production of his pen which is not more read than this great work of casuistry. His error, however, consisted in an ill choice of his subject, not in his mode of treating it. A *minute* treatise on casuistry is not to be rendered attractive; there is a radical vice in the subject, which no power of genius can fully obviate. Jeremy Taylor, indeed, has done all that mortal man could do to enliven and adorn it; but not even the magic of *his* genius could render it generally interesting. It is sufficient praise, that it is by far the *least repulsive* work on the subject that has ever been given to the world.

One great reason of the general neglect into which this work has fallen, is, that people no longer feel an interest in by far the greater number of the discussions to which it relates. In his estimate of the importance of such discussions, Jeremy Taylor committed a great error.

The fact is, he thought that the nation stood in much greater need of casuistry, than was really the case. It was true, indeed, (as he complains,) that protestants *had* generally neglected the study of this uninviting science, and that, while the Romish church, with whose writers he was so familiar and

from whom he contracted much of his taste for casuistical theology, possessed numberless works on this subject, protestants could hardly point to one. He should have remembered, however, that this very neglect was, if not the result of a deliberate judgment of the comparative insignificance of the science, a necessary consequence of a return to the simplicity of the christian system as developed in the New Testament, and a hearty adoption of those comprehensive laws of morals, which it has delivered to us ;—laws which, for the most part, are of such easy application to the actual circumstances of life. It is true, that in the infinite complexity and ever-changing relations of human affairs, there will still be, even in spite of the most attentive study of the great rules of the New Testament, aye, or even of the most voluminous systems of casuistry, many cases of much intricacy and of difficult solution. These, however, will form a very small proportion, compared with those to which the great principles of the New Testament are immediately applicable ; while even of these exceptions, there are few on which the judgment cannot come to a satisfactory decision, if the heart be but sincere and honest in its inquiries after truth ; and, above all, if it be rendered (as it will be by such a disposition) anxious to take the *safe* side of every practical difficulty, and willing rather to forego some advantage, than snatch at it with a possible violation of what is right. And as to difficulties connected with *religion*,—the subject which has hitherto been far more fruitful of casuistical discussion than any other,—there is hardly a single case of importance that is not determined by a simple recurrence to the divine simplicity of the New Testament. He who habitually believes that " God looketh on the heart ;" that *thence* are the " fountains of life ;" that the essence of good and evil actions is the motive from which they are performed ; that the circumstances of actions are always less important than the actions themselves; that the means derive their sole dignity and value from the end, and not the end from the means ; that though the external duties of religion are all to be performed, it is purely to promote the spiritual life of the soul, and that, consequently, their importance is always to be estimated by the great purpose they are designed to serve ; and above all, that in doubtful cases it is always better to lose a little than to endanger all ; to take always that road which we *know* is nearest to heaven and to greater degrees of purity and holiness than one of the direction of which we are in a degree uncertain ;—he, who habitually carries with him these principles, and a few more of like comprehensive import, may safely dispense with the wearisome discussions and frivolous distinctions of a minute and unprofitable casuistry. These are the " great lights " which rule the day, and, so long as they are above the horizon, render needless that dim and dubious light which is all that can reach us from the brightest luminaries of casuistical science.

Thus, then, if protestants neglected this science, it was because the grand principles they embraced placed them above the necessity of frequently appealing to it. They had removed into a well-built and commodious habitation, and no longer needed the clumsy buttresses which were necessary to support the vast, ill-compacted, and ruinous tenement of the church of Rome.

But when, as amongst the ancient Jews, or in the Romish church, all the above grand principles of ethics are subverted ; when vice and virtue are subjected to weight and measure ; when duties are exchanged and bartered, like any other commodities ; when merit and holiness are bought and sold by the pound and the bushel ; when the external circumstances of actions are magnified into greater importance than the actions themselves ; when the modes of duty are represented as more essential than the duties of which they are the instruments or the expressions ; when the great object of the whole system of religion is not only to enable men to do all, however doubtful, that they may lawfully do, but even to encourage them in doing what is unlawful with a secure conscience, and to reconcile eternal felicity with every earthly gratification ; and when for this purpose recourse is had to an infinity of subtle distinctions ;—it is no wonder that books of casuistry are multiplied, and that guides are rendered necessary for threading those intricate and mazy labyrinths, which themselves have first constructed to perplex mankind. The former evil is a necessary consequence of the latter ; such voluminous casuistry is an artificial remedy for difficulties equally artificial. As the whole system is full of snares for the conscience, so it was necessary to invent methods of releasing it from its perpetual entanglements and perplexities. But protestants, no longer exposed to the same dangers, no longer need the same securities. In consequence, a comparatively small part of Jeremy Taylor's work is taken up with those matters which, in the books of the Romish casuists, constitute the principal part of the cases of conscience.

The " Ductor Dubitantium " is divided into four books. The first treats of " Conscience, the kinds of it, and the general rules of conducting them." Under this he treats, in distinct chapters, " Of the Rule of Conscience in general ;" " Of the right or sure Conscience ;" " Of the confident or erroneous Conscience ;"

"Of the probable or thinking Conscience;" "Of a doubtful Conscience;" and "Of a scrupulous Conscience."

These chapters, on the whole, form, in the view of the present writer, the most valuable part of the work. Bishop Heber prefers the last book, on the "causes of good and evil; their limits and circumstances; their aggravations and diminutions;" but though very admirable, few, we apprehend, will think it equal to the first, either in general merit or practical utility; not to mention that these introductory chapters contain, either directly or by implication, most of what is found in the last book. The general remarks about to be made on the one, however, will apply to both.

The first book, it will be seen, is in fact preliminary to what is, more strictly speaking, the casuistical portion of the work; and the last is supplementary. But it is precisely this circumstance which renders these books so interesting and valuable; they are taken up, for the most part, in the discussion and establishment of great general principles,—principles to be afterwards applied to particular cases. They may, consequently, be read with benefit by every body. Indeed, as Jeremy Taylor aptly and wittily observes, at the close of the chapter on a doubtful conscience, "these advices or discourses of conscience in general, are intended but as directions how to take our physic, and what order to observe 'in diebus custodiæ;' but the determining the several doubts is like preparing and administering the medicines, which consist of very many ingredients."

Throughout these preliminary discussions, Jeremy Taylor contends for the great principle—without which, indeed, any consistent theory of human duty is impossible—that conscience, that is, the conviction that such and such actions are a *duty*, always *obliges*, whether it be rightly informed or not. The firmness with which he grasps this great maxim, shows that he had profoundly considered the whole question of the grounds of human obligation, and forms a striking contrast to the hesitating and contradictory manner in which many ethical writers have held the same doctrine.* It is true that, at first sight, *it appears* a dangerous admission, that conscience binds to the performance of an action intrinsically wrong, and consequently absolves from guilt in reference to that *particular action performed at such a bidding*. Yet all danger is removed by the consideration, that though no man is bound to attain clearer views of truth than he can, and consequently cannot be blamed for doing what his conscience, at the very time of action, sincerely tells him it is his duty to do, he is answerable for every instance in which he has neglected the proper means and opportunities of rightly informing himself or in which he has willingly shut his eyes, lest he should be set right; that wherever the action need not be immediately performed, he is bound to reconsider the grounds of it; that in all cases of habitual conduct, where the slightest doubt remains within or is suggested from without, he is bound to traverse the reasons of his conduct and to hold himself always ready to receive fresh light from whatsoever quarter it may be offered; that so far as he neglects any of these means of informing his conscience, he is accessory to its abuse; and, by consequence, in that degree, guilty; and that it is only absolutely unavoidable error which absolves the man from all guilt, both as regards the intrinsically evil action which he performs, and the mental process by which he arrived at the conclusion that he ought to perform it. Whenever this absolutely unavoidable error does exist indeed, the man is absolved from all guilt; and by parity of reason, his guilt is diminished as his opportunities of correct information were small, and the difficulties of attaining it great. To say otherwise, is to contradict all the cardinal principles of morals; it is to affirm that a man is guilty of what he cannot avoid; and that not only *moral* but *physical* necessity may be compatible with crime. The above great principles, therefore, Jeremy Taylor firmly holds throughout the whole of these preliminary books on Conscience; and they have imparted unusual clearness and consistency to his speculations. They have shed a guiding light over many of the intricate questions which come under discussion in the subsequent parts of the work.

The most valuable portions of these preliminary chapters appear to us to be,—rule iii. chap. i., on which he gives cautions against mistaking "prejudice or passion, fancy and affection, error or illusion, for conscience;"—rule iii. chap. ii., entitled, "The practical Judgment of a Right Conscience is always agreeable to the speculative determination of the Understanding;" in which will be found the admirable discussion already referred to, on the limits of faith and reason;—rule viii. of the same chapter, entitled, "He that sins against a right and sure Conscience, whatever the instance be, commits a great sin, but not a double

* A highly intelligent friend lately pointed out to the present writer a beautiful Latin ode of the great Barrow, in which he as fully and fearlessly maintains the same fundamental principle. It is entitled, "Conscientia erronea obligat," and will be found in the eighth volume of the octavo edition of his Works, published at Oxford, 1830.

one;" and in which he confutes the notion of the Roman casuists, that it was lawful for a judge, or other public functionary, to act against the conscience, provided such conduct was according to law;—the close of rule ix. of the same chapter, in which he examines, with great acuteness, "what changes may be made in moral actions by the persuasion and voice of conscience," and in which he establishes the important principle, "that conscience hath power in obligations and necessities, but not so much nor so often in permissions;" in other words, that we *must* do what she commands, but it does not follow that we are always right in doing all that she does not condemn.

The most impressive parts of chap. iii. are,—rule ii., "An erroneous Conscience binds us to Obedience;" —rule iii. that "An erring Conscience is a cause of Sin;"—rule iv. "That it is a greater Sin to do a good Action against our Conscience, than an evil Action in obedience to it;"—rule vi. "That Conscience is to be obeyed even against the Command of our Superiors."

The most valuable rules in the fourth chapter, which is on "The probable or thinking Conscience," are, —the second, entitled "A probable Conscience may be made certain;"—the fourth, "An Opinion speculatively probable is not always practically the same;"—the sixth, "While two Opinions remain equally probable, the last Determination is to be made by collateral Inducements;"—and the fifteenth, "The probable Sentence of a prudent Man is more than a probable Warranty to Actions otherwise undeterminable."

The fifth chapter is "Of a doubtful Conscience," and every part of it is well worthy of attentive perusal. But, perhaps, the most judicious, and certainly the most eloquent, of these introductory chapters, is the last, which is on "The scrupulous Conscience," the whole of which is excellent.

These admirable chapters do not contain any great principles absolutely false, yet they contain some false applications of principles in themselves true. Of these the chief which occur to us are, his incautious admission that it is not absolutely unlawful to enter on the ministry, the party having for the first and immediate design temporal support and maintenance;* his equally incautious admission that it is allowable in some cases to attempt to persuade men to the belief of a true proposition, by arguments with which the party himself is not persuaded, and which he believes are not sufficient;† his strange admission, in the same rule, (and after much admirable reasoning on the same subject,) "that it is in some cases right to frighten children and fools, and all those whose understanding is little better," by false terrors, "to their own good," if the matter cannot be managed in a better way. His language is curious enough.

"To children and fools, and all those whose understanding is but a little better, it hath been in all ages practised, that they be affrighted with mormoes and bugbears, that they may be cozened into good. But this is therefore permitted, because other things which are real, certain, or probable, cannot be understood or perceived by them: and therefore these things are not to be permitted, where it can well be otherwise. If it cannot, it is fit that their understandings should be conducted thither where they ought to go, and by such instruments as can be useful."

To these may be added, some parts of rule v. of the first chapter of the third book, in justification of certain instances of fraud and deception.

The titles of the remaining books are as follows:—"Of the Laws Divine, and all collateral obligations." —"Of human Laws, their obligation and relaxation; and of the collateral, indirect, and accidental bands of Conscience."—"Of the Nature and Causes of Good and Evil, their limits and circumstances, their aggravations and diminutions."

Of the contents of these books it is hardly necessary to offer any distinct analysis. The most tempting bill of fare, which the most enthusiastic admirers of such delicacies—and there are not many such epicures in our days—could prepare for the reader, would be totally insufficient to stimulate his languid appetite. The reason is obvious. Though these "books" contain many discussions of a curious, and some of an important nature, a very large proportion of them turn on matters which, however interesting in the days of Taylor, are totally insignificant in ours. Many of the popular prejudices which then gave rise to scruples of conscience, exist no longer; and many of the errors which then lingered in the public mind, errors so inveterate that nothing but the revolution of ages could remove them, have yielded to the progress of public opinion. Thus, for example,—whether it be "lawful or not to eat blood-puddings;" whether there be any

* In rule v. chap. ii. entitled, "When two motives concur to the determination of an action, whereof one is virtuous and the other secular, a right conscience is not prejudiced by the mixture." The general strain of the section accords with truth.

† In rule vi. chap. ii.—Yet the principal part of the rule is excellent.

sufficient reason to "forbid cousins-german to marry;"* whether the Jewish sabbath is of perpetual observance or the christian sabbath designed to supersede it; whether it is lawful under any circumstances to worship images; whether the people are entitled to partake of the eucharist in both kinds or only in one; whether the pope or any one else "has any power to dispense in the laws of Christ;" whether the Lent fast has any claim to be considered either as a tradition or canon apostolical; whether bishops and priests may marry;† whether passive obedience and non-resistance are duties of the subject or not, (for the affirmative of which Jeremy Taylor, as a devoted loyalist, most strenuously contends,) are questions which will minister matter of scruple to very few in the present day. All the above questions, with the exception of the last, Taylor decides, it is true, according to the principles of truth and of common sense; but then, unfortunately for his popularity, the bulk of mankind in the present day do not need such elaborate reason to convince them. In all these books, however, more especially the third, which treats of "Human Laws and their Obligations," the philosophical spirit of Jeremy Taylor is constantly displaying itself; he is perpetually ascending from matters of transient or local interest to principles of universal and permanent importance.

Such is a brief view of the principal productions of this extraordinary genius. There are two or three smaller pieces, such as his "Discourse on Friendship" (on the whole one of the happiest efforts of his pen); his posthumous piece, entitled "Christian Consolations;" his "Divine Institution of the Office Ministerial;" his "Rules and Advices for the Clergy;" and his "Golden Grove;" on which it is not deemed necessary to offer any further observations. They are all, however, worthy of perusal, for Jeremy Taylor's most casual productions are all impressed with the peculiar, the characteristic splendours of his genius.

* This question, as sufficiently appears by the elaborate manner in which Jeremy Taylor has treated it, ministered matter of scruple to many in that day. Such is the force of prejudice. There are still some absurd prejudices more or less prevalent with respect to the "prohibited degrees of marriage," fostered by certain parts of the canon law; these prejudices, however, are fast yielding, like those which once respected "the marriages of cousins-german."

† These, and a great many other questions, which properly belong to the popish controversy, are incidentally treated by Taylor in this great work; clearly showing the truth of a remark previously made,—that to "protestants" works of such a nature are of comparatively little utility. Taylor is obliged to seek for the very illustrations of his principles, amongst the abuses of the Romish church,—abuses which have alone rendered the subtleties of casuistry necessary. His reasonings are, consequently, useful principally to persons in danger of falling into Romish errors, or who have been only partially reclaimed from them. It is needless to say that this class of persons was much larger in the days of Jeremy Taylor than in our own.—These observations apply more particularly to the second and some parts of the third books.

A FUNERAL SERMON,

PREACHED AT THE OBSEQUIES OF THE RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD JEREMY, LORD BISHOP OF DOWN: WHO DECEASED AT LISBURN, AUGUST 13, 1667.

BY GEORGE RUST, D. D. LORD BISHOP OF DROMORE.

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1 John iii. 2.

It doth not yet appear what we shall be.

Glorious things are spoken in Scripture concerning the future reward of the righteous; and all the words that are wont to signify what is of greatest price and value, or can represent the most enravishing objects of our desires, are made use of by the Holy Ghost, to recommend unto us this transcendent state of blessedness: such are these: "Rivers of pleasures; a fountain of living water; a treasure that can never be wasted, nor never taken from us; an inheritance in light; an incorruptible crown; a kingdom; the kingdom of God, and the kingdom of Christ; the kingdom of glory; a crown of glory, and life, and righteousness, and immortality; the vision of God; being filled with all the fulness of God; an exceeding eternal weight of glory," *καθ' ὑπερβολὴν εἰς ὑπερβολὴν αἰώνιον βάρος δόξης*, words strangely emphatical, that cannot be put into English; and if they could, they would not be able to convey to our minds the notion that they design; for it is too big for any expressions: and, after all that can be said, we must resolve with our apostle, "It does not yet appear what we shall be."

At this distance, we cannot make any likely guesses or conjectures at the glory of that future state. Men make very imperfect descriptions of countries or cities, that never were there themselves, nor saw the places with their own eyes. It is not for any mortal creature to make a map of that Canaan that lies above; it is, to all us that live here on the hither side of death, an unknown country, and an undiscovered land. It may be, some heavenly pilgrim, that, with his holy thoughts and ardent desires, is continually travelling thitherward, arrives sometimes near the borders of the promised land, and the suburbs of the New Jerusalem, and gets upon the top of Pisgah, and there he has an imperfect prospect of a brave country, that lies a far way off; but he cannot tell how to describe it; and all that he hath to say to satisfy the curious inquirer, is only this, "If he would know the glories of it, he must go and see it." It was believed of old, that those places that lie under the line were burned up by the continual heat of the sun, and were not habitable, either by man or beast: but later discoveries tell us, that there are the most pleasant countries that the earth can show; insomuch that some have placed Paradise itself in that climate. Sure I am, of all the regions of the intellectual world, and the several lands that are peopled either with men or angels, the most pleasant countries they lie under the line, under the direct beams of the Sun of righteousness, where there is an eternal day, and an eternal spring; where is that tree of life, that beareth twelve manner of fruits, and yieldeth her fruit every month. Thus we may use figures, and metaphors, and allegories, and tell you of fruitful meads, and spacious fields, and winding rivers, and purling brooks, and chanting birds, and shady groves, and pleasant gardens, and lovely bowers, and noble seats, and stately palaces, and goodly people, and excellent laws, and sweet societies; but this is but to frame little comparisons to please our childish fancies; and just such discourses as a blind man would make concerning colours,—so do we talk of those things we never saw, and disparage the state while we should recommend it. Indeed, it requires some saint or angel from heaven to discourse upon the subject; and yet that would not do neither: for though they might be able to speak something of it, yet we would want ears to hear it. Neither can those things be declared but in the language of heaven, which would be little understood by us, the poor inhabitants of this lower world; they are, indeed, things too great to be brought within the compass of words. St. Paul, when he had been rapt up into the third heaven, saw *ῥήματα ἄῤῥητα*, "things unlawful, or impossible, to be uttered;" and "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor can it enter into the heart of man to conceive, what God hath prepared for them that love him;" and, "it does not yet appear what we shall be," said that beloved disciple, that lay in the bosom of our Saviour.

You will not now expect that I should give you a relation of that which cannot be uttered, nor so much as conceived; or declare unto you what our eagle-sighted evangelist tells us "does not yet appear." But that you may understand that that which sets this state of happiness so beyond the reach of all imagination, is only its transcendent excellency, I shall tell you something of what does already appear of it, and may be known concerning it.

1. First of all, we are assured that we shall then be freed from all the evils and miseries that we now labour under; vanity and misery,—they are two words that speak the whole of this present world; the enjoyments of it are dreams, and fancies, and shadows, and appearances; and if any thing be, it is only evil and misery that is real and substantial. Vanity and folly, labour and pains, cares and

fears, crosses and disappointments, sickness and diseases, they make up the whole of our portion here. This life, it is begun in a cry, and it ends in a groan; and he that lives most happily, his life is chequered with black and white, and his days are not all sunshine, but some are cloudy and gloomy, and there is a worm at the root of all his joy, that soon eats out the sap and heart of it; and the gourd in whose shade he now so much pleases himself, by to-morrow will be withered and gone. But heaven is not subject to these mixtures and uncertainties; it is a region of calmness and serenity, and the soul is there gotten above the clouds, and is not annoyed with those storms and tempests, that are here below. All tears shall then be wiped from our eyes; and though sorrow may endure for the night of this world, yet joy will spring up in the morning of eternity.

2. We are sure we shall be freed from this earthly, and clothed with a heavenly and glorified body. These bodies of ours, they are the graves and sepulchres, the prisons and dungeons of our heaven-born souls; and though we deck and adorn them, and pride ourselves in their beauty and comeliness, yet, when all is done, they are but sinks of corruption and defilement, they expose us to many pains and diseases, and incline us to many lusts and passions; and the more we pamper them, the greater burden they are unto our minds; they impose upon our reasons, and, by their steams and vapours, cast a mist before our understandings; they clog our affections, and, like a heavy weight, depress us unto this earth, and keep us from soaring aloft among the winged inhabitants of the upper regions: but those robes of light and glory, which we shall be clothed withal at the resurrection of the just, and those heavenly bodies which the gospel hath then assured unto us, they are not subject to any of these mischiefs and inconveniences, but are fit and accommodate instruments for the soul in its highest exaltations. And this is an argument that the gospel does dwell much upon, viz. the redemption of our bodies, that, "He shall change our vile bodies, that they may be like unto his glorious body;" and we are taught to look upon it as one great piece of our reward, that we shall be "clothed upon with our house which is from heaven;" that "this corruptible shall put on incorruption,—and this mortal, immortality;" that, "as we have borne the image of the earthly, so we must bear the image of the heavenly Adam; "who was ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἐπουράνιος, of "heaven heavenly;" as "the first man was ἐκ γῆς χοϊκὸς, of the earth earthy." And, therefore, I think, the schools put too mean a rate upon this great promise of the gospel—the resurrection of our bodies; and, I believe it might be demonstrated from the principles of sound philosophy, that this article of our christian faith, which the atheist makes so much sport withal, is so far from being chargeable with any absurdity, that it is founded upon the highest reason: for, seeing we find by too great an experience, that the soul hath so close and necessary a dependence upon this gross and earthly mass that we now carry about with us, it may be disputed with some probability, whether it ever be able to act independently of all matter whatsoever: at least, we are assured that the state of conjunction is most connatural to her, and that intellectual pleasure itself is not only multiplied, but the better felt, by its redundancy upon the body and spirits; and if it be so, then the purer and more defecate the body is, the better will the soul be appointed for the exercise of its noblest operations; and it will be no mean piece of our reward hereafter, that that which is sown σῶμα ψυχικὸν, an animal, shall be raised a heavenly body.

3. We are sure, that we shall then be free from sin, and all those foolish lusts and passions that we are now enslaved unto. The life of a christian, it is a continual warfare; and he endures many sore conflicts, and makes many sad complaints, and often bemoans himself after such a manner as this; "Woe is me, that I am forced to dwell in Meshech, and to have my habitation in the tents of Kedar; that there should be so many Goliahs within me, that defy the host of Israel; so many sons of Anak, that hinder my entrance into the land of promise, and the rest of God; that I should toil and labour among the bricks, and live in bondage unto these worse than Egyptian task-masters." Thus does he sit down by the rivers of Babylon, and weep over those ruins and desolations, that these worse than Assyrian armies have made in the city and house of his God. And many a time does he cry out in the bitterness of his soul, "Wretched creature that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?" And though, through his faith, and courage, and constancy, he be daily getting ground of his spiritual enemies, yet it is but by inches; and every step he takes, he must fight for it; and living, as he does, in an enemy's country, he is forced always to be upon his guard; and if he slumber never so little, presently he is surprised by a watchful adversary. This is our portion here, and our lot is this: but when we arrive unto those regions of bliss and glory that are above, we shall then stand safely upon the shore, and see all our enemies, Pharaoh and all his host, drowned and destroyed in the Red sea, and, being delivered from the world, and the flesh, and the devil, death, and sin, and hell,—we shall sing the song of Moses, and of the Lamb, an epinicion, and song of eternal triumph, unto the God of our salvation.

4. We shall be sure to meet with the best company that earth or heaven affords. Good company, it is the great pleasure of the life of man; and we shall then come "to the innumerable company of angels, and the general assembly of the church of the first-born, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant." The oracle tells Amelius, inquiring what was become of Plotinus's soul, that "he was gone to Pythagoras, and Socrates, and Plato, and as many as had borne a part in the choir of heavenly love." And I may say to every good man, that he shall go to the company of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; Moses, David, and Samuel; all the prophets and

apostles, and all the holy men of God, that have been in all the ages of the world. All those brave and excellent persons that have been scattered at the greatest distance of time and place, and, in their several generations, have been the salt of the earth, to preserve mankind from utter degeneracy and corruption,—these shall be all gathered together, and meet in one constellation in that firmament of glory. "O præclarum diem, cùm ad illud divinorum animorum concilium cœtumque proficiscar, atque ex hac turbâ ac colluvione discedam!" "O that blessed day, when we shall make our escape from this medley and confused riot, and shall arrive to that great council and general rendezvous of divine and godlike spirits!" But, which is more than all, we shall then meet our Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of our recovery, whose story is now so delightful unto us, as reporting nothing of him, but the greatest sweetness and innocence, and meekness and patience, and mercy and tenderness, and benignity and goodness, and whatever can render any person lovely or amiable: and who, out of his dear love and deep compassion unto mankind, gave up himself unto the death for us men, and for our salvation. And if St. Austin made it one of his wishes, "to have seen Jesus Christ in the flesh," how much more desirable is it to see him out of his terrestrial weeds, in his robes of glory, with all his redeemed ones about him! And this I cannot but look upon as a great advantage and privilege of that future state; for I am not apt to swallow down that conceit of the schools, that we shall spend eternity in gazing upon the naked Deity; for certainly the happiness of man consists in having all his faculties, in their due subordinations, gratified with their proper objects; and I cannot but believe a great part of heaven to be the blest society that is there; their enravishing beauty, that is to say, their inward life and perfection, flowering forth and raying itself through their glorified bodies; the rare discourses wherewith they entertain one another; the pure, and chaste, and spotless, and yet most ardent, love, wherewith they embrace each other; the ecstatic devotions wherein they join together. And, certainly, every pious and devout soul will readily acknowledge with me, that it must needs be matter of unspeakable pleasure, to be taken into the choir of angels and seraphims, and the glorious company of the apostles, and the goodly fellowship of the prophets, and the noble army of martyrs; and to join with them in singing praises, and hallelujahs, and songs of joy and triumph, unto our great Creator and Redeemer, the Father of spirits, and the Lover of souls, unto him that sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.

5. We are sure we shall then have our capacities filled, and all our desires answered; "They hunger no more, neither thirst any more: for the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters." What vast degrees of perfection and happiness the nature of man is capable of, we may best understand, by viewing it in the person of Christ, taken into the nearest union with Divinity, and made God's Vicegerent in the world, and the Head and Governor of the whole creation. In this our narrow and contracted state, we are apt to think too meanly of ourselves, and do not understand the dignity of our own natures, what we were made for, and what we are capable of: but as Plotinus somewhere observes, "We are like children, from our birth brought up in ignorance of, and at a great distance from, our parents and relations; and have forgot the nobleness of our extraction, and rank ourselves and our fortunes among the lot of beggars, and mean and ordinary persons; though we are the offspring of a great Prince, and were born to a kingdom." It does, indeed, become creatures to think modestly of themselves; yet, if we consider it aright, it will be found very hard to set any bounds or limits to our own happiness, and say, "Hitherto it shall arise, and no further." For that wherein the happiness of man consists, *viz.* truth and goodness, the communication of the Divine nature, and the illapses of Divine love,—it does not cloy, or glut, or satiate; but every participation of them does widen and enlarge our souls, and fits us for further and further receptions: the more we have, the more we are capable of; the more we are filled, the more room is made in our spirits; and thus it is still and still, even till we arrive unto such degrees as we can assign no measures unto.

We shall then be made like unto God, Ἡ σωτηρία οὐχ' ἑτέρως γίνεται, εἰ μὴ θεουμένων τῶν σωζομένων, said the Areopagite; "Salvation can no otherwise be accomplished, but by becoming God-like." "It does not yet appear what we shall be;" but "when he shall appear, we shall be like him," says our evangelist; for "we shall see him as he is." There is no seeing God as he is, but by becoming like unto him; nor is there any enjoying of him, but by being transformed into his image and similitude. Men usually have very strange notions concerning God, and the enjoyment of him; or rather, these are words to which there is no correspondent conception in their minds: but if we would understand God aright, we must look upon him as infinite wisdom, righteousness, love, goodness, and whatever speaks any thing of beauty and perfection; and if we pretend to worship him, it must be by loving and adoring his transcendent excellencies: and if we hope to enjoy him, it must be by conformity unto him, and participation of his nature. The frame and constitution of things is such, that it is impossible that man should arrive to happiness any other way. And, if the sovereignty of God should dispense with our obedience, the nature of the thing would not permit us to be happy without it: if we live only the animal life, we may indeed be happy, as beasts are happy; but the happiness that belongs to a rational and intellectual being, can never be attained but in a way of holiness and conformity unto the Divine will: for such a temper and disposition of mind is necessary unto happiness, not by virtue of any arbitrarious constitution of heaven, but the eternal laws of righteousness, and immutable respects of things, do require and exact it: yea, I may truly say, that God and Christ, without us, cannot make us happy: for we are not conscious to ourselves of any thing, but only the operations of

our own minds; and it is not the person of God and Christ, but their life and nature, wherein consists our formal happiness: for, what is the happiness of God himself, but only that pleasure and satisfaction that results from a sense of his infinite perfections? And how is it possible for a creature to be more happy, than by partaking of that, in its measure and proportion, which is the happiness of God himself?

The soul being thus prepared, shall live in the presence of God, and lie under the influences and illapses of Divine love and goodness: "Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." They that fight manfully under the banners of Heaven, and overcome their spiritual enemies, "they shall eat of the hidden manna, and become pillars in the temple of God, and shall go no more out: they shall stand before the throne of God continually, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne, shall dwell amongst them." God shall put under them his everlasting arms, and carry them in his bosom, and they shall suck the full breasts of eternal goodness: for now there is nothing can hinder the most near and intimate conjunction of the soul with God; for things that are alike, do easily mingle with one another: but the mixture that is betwixt bodies, be they never so homogeneal, comes but to an external touch; for their parts can never run up into one another. But there is no such *ἀντιτυπία*, or "resistance," amongst spiritual beings; and we are estranged from God, *οὐ τόπῳ ἀλλ' ἑτερότητι καὶ διαφορᾷ*, "not by distance of place, but by difference and diversity of nature," and when that is removed, he becomes present to us, and we to him: *ὥστε ἐφαρμόσαι καὶ οἷον ἐφάψασθαι καὶ θίγειν αὐτὸν ὁμοιότητι*, &c. like the "magnitudines congruæ" in the mathematics, "Quando prima primis, media mediis, extrema extremis, partes denique partibus usquequaque respondent:" "Each of whose parts do exactly one to the other." This, therefore, is the soul's progress from that state of purgation to illumination, and so to union. There are several faculties in the soul of man, that are conformed to several kinds of objects; and, according to that life a man is awaked into, so these faculties do exert themselves: and though, whilst we live barely an animal life, we converse with little more than this outward world, and the objects of our senses,—yet there are faculties within us that are receptive of God; and when we arrive once unto a due measure of purity of spirit, the rays of heavenly light will as certainly shine into our minds, as the beams of the sun, when it arises above the horizon, do illuminate the clear and pellucid air: and from this sight and illumination, the soul proceeds to an intimate union with God, and to a taste and touch of him. This is that *ἡσυχος πρὸς ἐκεῖνον ἐπαφὴ*, that "silent touch" with God, that fills the soul with unexpressible joy and triumph. For, if the objects of this outward world, that strike upon our senses, do so hugely please and delight us; what infinite pleasure then must there needs be in those touches and impresses, that the Divine love and goodness shall make upon our souls! But these are things that we may talk of, as we would do of a sixth sense, or something we have no distinct notion or idea of; but the perfect understanding of them belongs only to the future state of comprehension.

Lastly, we shall have our knowledge, and our love, which are the most perfect and beatifying acts of our minds, employed about their noblest objects in their most exalted measures; for a man to resolve himself in some knotty question, or answer some stubborn argument, or find out some noble conclusion, or solve some hard problem, what ineffable pleasure does it create many times to a contemplative mind! We know who sacrificed a hecatomb for one mathematical demonstration; and another, that, upon the like occasion, cried out, *εὕρηκα, εὕρηκα*, in a kind of rapture. To have the secrets of nature disclosed, and the mysteries of art revealed; but above all, the riddles of providence unfolded,—are such jewels as I know many searching and inquisitive spirits would be willing to purchase at any rate. When we come to heaven,—I will not say we shall see all things in the mirror of divinity, for that, it may be, is an extravagancy of the schools; nor that any one true proposition, through the concatenation of truth, will then multiply itself into the explicit knowledge of all conclusions whatsoever, for I believe that a fancy too;—but our knowledge shall be strangely enlarged, and, for aught I can determine, be for ever receiving new additions and fresh accruments; the clue of Divine providence will then be unravelled, and all those difficulties which now perplex us, will be easily assoiled; and we shall then perceive that the wisdom and goodness of God is a vast and comprehensive thing, and moves in a far larger sphere than we are aware of in this state of narrowness and imperfection. But there is something greater and beyond all this; and St. John has a strange expression, that "we shall then see God even as he is;" and God, we know, is the well-spring of perfection and happiness, the fountain and original of all beauty; he is infinitely glorious, and lovely, and excellent; and if we see him as he is, all his glory must descend into us and become ours: for we can no otherwise see God, as I said before, but by becoming deiform, by being changed into the same glory. But love, that is it which makes us most happy, and by that we are most intimately conjoined unto God, for "he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him:" and how pleasant beyond all imagination must it needs be, to have the soul melted into a flame of love, and that fire fed and nourished by the enjoyment of its beloved; to be transported into ecstasies and raptures of love, to be swallowed up in the embraces of eternal sweetness; to be lost in the source and fountain of happiness and bliss, like a spark in the fire, or a beam in the sun, or a drop in the ocean!

It may be, you will tell me, I have been all this while confuting my text, and giving you a relation of that which St. John tells us, "does not yet appear what it is;" but my design has been the same with the holy evangelist's; and that is, to represent unto you how transcendently great that state of

happiness must needs be: when as, by what way we are able to apprehend of it, it is infinitely the object of our desires; and yet we are assured by those, that are best able to tell, that the best and greatest part of the country is yet undiscovered, and that we cannot so much as guess at the pleasure of it, till we come to enjoy it. And, indeed, it is impossible it should be otherwise; for, happiness being a matter of sense, all the words in the world cannot convey the notion of it into our minds: and it is only to be understood by them that feel it; *μὴ κατὰ ἐπιστήμην ἡ σύνεσις ἐκείνου, μηδὲ κατὰ νόησιν, ὥσπερ τὰ ἄλλα νοητὰ, ἀλλὰ κατὰ παρουσίαν ἐπιστήμης κρείττονα.*

But though it does not yet appear what we shall be; yet so much already appears of it, that it cannot but seem the most worthy object of our endeavours and desires; and by some few clusters that have been shown us of this good land, we may guess what pleasant and delightful fruit it bears: and if we have but any reverence of ourselves, and will but consider the dignity of our natures, and the vastness of that happiness we are capable of; methinks we should be always travelling towards that heavenly country, though our way lies through a wilderness: and be striving for this great prize and immortal crown: and be clearing our eyes, and purging our sight, that we may come to this vision of God; shaking off all fond passions and dirty desires, and breathing forth our souls in such aspirations as these:

My soul thirsteth for thee, O Lord, in a dry and barren land, where no water is; O that thou wouldst distil, and drop down the dew of thy heavenly grace into all its secret chinks and pores. One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, and behold his glory: for a day in thy courts is better than a thousand, and I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of the Lord, than dwell in the tents of wickedness. All the kings of the earth, they are thy tributaries; the kings of Tarshish, and of the isles, bring presents unto thee; the kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts. O that we could but pay thee that, which is so due unto thee, the tribute of our hearts! The heathen are come into thine inheritance; thy holy temple have they defiled: help us, O God of our salvation, and deliver us, and purge away our sins from us, for thy name's sake! O that the Lord, whom we seek, would come to his own house, and give peace there, and fill it with his glory! Come and cleanse thine own temple, for we have made it a den of thieves, which should have been a house of prayer! O that we might never give sleep to our eyes, nor slumber to our eyelids, till we have prepared a house for the Lord, and a tabernacle for the God of Jacob! The curse of Cain it is fallen upon us, and we are as vagabonds in the earth, and wander from one creature to another. O that our souls might come at last to dwell in God, our fixed and eternal habitation! We, like silly doves, fly up and down the earth, but can find no rest for the sole of our feet; O that, after all our weariness and our wanderings, we might return into the ark; and that God would put forth his hand, and take us, and pull us in unto himself! We have too long lived upon vanity and emptiness, the wind and the whirlwind; O that we may now begin to feed upon substance, and delight ourselves in marrow and fatness! O that God would strike our rocky hearts, that there might spring up a fountain in the wilderness, and pools in the desert; that we might drink of that water, whereof whosoever drinks, shall never thirst more; that God would give us that portion of goods that falleth to us, not to waste it with riotous living, but therewith to feed our languishing souls; lest they be weary and faint by the way! We ask not the children's bread, but the crumbs that fall from thy table: that our baskets may be filled with thy fragments: for they will be better than wine, and sweeter than the honey and the honeycomb, and more pleasant to us than a feast of fat things. We have wandered too long in a barren and howling desert, where wild beasts, and doleful creatures, owls and bats, satyrs and dragons, keep their haunts: O that we might be fed in green pastures, and led by the still waters, that the winter might be past, and the rain over and gone, that the flowers may appear on the earth, and the time of the singing of birds may come, and the voice of the turtle may be heard in our land! We have lived too long in Sodom, which is the place that God at last will destroy: O that we might arise, and be gone; and, while we are lingering, that the angels of God would lay hold upon our hands, and be merciful unto us, and bring us forth, and set us without the city; and that we may never look back any more, but may escape unto the mountain, and dwell safe in the Rock of ages! Wisdom hath killed her beasts, she hath mingled her wine, and furnished her table; O that we might eat of her meat, and drink of her wine which she hath mingled! God knocks at the doors of our hearts; O let us open unto him those everlasting gates, that he may sup with us, and we with him; for he will bring his cheer along with him, and will feast us with manna and angels' food; O that the Sun of righteousness might arise, and melt the iciness of our hearts! That God would send forth his Spirit, and, with his warmth and heat, dissolve our frozen souls! That God would breathe into our minds those still and gentle gales of Divine inspirations, that may blow up and increase in us the flames of heavenly love! That we may be a whole burnt-offering, and all the substance of our souls be consumed by fire from heaven, and ascend up in clouds of incense! That, as so many sparks, we might be always mounting upward, till we return again into our proper elements! That, like so many particular rivulets, we may be continually making toward the sea, and never rest till we lose ourselves in that ocean of goodness, from whence we first came! That we may open our mouths wide, that God may satisfy them! That we may so perfectly discharge ourselves of all strange desires and passions, that our souls may be nothing else but a deep emptiness and vast capacity to be filled with all the fulness of God! Let but these be the breathings of our spirits, and this Divine magnetism will most certainly draw down God

into our souls, and we shall have some prelibations of that happiness; some small glimpses, and little discoveries whereof, is all that belongs to this state of mortality.

I have as yet done but the half of my text: and I have another text yet to preach upon, and a very large and copious one,—the great person, whose obsequies we here come to celebrate: his fame is so great throughout the world, that he stands in no need of an encomium; and yet his worth is much greater than his fame; it is impossible not to speak great things of him, and yet it is impossible to speak what he deserves; and the meanness of an oration will but sully the brightness of his excellencies: but custom requires that something should be said, and it is a duty and a debt that we owe only unto his memory: and I hope his great soul, if it hath any knowledge of what is done here below, will not be offended at the smallness of our offering.

He was born at Cambridge, and brought up in the free-school there, and was ripe for the university afore custom would allow of his admittance; but by that time he was thirteen years old, he was entered into Caius college; and as soon as he was graduate, he was chosen fellow. Had he lived among the ancient pagans, he had been ushered into the world with a miracle, and swans must have danced and sung at his birth; and he must have been a great hero, and no less than the son of Apollo, the god of wisdom and eloquence.

He was a man long afore he was of age, and knew little more of the state of childhood, than its innocency and pleasantness. From the university, by that time he was Master of Arts, he removed to London, and became public lecturer in the church of St. Paul's, where he preached to the admiration and astonishment of his auditory, and by his florid and youthful beauty, and sweet and pleasant air, and sublime and raised discourses, he made his hearers take him for some young angel, newly descended from the visions of glory. The fame of this new star, that outshone all the rest of the firmament, quickly came to the notice of the great archbishop of Canterbury, who would needs have him preach before him, which he performed not less to his wonder than satisfaction; his discourse was beyond exception and beyond imitation: yet the wise prelate thought him too young; but the great youth humbly begged his grace to pardon that fault, and promised, if he lived, he would mend it. However, the grand patron of learning and ingenuity thought it for the advantage of the world, that such mighty parts should be afforded better opportunities of study and improvement, than a course of constant preaching would allow of; and to that purpose he placed him in his own college of All Souls, in Oxford; where love and admiration still waited upon him: which, so long as there is any spark of ingenuity in the breasts of men, must needs be the inseparable attendants of so extraordinary a worth and sweetness. He had not been long here, afore my Lord of Canterbury bestowed upon him the rectory of Uppingham in Rutlandshire, and soon after preferred him to be chaplain to King Charles the martyr, of blessed and immortal memory. Thus were preferments heaped upon him, but still less than his deserts; and that not through the fault of his great masters, but because the amplest honours and rewards were poor and inconsiderable compared with the greatness of his worth and merit.

This great man had no sooner launched into the world, but a fearful tempest arose, and a barbarous and unnatural war disturbed a long and uninterrupted peace and tranquillity, and brought all things into disorder and confusion: but his religion taught him to be loyal, and engaged him on his prince's side, whose cause and quarrel he always owned and maintained, with a great courage and constancy: till at last, he and his little fortune were shipwrecked in that great hurricane, that overturned both church and state: this fatal storm cast him ashore in a private corner of the world, and a tender providence shrouded him under her wings, and the prophet was fed in the wilderness; and his great worthiness procured him friends, that supplied him with bread and necessaries. In this solitude he began to write those excellent discourses, which are enough of themselves to furnish a library, and will be famous to all succeeding generations, for their greatness of wit, and profoundness of judgment, and richness of fancy, and clearness of expression, and copiousness of invention, and general usefulness to all the purposes of a christian. And by these he soon got a great reputation among all persons of judgment and indifferency, and his name will grow greater still, as the world grows better and wiser.

When he had spent some years in this retirement, it pleased God to visit his family with sickness, and to take to himself the dear pledges of his favour, three sons of great hopes and expectations, within the space of two or three months: and though he had learned a quiet submission unto the Divine will, yet the affliction touched him so sensibly, that it made him desirous to leave the country; and going to London, he there met my Lord Conway, a person of great honour and generosity, who making him a kind proffer, the good man embraced it, and that brought him over into Ireland, and settled him at Portmore, a place made for study and contemplation, which he, therefore, dearly loved; and here he wrote his "Cases of Conscience:" a book that is able alone to give its author immortality.

By this time the wheel of Providence brought about the king's happy restoration, and there began a new world, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, and out of a confused chaos brought forth beauty and order, and all the three nations were inspired with a new life, and became drunk with an excess of joy: among the rest, this loyal subject went over to congratulate the prince and people's happiness, and bear a part in the universal triumph.

It was not long ere his sacred majesty began the settlement of the church, and the great Doctor Jeremy Taylor was resolved upon for the bishopric of Down and Connor; and not long after, Dromore

was added to it: and it was but reasonable that the kingdom and church should consider their champion, and reward the pains and sufferings he underwent in the defence of their cause and honour. With what care and faithfulness he discharged his office, we are all his witnesses; what good rules and directions he gave his clergy, and how he taught us the practice of them by his own example. Upon his coming over bishop, he was made a privy counsellor; and the university of Dublin gave him their testimony, by recommending him for their vice-chancellor: which honourable office he kept to his dying day.

During this being in his see, he wrote several excellent discourses, particularly his "Dissuasive from Popery," which was received by a general approbation; and a "Vindication" of it (now in the press) from some impertinent cavillers, that pretend to answer books, when there is nothing towards it more than the very title-page. This great prelate improved his talent with a mighty industry, and managed his stewardship rarely well; and his Master, when he called for his accounts, found him busy and at his work, and employed upon an excellent subject, "A Discourse upon the Beatitudes;" which if finished, would have been of great use to the world, and solved most of the cases of conscience that occur to a christian, in all the varieties of states and conditions. But the all-wise God hath ordained it otherwise, and hath called home his good servant, to give him a portion in that blessedness, that Jesus Christ hath promised to all his faithful disciples and followers.

Thus having given you a brief account of his life, I know you will now expect a character of his person; but I foresee it will befall him, as it does all glorious subjects, that are but disparaged by a commendation; one thing I am secure of, that I shall not be thought to speak by hyperboles; for the subject can hardly be reached by any expressions; for he was none of God's ordinary works, but his endowments were so many and so great, as really made him a miracle.

Nature had befriended him much in his constitution; for he was a person of a most sweet and obliging humour, of great candour and ingenuity; and there was so much of salt and fineness of wit, and prettiness of address, in his familiar discourses, as made his conversation have all the pleasantness of a comedy, and all the usefulness of a sermon. His soul was made up of harmony; and he never spake, but he charmed his hearer, not only with the clearness of his reason, but all his words, and his very tone and cadences, were strangely musical.

But that which did most of all captivate and enravish, was the gaiety and richness of fancy; for he had much in him of that natural enthusiasm, that inspires all great poets and orators; and there was a generous ferment in his blood and spirits, that set his fancy bravely a-work, and made it swell, and teem, and become pregnant to such degrees of luxuriancy, as nothing but the greatness of his wit and judgment could have kept it within due bounds and measures.

And, indeed, it was a rare mixture and a single instance, hardly to be found in an age: for the great trier of wits has told us, that there is a peculiar and several complexion required for wit, and judgment, and fancy; and yet you might have found all these in this great personage, in their eminency and perfection. But that which made his wit and judgment so considerable, was the largeness and freedom of his spirit; for truth is plain and easy to a mind disentangled from superstition and prejudice; he was one of the Ἐκλεκτικοὶ, a sort of brave philosophers that Laertius speaks of, that did not addict themselves to any particular sect, but ingeniously sought for truth among all the wrangling schools; and they found her miserably torn and rent to pieces, and parcelled into rags, by the several contending parties, and so disfigured and misshapen, that it was hard to know her; but they made a shift to gather up her scattered limbs, which as soon as they came together, by a strange sympathy and connaturalness, presently united into a lovely and beautiful body. This was the spirit of this great man; he weighed men's reasons, and not their names,—and was not scared with the ugly visors men usually put upon persons they hate, and opinions they dislike; not affrighted with the anathemas and execrations of an infallible chair, which he looked upon only as bugbears to terrify weak and childish minds. He considered that it is not likely any one party should wholly engross truth to themselves; that obedience is the only way to true knowledge; which is an argument that he has managed rarely well, in that excellent sermon of his which he calls, "Via Intelligentiæ;" that God always, and only, teaches docible and ingenuous minds, that are willing to hear and ready to obey, according to their light; that it is impossible a pure, humble, resigned, God-like soul, should be kept out of heaven, whatever mistakes it might be subject to in this state of mortality; that the design of heaven is not to fill men's heads, and feed their curiosities, but to better their hearts, and mend their lives. Such considerations as these made him impartial in his disquisitions, and give a due allowance to the reasons of his adversary, and contend for truth, and not for victory.

And now you will easily believe that an ordinary diligence would be able to make great improvements upon such a stock of parts and endowments; but to these advantages of nature, and excellency of his spirit, he added an indefatigable industry, and God gave a plentiful benediction: for, there were very few kinds of learning, but he was a Mystes, and a great master in them: he was a rare humanist, and hugely versed in all the polite parts of learning; and had thoroughly concocted all the ancient moralists, Greek and Roman, poets and orators; and was not unacquainted with the refined wits of the later ages, whether French or Italian.

But he had not only the accomplishments of a gentleman, but so universal were his parts, that they were proportioned to every thing; and though his spirit and humour were made up of smoothness and gentleness, yet he could bear with the harshness and roughness of the schools; and was not unseen in

their subtilities and spinosities, and, upon occasion, could make them serve his purpose; and yet, I believe, he thought many of them very near akin to the famous Knight de la Mancha, and would make sport sometimes with the romantic sophistry, and fantastic adventures of school-errantry. His skill was great, both in the civil and canon law, and casuistical divinity; and he was a rare conductor of souls, and knew how to counsel and advise; to solve difficulties, and determine cases, and quiet consciences. And he was no novice in Mr. I. S.'s new science of controversy; but could manage an argument and repartees, with a strange dexterity; he understood what the several parties in christendom have to say for themselves, and could plead their cause to better advantage than any advocate of their tribe; and when he had done, he could confute them too; and show, that better arguments than ever they could produce for themselves, would afford no sufficient ground for their fond opinions.

It would be too great a task to pursue his accomplishments through the various kinds of literature: I shall content myself to add only his great acquaintance with the fathers and ecclesiastical writers, and the doctors of the first and purest ages both of the Greek and Latin church; which he has made use of against the Romanists, to vindicate the church of England from the challenge of innovation, and prove her to be truly ancient, catholic, and apostolical.

But religion and virtue is the crown of all other accomplishments; and it was the glory of this great man to be thought a christian, and whatever you added to it, he looked upon as a term of diminution: and yet he was a zealous son of the church of England; but that was because he judged her (and with great reason) a church the most purely christian of any in the world. In his younger years he met with some assaults from popery: and the high pretensions of their religious orders were very accommodate to his devotional temper: but he was always so much master of himself, that he would never be governed by any thing but reason, and the evidence of truth, which engaged him in the study of those controversies; and to how good purpose, the world is by this time a sufficient witness: but the longer and the more he considered, the worse he liked the Roman cause, and became at last to censure them with some severity; but I confess I have so great an opinion of his judgment, and the charitableness of his spirit, that I am afraid he did not think worse of them than they deserve.

But religion is not a matter of theory and orthodox notions; and it is not enough to believe aright, but we must practise accordingly; and to master our passions, and to make a right use of that *αὐτεξούσιον*, and "power that God has given us over our own actions," is a greater glory than all other accomplishments that can adorn the mind of man; and, therefore, I shall close my character of this great personage with a touch upon some of those virtues, for which his memory will be precious to all posterity. He was a person of great humility; and notwithstanding his stupendous parts, and learning, and eminency of place, he had nothing in him of pride and humour, but was courteous and affable, and of easy access, and would lend a ready ear to the complaints, yea, to the impertinencies of the meanest persons. His humility was coupled with an extraordinary piety, and, I believe, he spent the greatest part of his time in heaven; his solemn hours of prayer took up a considerable portion of his life; and we are not to doubt but he had learned of St. Paul to pray continually; and that occasional ejaculations, and frequent aspirations and emigrations of his soul after God, made up the best part of his devotions. But he was not only a good man God-ward, but he was come to the top of St. Peter's gradation, and to all his other virtues added a large and diffusive charity; and whoever compares his plentiful incomes with the inconsiderable estate he left at his death, will be easily convinced that charity was steward for a great proportion of his revenue. But the hungry that he fed, and the naked that he clothed, and the distressed that he supplied, and the fatherless that he provided for; the poor children that he put to apprentice, and brought up at school, and maintained at the university, will now sound a trumpet to that charity which he dispersed with his right hand, but would not suffer his left hand to have any knowledge of it.

To sum up all in a few words: This great prelate had the good humour of a gentleman, the eloquence of an orator, the fancy of a poet, the acuteness of a school-man, the profoundness of a philosopher, the wisdom of a counsellor, the sagacity of a prophet, the reason of an angel, and the piety of a saint: he had devotion enough for a cloister, learning enough for an university, and wit enough for a college of virtuosi: and, had his parts and endowments been parcelled out among his poor clergy that he left behind him, it would, perhaps, have made one of the best diocesses in the world. But, alas! "Our father! our father! the horses of our Israel, and the chariot thereof!" he is gone, and has carried his mantle and his spirit along with him up to heaven; and the sons of the prophets have lost all their beauty and lustre, which they enjoyed only from the reflection of his excellencies, which were bright and radiant enough to cast a glory upon a whole order of men. But the sun of this our world, after many attempts to break through the crust of an earthly body, is at last swallowed up in the great vortex of eternity, and there all his maculæ are scattered and dissolved, and he is fixed in an orb of glory, and shines among his brethren-stars, that, in their several ages, gave light to the world, and turned many souls unto righteousness; and we that are left behind, though we can never reach his perfections, must study to imitate his virtues, that we may at last come to sit at his feet in the mansions of glory; which God grant for his infinite mercies in Jesus Christ! to whom, with the Father, through the Eternal Spirit, be ascribed all honour and glory, worship and thanksgiving, love and obedience, now and for evermore. Amen.

CHRISTIAN CONSOLATIONS;

TAUGHT FROM

FIVE HEADS IN RELIGION:

I. FAITH; II. HOPE; III. THE HOLY SPIRIT; IV. PRAYER; V. THE SACRAMENTS.

[The following piece, as appears by the preface prefixed to the original edition by the publisher, was first written for the private use of a "noble and excellent lady." Before the late edition of Jeremy Taylor's whole works was published, this little treatise had become exceedingly scarce, not more than one copy being known to exist. There is no doubt about its being a work of Jeremy Taylor. Every page bears the marks of the author's peculiar style and manner.]

TO THE READER.

This manual of Christian Consolations, derived from Five Heads of great importance in Religion, was written by a late Reverend Prelate of our church, and now is printed according to his own copy.

The papers were presented by him to a person of honour, for whose private use they were designed; but, as the noblest spirits are most communicative, that noble and religious lady was pleased to impart them for the good also of others. We read in the Evangelists, how that the holy Jesus, who "went about doing good," (that is the short, but full, character which Saint Peter[a] gives of him,) did, by a miracle of mercy, bless five loaves to the feeding of a very great multitude. And may the same Almighty goodness bless and prosper whatsoever spiritual good is contained in these Five Helps and Directions for a Christian's Comfort, to the refreshing and strengthening of such souls as truly hunger and thirst after God! May the serious and devout readers taste and see how good the Lord is, that his loving-kindness is better than life,—and that the light of his countenance, the sense of his favour, is infinitely more heart-cheering, and brings with it a truer and larger satisfaction, than the increase of "corn, and wine, and oil,"[b] doth to the men of this world, who only or chiefly "mind earthly things," and unwisely place their felicity in the fading and empty enjoyments of this present life.

It is a good thing, then, that a man should both hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord; for, "he is good to them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him."[c]

He who is the God of love, and even Love itself;[d] he who is the ever-flowing fountain of goodness, will not fail to fill the hungry with good things. Such a christian hath meat to eat which the world knows not of; he feeds on the hidden manna: he hath (as St. Austin said of St. Ambrose) "occultum os in corde ejus," and with this he doth "sapida gaudia de pane Dei ruminare." "The Father of the world, who openeth his hand, and satisfieth the desire of every living thing, giving to all their meat in due season;"[e] "he is as ready to fulfil the desire of them that fear him; he will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."[f] And here, from the character and qualification of the persons, (them that fear him, and them that walk uprightly,) it highly concerns us to observe, and to lay it to heart, that a sincere desire and serious endeavour to fear God and walk uprightly, is a necessary and indispensable condition to qualify and make us meet for the receiving of the best of Divine favours and blessings. We must first walk in the fear of the Lord, if we would walk in the comfort of the Holy Ghost; as these two are set together.[g] If we would have the Spirit to be our comforter, we must follow the Spirit as our guide and counsellor. If we would find rest unto souls, we must take Christ's yoke upon us,[h] the yoke of his precepts, which are all holy, and just, and good. A state of inward comfort and true tranquillity of spirit can never be secured and preserved, but by a continued care to walk before God in faithful obedience to his will in all things.

For "there is no peace to the wicked,"[i] as is twice expressed by the noble prophet Isaiah;[k] but "great peace have they that love thy law,"[l] saith the royal psalmist, the man after God's own heart,

[a] Acts x. 38. [b] Psalm iv. [c] Lam. iii. [d] 1 John iv. [e] Psalm cxlv. [f] Psalm lxxxiv. [g] Acts ix. 31.
[h] Matt. xi. [i] Chap. xlviii. 22. [k] Chap. lvii. 21. [l] Psalm cxix. 165.

who herein spake his own experience; and elsewhere, "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace."[m] While he lives, he lives in peace, his soul dwells at ease; he feels an unspeakable joy and pleasure within, upon the sense of his doing his duty, and being faithful in obedience to his Lord and Master in heaven. And when he dies, he departs in peace,[n] and shall "enter into peace," and "into the joy of his Lord."[o] Here he "tastes how sweet the Lord is," but there "he shall be abundantly satisfied with the plenty of God's house, and made to drink of the river of his pleasures."[p] "The meek shall eat and be satisfied, and their heart shall live for ever."[q] And so full and complete shall be their joy and satisfaction, that "they shall neither hunger nor thirst any more; for the Lamb shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."[r] This is the happy portion of those souls who have the Lord for their God, with whom "there is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures," most pure and permanent, "for evermore."

THE INTRODUCTION.

The work of the ministry consists in two things, in threatenings or comforts. The first is useful for the greatest part of christians, who are led by the spirit of bondage, and fear to do evil, because of wrath to come; which grows out of love to themselves. The second is fit for the best christians, that are led by the spirit of love; who endeavour to do righteousness, because they love righteousness, and to be like unto God, who, they know, is only good, (which grows out of the spirit of adoption,) and obey as sons and daughters, and not as servants.

Our Saviour and his apostles insist sometimes upon the former way, threatening the impenitent, yet qualifying it with tidings of peace, if they return and amend their lives. For sharpness must be applied, according to the power which the Lord has given us, for edification, and not for destruction.[a] The same apostle propounds both in the former epistle,[b] "Shall I come unto you with a rod? or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?" Which latter is most suitable to the gospel, to proclaim peace on earth, and good will towards men: and when James and John would have had fire to come down from heaven upon the Samaritans, Christ reproved them, saying, "The Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them:"[c] and St. Paul, "God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ."[d] And surely there is cause to apply a cluster of consolation against a few grains of terror: 1. Because we are all concluded under sin, and the guilt is ever present unto us. 2. Because of the weakness of the graces that are in us; not that they are weak, but that human corruption is mixed with them. 3. Because of the strength and manifoldness of temptations. 4. Because we are to be exercised with the sufferance of the cross, and we are infirm to bear it. Lastly, because little is communicated to us, at the present, of that reward we look for; least of all, is any share of it present and before our eyes. Forasmuch then, as there are so many in-draughts that break into our heart, to make us sick of sorrow and fear, let us seek comfort from God, who hath left no disease without a remedy to cure it, "who healeth all thy diseases."[e] I say, it is to be sought from God, lest we light upon them that tell false dreams, and comfort in vain.[f] The right place for it must be the word of God, as it is:[g] "that we, through patience, and comfort of the Scripture, might have hope." Which comfort, scattered up and down in that holy book, and not cast all in a lump together, by searching it diligently, we may draw our consolation out of five things,—faith,—hope,—the in-dwelling of the Spirit,—prayer,—and the sacraments.

CHAPTER I.

That Faith is the Ground and Foundation of a Christian's Comfort: several Doubts and Scruples about believing, answered.

Faith is the root of all blessings. Believe, and you shall be saved: believe, and you must needs be sanctified: believe, and you cannot choose but be comforted: believe that God is true in all his

[m] Psalm xxxvii. 37. [n] Isaiah lvii. [o] Matt. xxv. [p] Psalm xxxvi. [q] Psalm xxii. [r] Rev. vii.
[a] 2 Cor. xiii. 10. [b] Ibid. iv. 21. [c] Luke ix. 56. [d] 1 Thess. v. 9. [e] Psalm ciii. 3.
[f] Zech. x. 2. [g] Rom. xv. 4.

promises, and you are the seed of faithful Abraham, and shall inherit the promises made to Abraham: believe that you are Christ's, and Christ is yours; and then you are sure that none can perish, whom the Father hath given to him. "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus."[a] And as Martha said, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died:"[b] so let all that groan and pine away in sorrow, say, Lord, if thou hadst been here, if thou hadst appeared to my soul in thy goodness, I had not fainted in my trouble. Isaiah foretells,[c] that it should be Christ's office "to give the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. For St. John saw in the spirit, that they that follow Christ, are clothed in "white garments," in garments of joy, in the livery of gladness. Solomon, describing the provident mistress of a family,[d] says, "She is not afraid of the snow for her household, for all her household are clothed with scarlet." So the household of Christ are not afraid of frost and snow, nor of any bitter blast; they have put on the garment of dependence on Christ, which protects them, and do resolve never to put off their privy coat of confidence in their Saviour. With this did Christ encourage the poor woman, being under confusion, who had secretly touched the hem of his garment; "Be of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole."[e] The first time that the word comfort is found in Scripture, is[f] upon the birth of Noah; his father says, "This son shall comfort us:" so when God did give Christ to be made man, he did, as it were, say unto us, "This Son shall comfort you, for his name is Jesus, and he shall save his people from their sins." He that gave us him, hath given us all things with him. As it is true to say, that Matthew left all to follow Christ, so is it as true, that he got all that can be wished by following him.

It is the chemistry of faith (let me use that word) to turn all things into good and precious ore. It is Abraham's country in a strange land: Jacob's wages, when Laban defrauded him: Moses's honour, when he refused to be the son-in-law of Pharaoh's daughter: Rahab's security, when all Jericho besides did perish: David's rescue, when there was but a step between him and death: the power of the apostles, to be able to cast out devils: Mary Magdalen's sweet ointment, to take away the ill-savour of her sins. Plead, therefore, with the oratory of faith, and say, "Lord, I have no life but in thee, I have no joy but in thee, no salvation but in thee: but I have all these in thee; and how can my soul refuse to be comforted?"

But some will say, perhaps, "Faith is a powerful comforter: but I, poor wretch, had need to be comforted concerning my faith. I find the pulse of it weak, and sometimes it intermits, as if it beat not at all. Methinks I am not drawn near to Christ, or that I am so far off, that I cannot embrace him." Some such infirmity may seem to have been in the Thessalonians; and therefore St. Paul says, "I have sent Timotheus to establish you, and to comfort you, concerning your faith."[g]

Now, to turn this water into wine, and the trembling of this objection into peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, conceive as if these questions were put to you; "Do you often accuse yourself of a weak faith in secret unto God?" I like it for a good symptom; for an hypocrite doth not use to accuse himself.—"And do you bewail your want to the Lord, because you would have it better supplied?" that is a good sign too, for it is the same as to thirst for the living God. They that have not the gift of faith, do not miss it: but they that have it, though but in a little, do insatiably desire the increase of it.

But do you find that the more you put forward to come to Christ, the more you are put back by doubts and temptations? It is right the resemblance of him that was sick of the palsy;[h] fain he would have been brought to Christ, but could not come at him for the press. This press that stops you, are the snares of the world, vain imaginations, nay, perhaps humility, a broken heart, and a tender conscience: yet find out a way to come to your Saviour, though the throng be cumbersome. If there be no other way, untile the house, break down the roof to be brought unto him: call unto the Lord to dissolve this house of clay, that thy soul may see him clearly without all impediment. But, at the worst of all, do you lie in a swoon, as it were? do you think there is no life, no motion in your faith? do you fear the light of grace is so eclipsed, that you have lost all communion with Christ? Remember, and be assured, that you could not miss Christ so much, unless Christ were in you. Because God loves you, he seems to leave you; and withdraws out of the way for a time, because he would be found; and makes you desire to seek him, that you may hold him the surer to you, when you enjoy him. A mother that hath conceived, may think, not long after, that she perceives some tokens of her conception; in a while, she doubts of it again, and wisheth some signs of better satisfaction: she hangs long under many assays of fear and persuasion: at last she finds the babe spring in her womb, and is utterly confirmed. So it is with them in whom Christ is born anew; they have found the Lord,—yet sometime, as it is in the Canticles, "He is behind the lattice," that we miss him by a spiritual jealousy, and fall into many of these fits, as if he were quite departed. And in this state of trepidation we must be exercised, that we may know, that holy fear and a troubled spirit are heavenly qualities, that may consist with faith.

Yet I have more to ask. Do you look dejectedly upon your faith, because you apprehend it is not full of life in the root, nor laden with fruit in godly practice? Woe be to them that are not sensible of those infirmities. It is one of the best lessons in the New Testament, "Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus;"[i] but it is one of the hardest. God gives a measure of faith to all in the covenant

[a] Romans viii. 1. [b] John xi. 21. [c] Isaiah lxi. 3. [d] Prov. xxxi. 21. [e] Matthew ix. 22.
[f] Gen. v. 29. [g] 1 Thess. iii. 2. [h] Mark ii. 4. [i] 2 Tim. ii. 1.

that call upon him; but we have this gift in earthen vessels, and taint it with the affections of our carnal mind. The best faith is weak and wavering, short-sighted, riseth and falls like a tune in music. Therefore, to encourage a perplexed mind, hearken to Isaiah,[k] "Say to them that are of a sorrowful heart, Be strong, fear not." For though it be but an infant faith, it is a true faith: as an infant is a true man in the essence of a man, though not a man in growth; perfect in the real being, though not in the degrees, wherein we must strive to grow up more and more. To prove the truth of it, believe all the word of God, and it can be no wider: and for the soundness of it, believe in Christ, and look for salvation in him alone; then it is as legitimate and true-born as is the faith of any saint that is far more noble. A dim or a blear eye, that looked upon the brazen serpent, did procure a remedy for a wound, as much as a clear and well-conditioned eye. And a little faith, casting its weak beams on Christ and his death, will go far. The quantity of a grain of mustard-seed hath warmth and virtue in it to spread abundantly. If faith on earth hath shaken off all frailty, and comprehended the joys of heaven, without casting its eye aside to the love of this world, I do not conceive how the body could subsist any longer here, but that the soul, in that ecstasy, would be dissolved, and fly away.

Lastly; as God sees such sins in you as you cannot see, so he sees such graces in you as you cannot perceive. The charitable, to whom Christ speaks when they are at his right hand,[l] do deny such good things to be in them, as Christ did profess they had. The Canaanitish woman found no better in herself than the vileness of a dog, that waited for crumbs under the table; but Christ commends her for her great faith. The centurion[m] saw nothing but unworthiness in his person; but Christ gave him the praise above all those to whom he had preached in Israel. Confess then, and be not ashamed to say, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!" And take consolation, that water-springs shall flow out of a barren ground, which suspected itself to be parched and dry. Though you see but little by your own light, it is because it is put into the lantern of humility. And let these be the consolations of faith.

CHAPTER II.

That a Christian's Comfort flows from the Grace of Hope. The Object of Hope is, 1. *That which is good.* 2. *A Good absent.* 3. *Though absent, yet possible; and that for three Reasons.* 4. *Though possible, yet difficult. An account of two Sorts of Difficulties, with particular Encouragements against them.*

Yet know that faith never rides single, but it carries hope before it. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for."[a] No scripture doth better contain them both in a little than Titus:[b] the apostle says, that "the faith of God's elect," first, "acknowledgeth the truth:" secondly, that "it is according to godliness:" thirdly, "it is in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." When you see a weight of iron tied to a line, wound upon a wheel from the ground to the top of a house,—remember it is like the heart of a sinner, leaden and heavy, lying upon the ground, and wound up in this text, with the line of hope, to the top of heaven. Heaven then is the express and fair object of hope, and God, in his promise, is the procurer. "Promise," I say: for we do not grope for heaven blindfold, and fall upon it out of our own head without a warrant: but our assurance is incomparably the best that can be given, and in the best manner; "a promise made before the world began;" that is, freely, unrequested, when we could have no being to ask it; and made over to Christ the Mediator, that it should be put into his hand to perform it to us. And it is unchangeable, as is all the truth of God: for "he cannot lie," neither is there any shadow of change in him. What can we desire more? Carry this evidence along with you, and show it to yourself upon every disquietness and deep plunge of heart; and how can you choose but convince yourself, that your melancholy and distrust is causeless? "The hope of the righteous shall be gladness."[c] And "we rejoice in hope."[d] The design of hope is considered four ways. First, it intends unto that which is good;—which makes a difference between hope and fear: for we hope for that which is good, we fear that which is evil. Secondly, it is not that good which is present, but absent; and this makes a difference between hope and fruition. "Hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?"[e] Thirdly, though it be a good absent, and not yet obtained, yet it is possible;—which is the difference between hope and despair: but we have no colour for despair, since all things are possible to God. Fourthly, it is a possible good, but "bonum arduum," to be gotten with difficulty and pains; which puts a difference between the diligence of hope and careless security. These are the four promontories of hope, and a good wind blows from every quarter.

I. First, it is good for a man to hope, since we hope for that which is good, so good that it exceeds

[k] Chap. xxxv. 4. [l] Matt. xxv. 34. [m] Matt. viii. 10. [a] Heb. xi. 1. [b] Chap. i. 1, 2.
[c] Prov. x. 26. [d] Rom. xii. 12. [e] Rom. viii. 24.

all that eye hath seen: for as yet we see not God but in his creatures. Nor ear hath heard it, that is, in its full, unutterable excellency, which the words of Holy Scripture cannot express to our imperfect reason. Then "neither can it enter into the heart of man:" for things can seem no greater than words can utter. "We know as yet but in part, hereafter we shall know as we are known." If we have boasted to the heathen, that we look for a kingdom and a crown of glory, we are sure we shall not be ashamed of that hope.[f] We may be ashamed that we have doted upon petty things out of which we have devised felicity, and they have failed and deceived us: but our treasure laid up in the heaven is so sure, that in the end, and in the day of trial, none shall insult over our hope and say, "Where is now the Lord your God?" If a mortal man detain the wages of the labourer, it is a sin: therefore, it cannot be incident to God, "who is not unrighteous to forget our work and labour of love."[g] "We shall not always be forgotten: our expectation shall not perish for ever."[h] The judgment of a good eye-sight is to see afar off; so, in the judgment of a good hope, to remark the unspeakable reward of a better age to come. Whereupon it hath sufficient satisfaction and content to leave or to lose all it hath, things "not worthy to be compared to the glory which is revealed in us."[i] The rich mines and golden trade of both the Indies are on the other side the line: so the rich trade of hope is in the other world. Change your poor freight, which is your lading in this vessel of clay, and barter it for an immortal possession.

Hope that is not under the embers, but mounts up into a trembling flame, reckons not what it is worth by a very little which it hath in hand, but by its share which is reserved in the storehouse of God's eternal recompence. Now I am abased; but there is mine honour, a far more abundant exceeding weight of glory. Now I carry about a crazy, sickly body; there it shall be immortal, and incident to no distemper. Now my neighbours and acquaintance despise me, and run far from me; there I shall be enrolled with angels and saints, and "with the church of the first-born, and with the spirits of just men made perfect."[k] Now I live in all disorder of church ordinances, in distraction of schisms, in the filthy stench of old and new heresies: but there is the New Jerusalem, where all things set forth the glory of the Lamb, in beauty, and holiness, and truth. Now I must die, and deliver up my body unto the dust; but Christ died and rose again the third day, and will bring again with him, in due time, all those that sleep: and "comfort one another with these words," saith St. Paul.[l] And as when Christ ascended into heaven, "he went up with a merry noise, and the Lord with the sound of the trumpet;"[m] so let every heart break out into praise and gladness, whose hope flies up unto the Lord in his holy places: "holding fast the confidence and the rejoicing of hope firm unto the end."[n]

II. Stay yet, and consider it is a good which is absent that we hope for: when it is come, and brought to pass, hope is at the journey's end. "Say to the righteous, it shall be well with him, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings."[o] It shall be well; "dixit,—erit." It is not paid down, as we say, in ready money, but we have a good bond for assurance.

Let one object upon this, "Doth not hope deferred afflict the soul?" Yet be not disheartened: it is better than so. For first, we have somewhat in hand; because that which faith lays hold of, is really and actually its own: now hope is faith's rent-gatherer, and takes up that which faith claims upon the bargain which Christ hath made for us.

To be clearer yet: "We are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance."[p] You see, then, that though we have not the inheritance as yet, we have the earnest of it; and an earnest penny is more than nothing. Here I must distinguish between a pledge and an earnest. A pledge is laid down for assurance to repay that which was lent; but an earnest is given upon a bargain, to keep that till the rest be brought in. Now the earnest we receive of the kingdom to come is the seal of the Spirit, an imprinted comfort that it shall be ours, a seal that cannot be defaced, a comfort that cannot be taken from us. So much as you have of that seal, so much you have of the earnest: therefore, you cannot say that hope hath quite nothing to stay its longing. The blossoms of the spring do not only promise, but are God's earnest, to represent the fruits which will wax ripe in autumn.

I will make it out in another similitude. He that is in a merchant's warehouse, where spices are stored up, shall have some taste of them in his palate by their strong scent, though he put not one corn into his mouth: so we taste heaven, because the Spirit that comes from heaven, dwells in us, and gives many delightful signs of a glorified reversion.

But to go forward: it may not be denied but that hope is anxious and restless, till it come to enjoy. How tedious a thing it is to stay long without the company of them whom we entirely love! and can it be otherwise than irksome, to be so long absent from the vision of God, and of Christ, compassed with innumerable angels? St. Paul says no less:[q] "We that have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body." Here are groans and sighs indeed; but we shall never be sea-sick with that easy tossing, having "hope as an anchor of our souls."[r] Hope of the right stamp, looking for the appearance of God, and the reward that he brings with him, hath a good mate that goes together with it, and that is patience. In the saddest book of the Scripture,[s] it is written, "It is good that a man should hope, and quietly wait for

[f] Rom. v. 5. [g] Heb. vi. 10. [h] Psalm ix. 18. [i] Rom. viii. 18. [k] Heb. xii. 23.
[l] 1 Thess. iv. 14. [m] Psalm xlvii. 5. [n] Heb. iii. 6. [o] Isaiah iii. 10. [p] Eph. i. 13, 14.
[q] Rom. viii. 23. [r] Heb. vi. 19. [s] Lam. iii. 26.

the salvation of the Lord." Which, that it may not be wanting, we must contend for it in prayer, as it is,[t] "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and the patient waiting for Christ." And it is no difficult thing to be persuaded. For when we are held off for a while from the inheritance of heaven, do we not attend God's leisure? And will the handmaid wait for her mistress, being in some degrees of place above her? And shall not the creature stay the leisure of the Creator, so infinite above us? Beside, the expectation of the recompence will increase the recompence, and make it more superlative; therefore, "let not him that believes, make haste."[u] Nay, so your spirit will be patient, the Lord will allow you your importunity to call upon him to hasten: "My strength, haste thee to help me."[x] Finally, stay for that contentedly, which, when it comes, it comes but once, and shall abide for ever.

III. Another degree upon which hope steps higher, is this, that her aim is possible. I have said how that which is proposed to it, is good; that it is not disconsolate, though it be in futurition, and not yet obtained (for it is too good to be yet obtained); if patience have its perfect work, it can attend cheerfully. "My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him."[y] Strike we, therefore, pleasantly upon this third string, that the past object of Divine hope is to be accomplished. "For I run not as uncertainly, I fight not as one that beateth the air."[z] Paul did do all things, and suffer all things, for that which is feasible and might be achieved.

The covetous is a projector for so much wealth as can never be gotten. The epicure longs for so much pleasure as can never be enjoyed. Great clerks and philosophers seek for so much knowledge as can never be found; which, in Isaiah's words, is "to spend money for that which is not bread, and to labour for that which doth not satisfy."[a] This is able to break the brain and to break the heart; for there is no labour like to lost labour. "But the fruit of the righteous is a tree of life."[b] His hope stands upon a sound bottom; it is all comfort for three reasons: 1. It is possible, because it comes from an infinite power; 2. Because it is derived from infinite love and goodness; 3. It hath abundant satisfaction from long and constant experience; and what can we desire more?

1. The first pillar that props it up, is the almightiness of God. "Abba, Father, all things are possible to thee," says our Saviour.[c] Talk not to me how the seas should be turned into dry land, or how the poor can be raised up to be set with the princes of the people; or how stones can be raised up to be children of Abraham; or how palsies and fevers can be cured with a word. I will stop all gaps of infidelity with this one bush, "That God is able to do it." He that is made by no cause, cannot be confined in his being; and he that hath no bounds in his being, can have no bounds and restriction in his power. And if any fancy start out of our weak brain, to cavil that somewhat is impossible to God, —it is soberly spoken by one, that "it were better to say that this could not be done, than that God could not do it." There is no possibility, therefore, for christian hope to despair, because all things are possible to God. There is no horizon under heaven, or above heaven, that hope cannot look beyond it. For that comfort that is commensurable with the strength and power of God, is as large as can be contained in the heart of a creature.

But if you lean upon the help of men, and hosts, and angels, they are slender reeds, and will give you a fall: as God said of the vain trust of the Jews, "They shall be ashamed of Ethiopia their expectation."[d] How many do I see to sink under a little sorrow, because they have too much temporal comfort! The world is too liberal to them; it hath given them of all things so largely, that they have not the patience to want any thing: as God told Gideon, that he had too much of man in his army to depend upon the Almighty for victory, and he bade him retain but the thirtieth part, and his foes should flee before him.[e] Throw all the miserable comforts of the world out of doors for rubbish, and cast yourself upon the strength of God, and upon that alone: and then say, "Lord, receive me, for I have driven all other solace from me, that I might enjoy thee alone: now I am ready for my Saviour, for there is none to help me but only thou, O Lord!"

2. That which holy hope hath in its prospect, is possible, not only for the infiniteness of power, but for the infiniteness of the mercy of our God. It is easy to get the favour of a gracious and a gentle nature among the sons and daughters of men; and the most generous are the most reconcilable. Then what possibility, nay, what readiness will hope find to be reconciled to God, "merciful, gracious, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth?"[f] The devil is not more frequent nor more strong in any temptation, than to undermine hope in this point, that it is too forward and too peremptory to expect remission of sins: fain he would have a tender conscience stick in this mire, and never get out of it. Some reverend writers go so far as to teach that Satan himself at first, when he began his mischief in Paradise, was of opinion, that sin could not be forgiven, it being his own case; and he would never have tempted Eve to disobedience, if he had imagined the eating of the forbidden fruit could be pardoned; not suspecting that God would have given his only Son to die for our redemption. Which I pass by, because it depends upon a grave question, whether God could pardon sin by his absolute power, without satisfaction made to his justice? Deep disputings will yield but shallow comforts. Of this we are assured, that the means which the Father appointed, are excellent, into which "the angels desire to look,"[g]—to give us "redemption and forgiveness of sins through the blood of Christ, accord-

[t] 2 Thess. iii. 5. [u] Isaiah xxviii. 16. [x] Psalm xxii. 19. [y] Psalm lxii. 5. [z] 1 Cor. ix. 26. [a] Chap. lv. 2.
[b] Prov. xi. 30. [c] Mark xiv. 16. [d] Isaiah xx. 5. [e] Judges vii. 4. [f] Exod. xxxiv. 6. [g] 1 Pet. i. 12.

ing to the riches of his grace."[h] "We have trespassed against our God, but there is hope concerning this thing."[i] "Forgiveness of sins" is put into our creed: he that doth not believe it, hath no creed nor christianity in him. Do you believe a "catholic church?" that is the dowry of that church, which Christ espoused to him in his blood. Do you believe "a communion of saints?" this is it in which we are baptized, in which all our communion doth join, "That through Christ is preached forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses."[k] So also it is put into our prayer, as well as into our creed. And he that taught us to pray, "Forgive us our sins,"—hath taught us this comfort, that sins are pardonable.

Yet an afflicted conscience will receive suggestion, that some sins indeed are pardonable, but not all, not the sin of the evil angels, not the sin against the Holy Ghost: "and there is a sin unto death, I do not say ye should pray for it," says St. John.[l] These, verily, are set out for instances of irreversible judgment, to deter us from committing crimes of a vast magnitude. But mark, the Holy Scriptures have not unfolded it clearly and explicitly, wherein the heinousness of these sins did consist, that we may not accuse ourselves of them, and fall into despair, as if we had committed them. Since you know not expressly what these are, how can you lay them to your own charge? Nay, if you lay them to your own charge, you must be mistaken; for he that condemns himself, shall not be condemned of the Lord. Such incurable castaways as have their consciences seared, are not sensible of their guilt. Who more like to be of that number than the Pharisees, who justified themselves, saying, "Are we also blind?"

"Well," says a forlorn sinner, "my sins then are not the forenamed, nor out of possibility of mercy; but it is almost as bad that they are in an unlikelihood to mercy, for they are very heinous." As unto that confession that your trespasses are very heinous, conceive so of them, and spare not: true repentance thinks no sin to be a little one. So St. Jerome spake to the commendation of the lady Paula, in her funeral sermon, that she was wont to bewail every fault she had committed as if it were one of the most presumptuous crimes. But be it so really, that God hath let you incur no small delinquencies: as Aaron was not free from idolatry,—nor David, from adultery,—nor Peter, from abjuration of Christ,—nor Paul, from persecuting the church,—nor Manasses, from witchcraft,—nor Mary Magdalen, from indefinite scandal; well, I know not what; who yet all obtained mercy, for a pattern to them, who hereafter should believe in Christ to everlasting life.[m] They were called Novatians, who blotted out the beginning of the eighth chapter of St. John's Gospel, because the story tells us, that Christ dismissed the woman taken in adultery, with a gracious gentleness. Why should not his procedure in judgment be like his doctrine? Did he not preach that publicans and harlots should go into heaven before proud justiciaries? "Be merciful unto my sin, for it is great," says David.[n] This is not the way to deal with mortal judges, when we stand at their bar; but this is the way to obtain propitiation from our God; "heal me, for I am sore wounded; cure me, for I am very sick; be merciful to my sin, for it is very great." Zozimus, a pagan, that envied the honour of Constantine the Great, makes this tale to discredit him in his history; that Constantine had put his wife, Fausta, and his son, Crispus, to death; after which, being haunted with an ill conscience, that gave him no quiet, he sought among the heathen priests for expiation, and they could give him no peace: but he was told that the religion of christians was so audacious as to promise pardon to all sins, were they never so horrible. Is not this to commend the emperor and his religion under the form of a dispraise? for what rest could a troubled mind attain to from the rites and superstitions of idol gods? But, in the immense value of the price of the blood of Christ, there is redemption for every sinner that repents and believes. "Whatsoever ye loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven," says Christ to his apostles.[o] Oh, loose not a syllable of such comfort in this discomfortable world! "Quodcunque" is "all manner of sin," great and little. And if Christ hath given such commission to men on earth, to unloose every sin by the power of their office, and the word of consolation,—then how unbounded is his own clemency! No sins can superabound his grace, if we do not sin presumptuously, because grace abounds.

Yet the poor publican will beat his breast, and cry out dolefully, "My sins are many; they are more in number than the hairs of my head." The bill of indictment is a true bill; who can tell how oft he offendeth? Scarce any sin we act, but hath a nest of sins in it: then think we what a heap will they make when they are put all together? Peter, it seems, misdoubted, that if a man were forgiven, that had trespassed often, it would be scandalous, and encourage the offender; therefore, he thought it fit to stint indulgence to some mediocrity, as it is,[p] "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him?—until seven times? Jesus answereth, I say not unto thee until seven times, but until seventy times seven times." So that Christ commends a boundless forgiveness in a finite number for an infinite. And, doubtless, himself would not stick with us for the same number. God forbid we should think he taught to be more merciful, or of greater perfection, than himself. "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven."[q]

Be thankful, and admire the mercies of our Father, both for nailing our great sins to the cross of Christ, and for acquitting us from the innumerable fry of minim sins, those of daily incursion: because when one of the least is remitted, all are remitted together. Mark that considerately. One that com-

[h] Eph. i. 7. [i] Ezra x. 2. [k] Acts xiii. 38, 39. [l] 1 Epist. v. 16. [m] 1 Tim. i. 18. [n] Psalm xxv. 11. [o] Matt. xviii. 18. [p] Matt. xviii. 21. [q] Luke vii. 47.

mitted some foul and leprous sin, goes mourning upon the deep sense of it, and especially the horror of it makes him fear damnation: yet he greatly deceives himself if he think his other sins are passed over,—and this great one, or a few such, do remain to his perdition. For do you hope comfortably that some faults of omission, some idle words, some garish and customary fashion of pride, are remitted to you? With the same affiance, leaning on Christ, you may hope that you are discharged from your greatest enormities. For all unrighteousness is covered at once to them, with whom God is well pleased. No sin is forgiven to him that is not in Christ,—and against him that is in Christ, there is no condemnation. They are the sons of God, to whom the Lord doth graciously remit any fault; but where any fault is not remitted, they are his enemies. He that is justified from any sin, must be truly penitent; but a true penitent is sorry for all sins together, hates them, eschews them all alike. Then follows a plenary absolution from all iniquity, through Christ our Lord.

And beware that you overlook not these multitudes of sins of the under size, as if little grief or anxiety would serve for them. Are they not numberless corns of sand? And may not a weight of too much sand sink a ship as soon as a burden of too much iron. The dailiness of sin must be bewailed with the dailiness of sorrow. And then "when thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid; yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet."[r] Now, tell me, if this balm be not enough to heal the bleedings and bruisings of despair? Talents of sins in small money, you may hide them all in the wounds of Christ. It is possible for God to do the benefit, and possible for thee to receive it. "Let Israel hope in the Lord: for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption; and he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities."[s]

3. It must now be added, how that which hope waits for, is possible, since it may find satisfaction from long and constant experience. In the younger days of the world, somewhat might be said to excuse the backwardness of hope: they wanted proof and demonstration in those times. Even Cain was the sooner overtaken with despair, crying out, "My sin is greater than can be forgiven me." He had not lived so long to be taught the contrary by experience. But every age hath given advantage to hope to be satisfied better and better. "O God, we have heard with our ears, and our fathers have declared unto us, the noble works that thou didst in their days, and in the old time before them."[t] The records of God do tell us how the armies of aliens have been discomfited before his children; how the rocks have given them drink, and the barren wilderness bread; how the church hath been scattered and re-collected; the righteous continually supported, either with deliverance or patience; that the dead have been raised up to life; nay, that Enoch and Elias were taken up alive into heaven, to implant into our minds, that both they that are in the graves, shall hear the voice of Christ, and come forth; and that such as shall be found living at that day, shall be caught up in the clouds, and be translated into heaven. And I challenge hope to instance, if it can surmise, that any thing is impossible to be brought to pass, since there is a precedent in every thing to demonstrate, that the right hand of the Lord hath brought mighty things to pass. There is one thing, I confess, for which there is no example, neither can be evidenced, till all things be accomplished, that is, the coming of the Lord Christ with the new heavens and the new earth; and yet, to confirm us in that mystery to come, St. John did see the idea or glimpse of it in his Revelation.

The use of all this is to remember the transactions of God in the times that are gone before. Whoever saw the righteous forsaken? or the wicked flourish long? Was there ever any persecution of the church which hath not ended in its triumph? But stay for it, and pray for it, and condole for the delays of God's providence, till you may say in earnest, "My soul fainteth for thy salvation."[u] How easy is it for a christian that hath any nostril, to run after God in the odour of his sweet ointments, and trace his steps from point to point! and then to say with David, "I have remembered thy judgments of old, O Lord, and have comforted myself."[x] And from another prophet,[y] "Ye shall see their way, and their doings, and ye shall be comforted concerning all the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem."

The great storehouse of consolation is hope: therefore, all this, and more, must be said to keep it fresh, like a green olive tree, having never a sear or withered bough upon it. I come now to complete it; I have shown it aims only at good, and that which is only and excellently good: at such a good whose harvest is not brought in all in a year, but still there is more and more to be had, and the most to come. It is possible, through the greatness of God's power and mercy, as all ages have witnessed.

4. But lastly; that which may seem to pinch is, that it is "bonum arduum," "a good not easily attained," but with great labour and diligence, to give warning against sloth and security. It were not worth our longing, to say we hope for petty things, easy, and at hand; but for things of value, for which we must struggle with many lets and impediments to possess them. No man need to hope to find cockle shells on the shore; but to find pearls in the sea, that is an object for the adventure of a jeweller. Neither is the jewel of christian hope easily purchased. But as Elijah said to Elisha, "Thou hast asked a hard thing; nevertheless, if thou see me, when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee."[z] Much after that sort I commune with my heart, and say, "It is good to seek for eternal life, pursue it, as the hart brayeth after the rivers of waters: there will be much ado to get it, for "many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able."[a] Nevertheless, if thou canst see the Lord,

[r] Prov. iii. 24. [s] Psalm cxxx. last verse. [t] Psalm xliv. 1. [u] Psalm cxix. 31.
[x] Psalm cxix. 52. [y] Ezek. xiv. 22. [z] 2 Kings ii. 10. [a] Luke xiii. 14.

as if he were continually before thee, thou shalt not miss of that thou desirest: for all things are possible to him, whose eyes are ever toward the Lord."

These difficulties upon which I strike, are either in ourselves, or in our adventure: in ourselves, partly through natural imbecility, partly through contracted impotency.

1. Our natural languor is that of original contagion, which makes us so weak, that there is none that doth good, no, not one: which is not to be extenuated, as if the malignity of it might be suppressed with a little resistance. It is good to know the power of so strong an enemy, that we may be fortified against it. It is a root of bitterness never to be digged up out of corrupt nature: a coal of fire spitting out sparks of temptations continually: as inward to us as the marrow is in our bones. Yet there is hope in Christ to slake this fire, though not utterly in this life to quench it. It is a body of death, a whole body, consisting of all the members of sin; yet a body is but flesh, and a spirit is mightier than flesh. Apply that of the prophet Zechariah to it, as we may read it by the direction of our margin, and keep to the original:[b] "If it be difficult in the eyes of this people, shall it be difficult in mine eyes? saith the Lord." Therefore, since God is our help against the insurrection of this rebellious sin, let us be comforted in his help, and not in excuses. For we must not plead our personal maladies and natural inclinations, and think that God will take it for an answer, and ask no more.

"I am dull of understanding," says one, "and what I am taught I cannot bear it away. I am suddenly transported with indignation, and cannot choose but break out: I am retentive of an injury, and cannot easily be reconciled." All this, and the like, is no better than the answer of those ill-mannered guests in the gospel, which are invited to a feast made by a king,—"We cannot come, I pray you have us excused:" which sounds like confession and humility, but it is denial and defiance. Spend your breath in a better way, and cry out often and affectionately,—"Give me not over to myself, O Lord; take away from me my stony heart, and give me a heart of flesh. Drop down upon this barren earth, and it shall bring forth quite against the bias of nature. The high-minded will grow meek as a lamb, the covetous will begin to disperse and scatter abroad, the lying lips will confess the truth, bitter cruelty will melt into pity, new-fangled braveries will be laid aside, and blush at vanity." To what purposes are the pourings in of the Spirit, but that what is wickedly inbred from our conception, should be shaken off from the tree, and a better fruit spring up in the place, from the increase of God?

Mark the rain that falls from above, and the same shower that dropped out of one cloud, increaseth sundry plants in a garden, and severally according to the condition of every plant: in one stalk it makes a rose, in another a violet, divers in a third, and sweet in all. So the Spirit works its multiformous effects in several complexions, and all according to the increase of God. Is thy habit and inclination choleric? Why, try thyself if thou be very apt to be zealous in a good cause, and it turns thy natural infirmity into holy heat.—Is melancholy predominant? the grace of God will turn that sad humour into devotion, prayer, and mortifying thy pleasures to die unto the world.—Is thy temperature sanguine and cheerful? the goodness of God will allow it unto thee in thy civil life, in a good mean; but over and above, it will make thee bountiful, easy to pardon injuries, glad of reconciliation, comfortable to the distressed, always rejoicing in the Lord.—Is a man phlegmatic and fearful? if this freezing disease, which is in thee from thy mother's womb, be not absolutely cured, yet the Holy Ghost will work upon it, to make thy conscience tender, wary to give no offence, to make thee pitiful, penitent, contrite, ready to weep for thy transgressions. "There are two handles to take hold of every thing," says a heathen: a dissolute man takes hold of original frailties, and makes them serpents: a holy man declines their serpentine nature, and catcheth them by that part which may conduce to all manner of virtue. This is the comfort of hope against original inquination, that this great enemy, by the operation of the Spirit, shall be made our friend, or our footstool. "O wretched man that I am; who shall deliver me from this body of death? I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord."[c]

What is stronger than a lion? yet, if the lion be killed, "out of the strong comes forth sweetness."[d] For all this, the worst is not past: beside natural pronity to sin, we have contracted much more evil by custom, education, strong habits, noxious examples, bad enticements, and infusions. The cockatrice' egg was laid, when we were in our mother's womb, but it proves more venomous being hatched, and grown able to fly abroad. There are seventy sons of Ahab, who shall kill thee? Even the sword of the Spirit: "there is none like it," as David said of that of Goliah.[e] This is sufficient, not merely to cut down grass and briars, but to hew down the trees, to cut off the branches, to shake the leaves, to scatter the fruit, to frighten away the fowls from the branches, and the beasts from grazing under it;[f] or, as the apostle comforts us in plain words, without a parable, "I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me."[g] If you be overtoiled and heated too much, you know how to cool: cast off some garments, wipe away the sweat, sit still and stir not, lest you inflame yourself with motion. Follow the same method; lay aside the burden of sin, that inflames you, cast off the weight and the superfluity of naughtiness: bear in mind that Christ sweat drops of blood in his agony, to make you ashamed of toiling and sweating in Satan's drudgery. Take ease in a sabbath of holy rest, and moil not in the unprofitable works of darkness. Try what refrigeration this will give unto your conscience: else take heed that you be not put to a terrible sweat of fear, lest God take you away in his wrath, and give you up for ever unto Satan, whom you have served so willingly.

[b] Chap. viii. 6. [c] Rom. vii. 24. [d] Judges xiv. 14. [e] 1 Sam. xxi. 9. [f] Dan. iv. 14. [g] Phil. iv. 13.

"To the law and to the testimony:" mind no examples, but when they are wrapt up therein. "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind."[h] What a case had Noah been in, if he had framed his life by common practice, when all flesh had corrupted their way? Choose better company, as Enoch did, to walk with God.[i] And "can two walk together unless they be agreed?"[k] It is more than agreement: it imports endearment, benevolence, friendship with God. No title can be greater or sweeter: what can match that honour of Abraham and the apostles, to be called the "friends of God and Christ?" No league in the world more sought for or more willingly accepted: no amity less burdensome or more beneficial. St. Austin[l] brings in a couple that served the Roman emperor, thus debating upon it: "What can we look for in this palace, more than to be called the friends of our sovereign? When we have got this, it is no sure and unchangeable favour. And how long shall we attend before we be promoted to it? But let us then turn to God in this hour, and sue to be his friends, and it shall be done instantly, and remain eternally."—"Ask, and it shall be given; seek, and we shall find." And as we trespass by sins of daily prevention, there is a dailiness of mercy to comfort us. But as you love Christ and would be beloved, struggle with temptations, do not yield upon the first enticement, no, nor upon the second or third assault. "Resist the devil, and he will fly from you:" quit yourself like a man, fight like a christian: "the flesh is weak, but the Spirit is willing, ready, able to assist you."[m] Thus hope waxeth valiant, and assures itself of victory against customs, habits, and all contracted impotencies.

2. Lay now our adventure, the toil and peril of our labour, wherein we are employed, in another balance, and more difficulty will appear. For hope is wise, and doth not flatter itself, as if the kingdom of heaven were accessible with little pains. What carefulness ought this to work in us! what self-denial; what fear; what zeal; what unblamable conversation! "I run, I fight, I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection."[n] "For Christ Jesus I have suffered the loss of all things."[o] Christ, having overcome the sharpness of death, hath opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers: yet to put us to our labour and skill to follow, mark what he has taught us,—"Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it."[p]

And, therefore, is it so strait and narrow? a question worthy to be resolved, to teach us and to comfort us.

First; a very religious life is said, by a metaphor, to go in at a strait gate, because it is our masterpiece to find the door, or to begin well; therefore, it is called "to be born again." For, as to be born into the world needs more art and skilful midwifery, than to bring us up; so to be regenerate, to begin to live the life that is in Christ, is exceeding irksome to flesh and blood: so many are the enticements that throng about the way, to keep us from the door, and to hold us in love with those sins, which have been our companions. As an orator will be more timorous to deliver the first period of his speech, than all that follows; so we stick long at the first onset to reform, to be strict, to pass away with so much vanity as must be forsaken. The penitent thief could not find the door, till he was going out of the world: St. Paul, as some compute, was twenty-eight years old before he left to be a blasphemer. But rush on, and make way through all resistances: he that hath one foot over the threshold, and hath cast the world behind him, is well advanced into the courts of our God.

Secondly; a heavenly mind gathers itself up into one wish, and no more. "One thing have I desired of the Lord, which I will require."[q] Grant me thyself, O Lord, and I will ask no more. The new creature asks nothing of God, but to enjoy God; give me this, O Lord, and for the rest, let Ziba take all. I will part with all to buy that one pearl, the riches of heavenly grace. The servant of sin hath all manner of pleasures under heaven to trade in. Can he ask for a shop with more variety of ware? why may he not have these, you will say, and life eternal to boot? Some of them are inconsistent with life eternal; but all are not, so they be added, and not sought for: as our Saviour distinguisheth, "First, seek the kingdom of God, and these things shall be added."[r] But if you seek them, which is to love them for themselves, and above the kingdom of God, it is like a man that carries a piece of timber at breadth upon his back; there is no room for a man to get in with such an impediment upon his shoulders. It is not the gate that excludes him, but he thrusts himself out with his own improvidence.

Thirdly; there are thousands of scandals, millions of errors, to be avoided, but truth and holiness are in the middle, in a little compass; and happy is he that shuns extremes, and falls perpendicularly upon the golden mean. The commandments of God are "but ten words;"[s] the inventions of men, and the forms of will-worship are innumerous. "Pray, fast, give alms;" Christ comprehends much external duty under those three heads, but the traditions of men are more than can be put in a catalogue. "Call upon God in the time of trouble;" that, and no more, is the pole-star of faith in prayer; but what a compass doth monkishness take in, to drop beads in the invocation of angels and saints! Profaneness neglects the honour of God: superstition falls into needless excesses about it: the true fear of God is in the centre, as far from the one extreme as from the other. As in an accurate song, you must keep minim time, or else you will put the whole choir out; so look that you sing the new song

[h] Rom. xii. 2. [i] Gen. v. 24. [k] Amos iii. 3. [l] Confess. 8. c. 6.
[m] Matt. xxvi. 41. [n] 1 Cor. ix. 26, 27. [o] Phil. iii. 8. [p] Matthew vii. 14.
[q] Psalm xxvii. 4. [r] Matthew vi. 33. [s] Deuteronomy iv. 13.

of the Lord with trembling and accurate observation, miss neither cliff nor note, that is, neither sound doctrine nor pious practice.

These are the reasons why it is so hard to get access to Christ in a narrow way, and through a strait gate. If these difficulties be not discerned by some, it is because they take up christianity as it is in use amongst men, and as they are born to it. But they that came to it in their years of understanding, and were trained up in church-discipline many years before they were baptized, and all that time were put to exact trial what they would prove, and were taught it over and over, how the laws of Christ were far stricter than any other laws in the world;—these were pre-acquainted with the covenant which they must perform, and then received it, with the largest and hardest conditions. Yet they were brought on with two special comforts: first, that God did behold from heaven the mightiness of the task, which we took upon us, the troubles of persecutions, the dangers of temptations, the infirmities of man to resist them. "He knows whereof we are made, he remembereth we are but dust;" it puts him to admire the performances of his saints, as Jesus marvelled at the centurion's faith.[t] Secondly, when we are under our hazards, we shall have an answer from the Lord, as St. Paul had, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."[u] Therefore, as the Lord said of David, when he had chosen him, "I have laid help upon one that is mighty;"[x] so we, casting ourselves upon the help of God, upon one that is almighty, though of ourselves we have gathered little into our omer, the blessing of God upon it will not let us lack. "Every hard matter that rose among the people, was to be brought to Moses."[y] So in every hard cause, desire the Lord to plead it, and to judge it; bring it to him, leave it in his court, and he will end it. These are the cordials to revive hope, touching the difficulties it finds in the way to obtain that good which is set before it.

CHAPTER III.

How a Christian's Comforts flow from the Inhabitation and Testimony of the Holy Ghost; as also from the Sanctification of the Spirit unto all Obedience, and the Fruits of Righteousness.

I HAVE insisted with so much length and variety upon hope, because it is the largest inlet of christian consolation. Yet, in the third place, that which carries it on, nay, that which causeth it, is the Holy Ghost. As the air is the medium through which the eye doth see all things, yet it is the light that shines in it that makes all things visible: so hope is the principal means, enlivened by faith, through which we rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory; yet it is the Spirit inhabiting, that kindles it, that enlightens it, which makes it affect its object, and cleave unto it. Our Saviour left the world, and ascended into heaven, for many reasons; one was "to give gifts unto men," which gifts, though very many, are all united in their fountain, the Holy Ghost. Of which legacy, Christ gave warning before his death.[a] "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever."[b] "The world knows him not, because it sees him not: but ye know him, for he shall dwell with you, and shall be in you."[c] "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you."[d] "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you: but if I depart, I will send him unto you." This Comforter, the everlasting Spirit, to speak after the phrase of men, is the proxy of Christ, his representative in our hearts. And so it was fulfilled: for when the Spirit descended in great abundance upon the church, St. Peter says, "This is that which is come to pass."[e] "Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance."[f] And for the evidence of it, it is said, "The churches were edified, walking in the fear of God, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost."[g] Which text begins this note, that christian solace consists in two things, which we may call the root and the fruit. The root is the Holy Ghost taking up his tabernacle in us, so that "our body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in us."[h] To walk by it in the fear of God is the fruit of sanctification in all manner of obedience.

1. Unto the former, the in-dwelling of the Spirit, let this be premised. When we speak of any one dwelling in safety, the great question is, who keeps the house? When David fled from Jerusalem for fear of Absalom, there was no likelihood that his palace would hold out, for "he left ten women, that were concubines, to keep the house."[i] So if we leave our concubines, our lusts and carnal desires, to keep our conscience, they will betray us to Satan to get the possession. "But who can take the city, if the Lord keep it?"[k] How impregnable are we, if he dwell in us, and we in him, "because he hath given us of his Spirit."[l]

All that one can say unto this, who is doubtful in faith, will be, "Show me that the Father of mercies, and that the God of all comfort, is entered into me, and it sufficeth." I answer, I cannot show, that is, demonstrate it to another, that this eternal life is in him; but I can persuade an apt scholar to stir up

[t] Matt. viii. 10. [u] 2 Cor. xii. 9. [x] Psalm lxxxix. 19. [y] Exod. xviii. 16. [a] John xiv. 16. [b] Verse 17. [c] Verse 18. [d] Chap. xvi. 7. [e] Acts ii. [f] Verse 28. [g] Acts ix. 31. [h] 1 Cor. vi. 19. [i] 2 Sam. xv. 16. [k] Psalm cxxvii. 1. [l] 1 John iv. 13.

the grace which is in him, that he may show it to himself. I say, he may do it, if he give his mind to it. Else, St. Paul made a question to no purpose, "Know ye not that ye are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"[m]

I deny not but the devil hath a way to fetch it about, to make you misknow, and take no heed of that you do perceive, if he did not stagger you with delusions. This is the first lesson that he reads out of his morals, "That distrust is a high point of wisdom; and be not over-reached with opinion: you are sure of that you see, and of no more." But to meet with this fallacy: Is nothing certain, or at least so certain as that which may be seen? Why, the wind will blow away this objection, the air will confute it. What can you make up so close that the air and the wind will not get into it? Yet you see it not, you know not whence it comes, it is an invisible messenger: "So is every one that is born of the Spirit."[n] Breath is an imperceptible expiration; therefore, Christ breathed on his apostles, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost."[o] Some gales of western winds, in the spring, make the earth glad with their gentle blast, and open the buds and flowers: so there is a breath of omnipotent virtue, which fans the heart that was hot in sin, with its coolness, which carries away the caterpillars that eat up the tender leaf of our first greenness: which widens our blossoms to make their expectation show itself openly: which perfume the evil scents of scandals that annoy us, as it is express to that intent in the mystical song. "Awake, thou north wind; and come, thou south; and blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out."[p]

I bring the case again to be examined: Is no witness so competent to depose for truth, unless it be sensible, and chiefly discerned by the eye? then what ail all sects of philosophers to say, "That the sun, and all the stars above, work upon these bodies below by heat and light, and likewise by influence?" An invisible virtue that doth enter into the production of many effects; which seems to have God's approbation with his own voice, who mentions there "the sweet influences of Pleiades, and the bands of Orion."[q] And can the constellations of the firmament drop down good upon minerals and plants, upon man and beast, and by a secret derivation? What an error, or rather what a madness, is it then, to scruple whether he that made the heavens, can dart celestial beams into man's soul, without a sensible perception! And this is all I will say more unto it; Is not the soul of man above a material apprehension? Pliny, or Galen, or whosoever unadvisedly deny the immortality of it, will yield there is a soul in our composition, that holds all the parts of the body together, and moves and acts in them; yet they can as soon take a pencil, and paint an echo, as describe the intelligible nature of a soul, by species drawn out in our sensitive fancy. Therefore, it concerns us, in maintenance of the dignity of our own nature, to say, that the Spirit of God can inform our soul, as well as our soul can inform our body. I know not what temptation may rise to gainsay the truth, that the soul is known by her powers and operations, that it justifies itself to be an immaterial substance, a spark kindled in us by God from reason, and will, and memory. But what evidence is there that there is a Divine cause that worketh in, and is more than, these natural faculties? It is requisite to work close unto this question: and I answer, first, because the bounds of nature are known, beyond which, nature cannot reach forth itself: as it works in its own sphere to preserve itself in being, and in well-being, in health, in wealth, in fame and glory, in extending ourselves unto ages to come by leaving a posterity, in preserving our country where we are born, and the like. But to have our conversation in heaven, at this present in heaven, to ascend thither in our desires, and in the tendencies of all our actions, to aspire to live in blessedness for ever, to long to be at that rest, where there is no sin; to look for a church which hath neither spot nor wrinkle: this could not enter into us to prosecute it all industriously, constantly, cheerfully, but by a supernatural elevation far above the vigour of a soul pressed down by a corruptible body, that is, by the power of the Holy Ghost.

Secondly; I feel the pulse of that Divine Spirit beating in me, by "delighting in tribulations" for Christ's sake, and "taking pleasure in infirmities" upon the same score.[r] And again, "I am filled with consolation, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulations."[s] An obstinate pagan might arm himself with patience and resolution, to vex his persecutors, and rather fall into them, than decline them, out of spite and contumacy. But self-love being spun out of our bowels, bred in the bone; who could rejoice to endure anguish upon anguish, that God might be glorified, but by strength which we are not born unto, but which is given us because we are born again of the Spirit?

Go farther yet. How much is the content of a natural man laid aside, when a good christian in his deliberate thoughts sometimes prays to have the rebellions of his heart kept under by some expedient cross? wisheth for wholesome correction to beat down the rankness of his sins? expects God's fan to winnow the chaff from the wheat? For he knows that as too much light dazzles the eyes, so too much prosperity surfeits the mind. Therefore, a good practitioner in repentance perceives there is no better way to bring him in from his wanderings, than to be scourged home with the gentle hand of God. To which, some expositors say, the spouse alludes, (reading one word as it is right in our margin,) "Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have puffed me up."[t] If we be puffed up, it is time to pray that the eye of God's outward mercy be for a little turned from us. But where had nature learned that lesson, if the Holy Ghost had never taught it?

[m] 1 Cor. iii. 16. [n] John iii. 8. [o] John xx. 22. [p] Cant. iv. 16. [q] Job xxxviii. 31. [r] 2 Cor. xii. 10. [s] 2 Cor. vii. 4. [t] Cant. vi. 5.

Thirdly; as the apostle says, "No man hates his own flesh." Every man, not overcome with a frenzy of melancholy, loves his own being, and would preserve his life. The devil, that cannot die, knows how loth we are to die: "All that a man hath, will he give for his life."[u] But how many saints have undergone, how many more are willing to undergo the fiery trial, and offer up their bodies for the testimony of the Lord Jesus! not to be cried up in popularity; not to be enrolled in the fame of a history, as there was such a sprinkling among the heathen. But they have died like lambs in the midst of wolves, when they have been hated, and evil spoken of in excess, because they would die for the truth of the gospel, which their prosecutors accounted to be blasphemy against the gods which they worshipped. If parents, or wives, or children, hung upon their arms, and besought them with tears to spare themselves, they threw them off as Christ did Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an offence unto me."[x] To see a martyr at the point of death feel no horror in his fleshly nature, but to be raised up as high as the third heavens with zeal; what human power could bring him to it? nothing but the Holy Ghost did, as I may say, lure his soul out of the body, with the bait of a crown of glory.

Fourthly; "The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, goodness, faith, temperance,"[y] &c. Is not the tree known by the fruit? Such a cluster hanging all together, growing constantly, and being fair and sound, (Tota, in toto tempore, cum toto corde,) it is not possible they should grow like a bulrush out of the mud of corrupt nature. "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost,"[z] that is, say it effectually, and from true allegiance to serve him as a Lord; for else Christ will say, "Why call you me Lord, Lord, and do not the thing which I say?"[a] This is the Spirit that acts not only in prophecies and miraculous gifts, but in every child of God. Even in the Old Testament, "Thou gavest thy good Spirit to instruct them:"[b] "them," that is, those that were led out of Egypt by Moses, and hearkened to him. And much more in the state of the New Testament; "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us."[c]

This might be extended into a great length, that the Holy Ghost is the Comforter, called so by appropriation, though it belong to every person of the Holy Trinity, and is well expressed in the first Divine Song, which is printed before the Psalms of David in metre:

"Thou art the very Comforter
In all woe and distress;
The heavenly gift of God most high,
Which no tongue can express."

This is "the unction, which we have from the Holy One;"[d] "the anointing which we have received of him that abideth in you;"[e] anointing oil is an oil to cure the sick:[f] "an oil of gladness:"[g] a fomentation to mitigate aches and torments in the bones, and in the heart.

2. And can the fruits choose but be answerable to the root? they must needs partake of it. First, because all that we do to the honour of God, must be done with gladness, willingly, and cheerfully: else it comes not from the spirit of sons, but either from the spirit of bondage, or rather from the spirit of the world. The new disciples received the word gladly, and were baptized.[h] They continued with one accord daily in the temple, "with gladness, and simplicity of heart."[i] "I was glad when they said unto me, We will go into the house of the Lord."[k] "Sing psalms, make a joyful noise unto God."[l] "Let us come with assurance in our supplications that we shall be heard praying with faith in the Holy Ghost."[m] "And then the prayer of the upright shall be God's delight;"[n] and why God's delight, but because his servants delight in prayer? "He that showeth mercy, let him do it with cheerfulness."[o] And he that giveth, offereth a blemished sacrifice, if he do it grudgingly: "For God loveth a cheerful giver."[p] Not so much but our losses and tribulations must be sustained with gladness. "Thy rod and thy staff do comfort me."[q] Enter into the combat willingly, and the continuance will be a pleasure. Our consolation aboundeth by Christ: for "as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation."[r] Therefore the apostles did change the name of a famous disciple, called Joses, into a notion of this theme, and called him Barnabas, which is, being interpreted, "The son of consolation."[s] The rabbies of the Jews hold themselves very close to this doctrine, and would have it observed, that "the merrier the heart is in the Lord, the more capable it is of the Spirit of God:" partly, because Miriam, when she prophesied of the mighty acts of Jehovah, took a timbrel in her hand and danced:[t] partly, because that Samuel, after he had anointed Saul to be king over Israel, told Saul, "Thou shalt meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place, with a psaltery, a tabret, a pipe, and a harp; and they shall prophesy, and the Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man."[u] More emphatically, when Jehoshaphat called for Elisha to inquire of the Lord; says Elisha, "Bring me a minstrel: and it came to pass when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him;"[x] that by the ravishing strains of music, his mind might be exalted into heavenly contemplations. Which is a great check to that drowsy dulness in devotion, which our late reformers have brought in, and have excluded the solemn melody of the organ, and the raptures of warbling and sweet voices out of the cathedral choirs. They that miss that

[u] Job ii. 4. [x] Matt. xvi. 23. [y] Gal. v. 22. [z] 1 Cor. xii. 3. [a] Luke vi. 46. [b] Nehem. ix. 20.
[c] Rom. v. 5. [d] 1 John ii. 20. [e] Verse 27. [f] James v. [g] Psalm xlv. [h] Acts ii. 41. [i] Verse 46.
[k] Psalm cxxii. 1. [l] Psalm lxvi. 1. [m] Jude ver. 20. [n] Prov. xv. 8. [o] Rom. xii. 8. [p] 2 Cor. ix. 7.
[q] Psalm xxiii. 4. [r] 2 Cor. i. 7. [s] Acts iv. 36. [t] Exod. xv. 20. [u] 1 Sam. x. 5, 6. [x] 2 Kings iii. 15.

harmony, can best tell how it was wont to raise up their spirit, and, as it were, to carry it out of them to the choir in heaven. And beside, cheerfulness is not only an adjunct, or companion with all the works of grace, in that time they are bringing forth; but being done and finished, that which is "post nate," the after-birth, as I may call it, comes with such a gleam gliding over all the soul, with such serenity and peace of mind as cannot be expressed; our conscience bearing us witness that we have been conversant in doing the pleasure of the Lord, as it is, "For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, we have had our conversation in the world." [y]

Here I shall find work to heal the broken in heart, who look upon the fruits of their lives with no content in themselves, but are unsolaced, and cast down, because neither in number nor in weight have they brought in that which the Lord required: they look on their ways, and they find them crooked: they look on their heart, and they find it is not constant to good purposes. To whom I rejoin; if this proceed from penitence, from quick sense of sin, from humility, which is opposite to a self-justifying, they have cause to praise God, that they are thus affected. Let them look narrowly if this gold (for it may prove no worse) be current, when it is brought to the touch-stone; then they may lift up their eyes, and look cheerfully towards Christ; for it is no flattery to say, they are under his grace and mercy. Deal clearly, that you are astonished at your frailties, because you think you can never work enough, never shun sin enough; and though your conscience condemn you, God will afford you equity against the rigour of conscience; for He that searcheth the heart, "knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit." [z] We are conceived in sin, and it is so intimate unto us, that we have no promise to be so spiritualized in this life, that we shall not often trespass. "God hath concluded all in sin, all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." [a] But it is one thing to fall into sin, another thing to run into it. One thing to be carried away by the passions of it, another to covet, and desire it. One thing to be overtaken in a fault, another thing to abide in it without repentance. And great odds between those that are given over to please themselves in filthiness, and between them that labour and desire to please God, though many times they attain not to perfect that willingness. The scope of the seventh chapter to the Romans, as I apprehend the mind of the apostle, is, to refresh our guilty consciences, that a regenerate man is not obnoxious to condemnation, though his flesh, upon some temptations, make him the servant of sin, because still in his mind he serves the law of God. And I am confirmed in that sense, because without all contradiction he teacheth the like doctrine: "The flesh and the spirit are contrary one to another, so that we cannot do the thing that we would."

And will the righteous God require more of a sick and feeble servant, than his best endeavour? Will not Christ accept from us the same that he did from Mary, that broke the box of ointment over his head; "She hath done what she could?" [c] Let a contrite heart, that would fain be righteous, remember the prayer of Nehemiah: "Let thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name:" [d] or the protestation of St. Paul; "We trust we have a good conscience, in all things, willing to live honestly." [e] But this desire and willingness must be without hypocrisy; not like iron that is gilded, base metal within, and rich without: it must be steady, industrious, instant to perform. Vehement holy desire is a great degree to perfection in our state; "For the beginning of wisdom is the desire of discipline," [f] but a lazy careless desire is a great token of imperfection. "The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing;" [g] and again, "the desire of the slothful killeth him, for his hands refuse to labour;" [h] like vagabonds, that when an officer catcheth them, will feign that they desire a service, and to be set at work: but take them at their word, and they will run away, that they may live in loitering, and upon other men's labours. St. Paul, provoking both rich and poor to liberality, according to their respective abilities, frames a rule upon that occasion, which is applicable to all good works. "If there be a willing mind, it is accepted according to that which a man hath, and not according to that which he hath not." [i] Yea, in some cases, when I desire a good thing, I am at my furthest. I desire the appearance of the Lord Jesus at the great day. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. I can do no more. I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ. I must do no more; for I must not attempt my own dissolution. I wish for the conversion of the Jews to the faith; I must not compel them. This holds in a few things. In the most willingness must show some practice; as in the same chapter: "Now, therefore, perform the doing of it: that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also of that which you have." [k] But to desire to do, and to do little, is a sign that there was little desire. This hath overthrown many, that they desire not to reach high. But we know that God gives his grace by talents, and not in petty sums, yet a lukewarm professor can be content with mites. Could such a one get a moderate competency of righteousness, knowing that "without holiness no man shall see God," then he would sit down, and let others strive, if they like it, to be tallest cedars in the house of the Lord.

There are many such indifferent disciples, that would be always babes, and never come to a manly growth; wrap themselves about with as many fig-leaves as would cover their shame, and think they want no more apparel. These, if they knew what it were to a dram, that would serve them to attain salvation,—they would reach so far if the grace of God would assist them; but would put themselves to no trouble to purify their body and spirit any further. Here is a pretence of desire to serve God,

[y] 2 Cor. i. 12. [z] Rom. viii. 27. [a] Rom. xi. 32. [b] Gal. v. 17. [c] Mark xiv. 8. [d] Nehemiah i. 11.
[e] Heb. xiii. 18. [f] Wisd. vi. 17. [g] Prov. xiii. 4. [h] Prov. xxi. 25. [i] 2 Cor. viii. 12. [k] Verse 11.

but with so much laziness, with so much lethargy, that the Lord disdains it as dead carrion. He would serve God, and he would serve mammon. He approves much prayer, but he cannot attend it. He would not for all the world but be a christian; yet a small share in profit, or a snap at a little pleasure, will pervert him to be a dishonest christian. But real and holy desire stands up for much, though it cannot do so much honour to God as he would: like the disease "ephialtes," that oppresseth us in the night, between sleeping and waking, we would turn to the other side of the bed, and cannot. But to shake off this "incubus," it listens after all the noble exploits that the saints of God have done, and would exactly follow them; or, if it were possible, run before them: if not, it will be heartily sorry that frailty makes it come short of the best. It would compound for no less than to pay all, if it were able. Then you shall find the heart pant often with these inward yearnings: "Sweet Saviour, should any of thy servants love thee better than I? should any of thy disciples be more obedient than I? No, Lord: for none of thine are so much indebted to thy passion, because none had so many sins to be forgiven. How amiable are thy commandments, O Lord of hosts! my soul thirsteth to be the nearest of them that shall stand before the presence of the living God. Lord, let me love thee as Peter did; Lord, let me love thee more than these!"

So I have revealed the first comforts flowing from the Holy Ghost, by his inhabitation and inward testimony: and the next comforts by the fruits of righteousness, and those sincere desires of godliness, which, by Christ's merciful interpretation, supply our failings. All which I conclude out of our church-song made to the Holy Ghost.

"Visit our minds, and into us
Thy heavenly grace inspire,
That in all truth and godliness
We may have true desire."

CHAPTER IV.

Prayer is the great Instrument of a Christian's Comfort. Concerning Prayer, three things to be considered; I. *The Substance or Matter of Prayer, in three Heads;* 1. *Thanksgivings;* 2. *Supplications;* 3. *Intercessions:* II. *The Qualifications of them that pray:* III. *The Fitness of Time for Prayer.*

The order laid down in the beginning, carries me to the fourth part of christian consolation,—the heavenly delight of prayer. It is the lively expression of faith, the ambassador which hope sends to God, the comfort of love, the fellowship of the Spirit, our advocate unto our Advocate Christ Jesus; our incense, whose smoke ascends up, and is sweet in the nostrils of the Most High; which promiseth such abundant success, that humility had rather conceive than utter it, lest we should seem to boast. A lowly supplicant to God never rose up from his knees, without some stirrings of gracious expectation, nor without a prophetical instinct that the mercy of the Lord was nigh at hand. Which fortunate presage Isaiah confirms unto us,[a] "I will make them joyful in my house of prayer." And how readily may we use this mighty ordinance of God! how soon it may be done, if we have a mind to it! What freedom have we (no man can deny it) to utter a brief prayer, and very often, if we will, in the greatest toil and business! "The tongue of the stammerer shall be ready to speak elegantly."[b] It is so facile a part of religion, as he that hath a tongue can scarce miss it. It is as easy to say, "Our Father, which art in heaven," as to see heaven, which is always in our eye. Every sect of pagans and idolaters were taught by instinct to fly unto it "ex tempore;" as the heathen mariners cried every man to his god.[c] An atheist, falling into a sudden danger, as suppose a pistol were put to his breast, would cry out as soon to God to help him as any true believer. And he that, upon deliberation, did say there was no God, will break out into a confession, before he is aware, that there is a God, by natural impulsion. A poor whelp hath found a way to lick its own sores whole with its tongue; so when we are oppressed with misery, whether the evil of sin or the evil of punishment, we are prompted, by the natural notions of our soul, to lick the sore with our tongue; that is, to call for help from heaven. That soul which God did breathe into man, cannot shake off this principle,—that all succour comes from above, for which it must breathe out itself unto God. No creature among beasts but, being smitten, will fall upon the way to relieve itself, except a blind, incogitant sinner. Such as have written upon their sagacity in that kind, tell us, that the fishes in the fresh water, being struck with a tool of iron, will rub themselves upon the glutinous skin of the tench to be cured. The hart, wounded with an arrow, runs to the herb dittany to bite it, that the shaft may fall out that stuck in his body. The swallow will seek out the green tetterwort, to recover the eyes of her young ones, when they are blinded. Only a stupid sinner forgets how to redintegrate his miserable estate, by throwing himself down prostrate before God

[a] Chap. lvi. 7. [b] Isaiah xxxii. 4. [c] Jonah i. 5.

in humble petition. He walks forward, lost to himself, lost to his right wits, because he hath no knowledge, or no good opinion, of the comfort of prayer. Which is my purpose to make him learn, by that which follows, looking upon, I. The substance or matter of prayer: II. The qualification of him that prayeth: and, III. The fitness of time when prayer is to be made.

I. The "matter of prayer" is as copious as all occasions that can be named; it will suffice for my purpose to treat of three heads: "Glorifications with thanksgivings, Supplications, and Intercessions."

1. The first is bent to magnify the Almighty, to extol his name, to praise him for his goodness. This is the Hallelujah of David, and of the saints in heaven; that is, Give glory to Jah, or the great Jehovah; which is followed with a rare variety in the song of the three children: "O all ye works of the Lord, bless ye the Lord, praise him, and magnify him for ever!" It is a ditty that is balsamed all over with a profusion of delight, to praise God from all things that he hath made, from the centre of the earth to the top of heaven. And this is most divinely expressed in that which is called St. Ambrose's hymn in our common prayer: "We praise thee, O God, we acknowledge thee to be the Lord." And let the servant of God that will listen to me, repeat it often and often: for it is a piece of devotion so sweetly spread out into the branches of heavenly praise, confession of faith, and devout petitions, that the like did never come forth since the time it was penned. Let me speak to others out of the sense of my own heart, and I may safely profess, that in the service and worship of God, I find nothing so delightful as to continue in the praise and honour of the Lord. If another contradict it, and say, that there are some means more aptly calculated, as I may speak, for the high meridian of comfort; he is he, and I am I, and I appeal from him to myself, what I find in my own motions and feelings. And "what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man which is in him?"[d] And observe that in the prudent institution of our church, to hold forth the consolation we have in Christ, after the participation of his body and blood in the blessed sacrament, it teacheth us to break out altogether in a jubilee, "Glory be to God on high; we praise thee, we bless thee, we glorify thee," &c. For when we are full of that holy feast, and have eaten angels' food, we fall into the tune of angels, and signify immediately, before we depart, how much our spirit rejoiceth in God our Saviour.

But who knew better the mind of the Lord than the Spirit itself, in those admirable ecstasies of David? "Sing praises unto God; for it is pleasant."[e] "Sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant, and praise is comely."[f] "Sing aloud unto God our strength; make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob."[g] Every furrow in the book of the Psalms is sown with such seeds. I know nothing more certain, more constant, to expel the sadness of the world, than to sound out the praises of the Lord as with a trumpet: and when the heart is cast down, it will make it rebound from earth to heaven. This was the wisdom of the holy church throughout all the world, (till distempers put us out of the right way not long since,) to solemnize the praise of our Saviour upon the feast of Christmas, Easter, &c.; that we might celebrate the great works which God hath done for us, "with the voice of joy, and praise, and with a multitude that kept holiday."[h] O give thanks unto the Lord, by telling of his mercy and salvation from day to day: Give thanks unto him with cheerfulness, for a joyful and pleasant thing it is to be thankful. Who is a just man, and fair conditioned, that would not pay a debt, and be exonerated of it? He that can say he hath paid what he owed, is it not quietness to his mind to be discharged?

It goes further a great deal, and brings more advantage, when we offer up the sacrifice of retribution, the incense of thanksgiving unto the Lord; for we draw on more benefits, when we declare the goodness of the Lord upon the receipt of the old. And the gratuitum which God gives, is a thousand-fold greater than the present which we bring. This is proposed to them that will fly high from the pinnacle of the Lord's prayer, the first petition, "hallowed be thy name."

2. Neither let them faint, that stoop low in supplication: for mercy will embrace them on every side. Two things being put together are of much weight: we pray with God's Spirit, and by his word. He invites us in his word to pray, and he gives the gift with which we pray. "I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplications."[i] Did he pour upon us his grace? and have we received a commandment, the outward sign of his will? and can we suspect, after all this, that he will put us off, and deny us? Is his grace given in vain? or hath he sent his word to delude us? He hath kindled a fire in our breasts, and it is a heavenly flame that burns within us. "Lord, though we are vile and despicable, thou canst not despise the acting of thine own Spirit, nor frustrate thine own operations. Or do we come unbidden, when we cast ourselves down in thy presence? Nay, Lord, thou hast beckoned and called us: "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden." Hold fast to these two, and who can forbid us to be comforted? The Lord bids us pray, and he gives us a heart to pray. For it is not strange to his mercy (perhaps it is strange to man's conceit) to give us strength to bring forth that obedience, both to will and to do, which himself hath commanded:—as he gave the blessed Virgin strength to bring forth the babe, who was conceived and formed in her womb by the Holy Ghost.

This I do the rather enforce, because we can see no comfort in ourselves: therefore, as I derive all the virtue and spirituality that is in prayer, from the efficacy of grace—so I refer all the success to Christ, in whom "we are blessed with all spiritual blessings."[k] "Whatsoever ye ask the Father in

[d] 1 Cor. ii. 11. [e] Psalm cxxxv. 3. [f] Psalm cxlvii. 1. [g] Psalm lxxxi. 1. [h] Psalm xlii. 4. [i] Zech. xii. 10. [k] Eph. i. 3.

my name, he will give it."[l] But he and his Father are one; therefore he says, "If ye shall ask the Father any thing in my name, I will do it."[m] If we had no better means to God than ourselves and our own merits, there were no hope to speed; nay, our hearts would be as faint and dead as if we heard ourselves denied before we had opened our lips: but we conclude as it is in the most of our collects, "through Christ our Lord." When we bring that name in the rear, and quote him for our merit and Mediator, then I know it will be well, and that the Lord will hear the petitions of his servants. Should we not put our requests into Christ's hand to offer them to his Father, Sion might spread forth her complaints, and there would be none to comfort her; and we might remain for ever in that heavy plight. "I remembered God, and was troubled: I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed."[n] But if we renounce our wretched selves, and imagine not the least intrinsical perfection to be in our prayers, do we sail then by the cape of good hope? Yes; because God is contented to yield upon such addresses. Jacob may wrestle with the angel all night, and protest he will not let him go till he have blessed him. But "victus est quia voluit:" God "was overcome, because he would be overcome" of Jacob: he lets us prevail, because he is willing to yield; but there is no strength in us to win, if he would not suffer himself to be vanquished.

There is no other person but Christ, in whom the Father (I know not what kind of necessity to call it) cannot but be well pleased; which made him say before his disciples,[o] "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me, and I know, that thou hearest me always:" as it is also,[p] "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, was heard for his piety." This is the pre-eminence of our High Priest, who is an orator for us all, that the Lord cannot reject his prayers. Therefore, committing our daily orisons to our High Priest, to bear them into the holy of holies before his Father, they are in a sure hand: and "they that know his name, will put their trust in thee:"[q] much more they that know his office perfectly. Wherefore let prayer carry on these considerations with it; that we are invited by God to that duty; that the Spirit instigates us unto it, and "helps our infirmities."[r] That it is presented to the Father by the mediation of the Son; then how canst thou be sad, O my soul, and fear to miscarry? Is not the lot fallen unto thee in a pleasant field? and mayest thou not promise to thyself a very goodly heritage?

II. Without all dispute, then, proceed unto prayer, and for a beginning, 1. "Ask in faith;"[s] that is, attribute unto God that he is almighty, and can do above all that we can ask or think: consent to his truth, that he is faithful in his promises: for he that believeth not those, makes God a liar. Acknowledge his goodness and mercy through Christ, that he will withhold no good thing from them that live a godly life. Let there be no wavering, no disputing about these attributes of God, lest we be condemned out of our own mouth. So much faith, so much efficacy, so much confidence, so much comfort in prayer.

Then will a solicitous christian reply, "What will become of me? I have not that plenitude of faith; at least, in sundry occasions, I have it not to ascertain myself that I shall prevail with God." No more had Abraham himself a perfect faith without any flaw. Excellent things are spoken of him, "who against hope believed in hope; and that he staggered not at the promise, but was strong in faith."[t] Yet see how he stooped a little: "Shall a son be born unto him that is a hundred years old? and shall Sarah that is ninety years old bear? O that Ishmael may live!"[u] God is not extreme to mark what is done amiss in every convulsion of faith:—which appears,[x] "I said in my haste, I am cast out of thine eyes: nevertheless, thou heardest the voice of my supplication, when I cried unto thee." You must be sure that, in general, David subscribed to the power, and truth, and goodness of God: but there was a temptation upon him at that time, in some particular case, in which he distrusted, or doubted that there was no likelihood to prevail. But if there be such a one that says, "I will pray, but I know I shall be never the better," he is an infidel, and mocks God: in that bad mind he did well to say, "he should be never the better;" for he did usurp a form of godliness, and denied the power thereof.

He is the right supplicant, but a very rare one, that hath no staggering or diffidence in his heart, that comes close up to our Saviour's rule, "Whatsoever things ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."[y] Yet the Lord will not cast them off, who are but in the next form, and do not resolutely promise success unto themselves in the instant of their present supplications: but bear it thus between faith and doubting, "whether I shall succeed in this or that, I am not confident, but of this I am most assured, that I shall be the better for my prayers. And I would it were thus and thus, because I conceive it would be best for me: but I am certain it will be better than the best that I can imagine, which the Lord knows to be most expedient."

Another, perhaps, may wrangle himself into an error, and say, "How do the heathen and the wicked obtain good things, if nothing will prevail with God but the prayer of faith?" Consider that even a pagan and idolater would never pray, but that they have some kind of belief to obtain fruit by their prayers. The king of Nineveh had a solemn fast at the hearing of Jonah's prophecy; "for," says he, "who can tell if God will turn, and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?"[z] None but a lunatic would ask for relief from them, that hath neither knowledge of his case, nor power to redress it.—"O, but the prayers of such are not grounded on the faith that we speak of." It is true,

[l] John xv. 16. [m] John xiv. 14. [n] Psalm lxxvii. 3. [o] John xi. 41. [p] Heb. v. 7. [q] Psalm ix. 10.
[r] Rom. viii. 26. [s] James i. 6. [t] Rom. iv. 20. [u] Gen. xvii. 18. [x] Psalm xxxi. 22. [y] Mark xi. 24. [z] Jonah iii. 9.

such a faith as possessed idolaters, is not that which impetrates mercy from God. Then I say, neither Jews, nor Mahometans, nor wicked men, get any thing by that prayer, to which the promise is made, "Ask, and ye shall have." For whether they pray or not, all that they obtain had come to pass, though they had held their peace. It is for our sins, and to scourge us, that they have kingdoms, and victories; it is not their motley faith that did purchase them. And for all manner of store and plenty that the earth yields to them, it is but as God gives fodder to the cattle, and meat to the young ravens that call upon him.

2. The prayer of faith, then, is only available, but out of the mouth of an humble suitor. For who will give an alms to a proud beggar? "Thus saith the high and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity; I dwell with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."[a] Let the comparison between the publican and the Pharisee remain for ever in our memory.[b] The prayer of the poor destitute, the contrite, the penitent, the bleeding heart, is a sacrifice well seasoned with the salt of anguish and misery. Away with high looks and high words. "Lord, thou dost hear the desire of the humble, and dost prepare their heart."[c] And "God comforteth those that are cast down."[d] Put yourself back, who art but dust and ashes, in a great distance from the Lord, that you may behold him the better in his infinite greatness. And a lowly heart will never spare to deject the body. "O come, let us worship and fall down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker." Solomon prayed upon his knees;[e] so did Daniel;[f] so did Peter, when messengers came to him from Cornelius;[g] so St. Paul: "For this cause, I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus."[h] And not only men upon earth, but the glorious spirits in heaven, cast themselves and their crowns down before him that sitteth on the throne.[i] Nay, the Son of God fell down upon his knees, and prayed unto his Father.[k]

And fasting, which is a pregnant circumstance of humiliation, was much in use with prayer; the instances are innumerous, to signify we had no part in any comfort, nor any delight in the creatures, till we were reconciled to the Lord. So was sackcloth used; and all apparel of beauty, all ornaments of riches and pride, were put off for that time. Let them be no more than outward circumstances; yet they are significant.

But that which is a sure companion, and most intimate to humility in prayer, is patience. It breaks not away in a pet, because it is not answered at the first or second asking: that is disdainful and arrogant. It holds on, and attends, and cries till the throat is dry: "I waited patiently for the Lord."[l] And there must be "patient continuance in them that seek for glory and immortality."[m] Faith is the foundation of prayer: and, to continue the metaphor, patience is the roof. The winds blow: look to the foundation, or the building will fall. Rain and storms will descend: but if they light upon a roof that is close and compact, they run aside, and are cast upon the ground. He that expects God's pleasure from day to day, will neither faint nor fret, that his suit hangs long in the court of requests: such storms as proceed from murmuring, cannot beat through a solid roof. Says Habakkuk,[n] A great thing will the Lord bring to pass, but not presently, says the Lord: "the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come." Many diseases will never be cured well, unless they be long a curing; and many deliverances will never be thoroughly settled, unless they be long a preparing; and many mercies are hid, like seed in the ground, and will be long a growing.

I give God thanks that every blessing of worldly comfort that I prayed for, the longer I was kept from it, and the more I prayed for it, I found it the greater in the end.

Observe that there is nothing of moment, yea, be it of lesser and vulgar size, with which the providence of God hath not interwoven a thousand things to be despatched with it, which require time, perhaps seven years, to finish them. Expect, therefore, from the Divine wisdom, to do all things in their order; and give honour to the supreme Majesty to wait his leisure. "For yet a little, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry."[o]

3. The third thing which gives assurance of comfort to prayer, is, zeal, devotion, fervency, which will pluck on patience further and further. For he that is zealous in any thing will not easily give over till he have brought his ends to pass. Zeal is a continual and an earnest supplicant, it prays "without ceasing;"[p] prays "exceedingly;"[q] asks with confidence, seeks with diligence, knocks with perseverance. A swarm of bees, that is, many thousands, must gather into a hive to fill it with honeycombs: and a swarm of prayers is sweeter before the Lord than the honey and the honeycomb.

Likewise, it is as vehement as it is assiduous, "labouring fervently for you in prayers."[r] Stir up your wit, and diligence, and memory, and meditations, when you come to spread out your wants before your Father: but if you yawn out your heedless, heartless petitions, you shall depart with discouragement; as it is,[s] "O Lord God of hosts, how long wilt thou be angry with the prayer of thy people?" The Laodiceans were lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, in the worship of God: therefore, the Spirit said to the angel of that church, "Be zealous, and repent."[t] Zeal is defined to be "a vehement and inflamed love." There must be an ardour, and a flame in prayer, as if we would mount it up like fire

[a] Isaiah lvii. 15. [b] Luke xviii. [c] Psalm x. 17. [d] 2 Cor. vii. 6. [e] 2 Chron. vi. 13. [f] Chap. vi. [g] Acts x. [h] Ephes. iii. 14. [i] Rev. iv. [k] Luke xxii. 14. [l] Psalm xl. 1. [m] Rom. ii. 7. [n] Habak. ii. 3. [o] Heb. x. 37. [p] 1 Thess. v. 17. [q] 1 Thess. iii. 10. [r] Coloss. iv. 12. [s] Psalm lxxx. 4. [t] Rev. iii. 19.

to heaven. Then we may say, that a seraphim hath laid a coal from the altar upon our mouth, and touched our lips.[u] Zeal takes away the soul for a time, and carries it far above us. I write to them that have felt it, that it darts a man's spirit out of him, like an arrow out of a bow. This is it which infallibly begets hope, comfort, patience, all in a sheaf,—as they are divinely put together:[x] "Fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer."

The transportment of zeal will excuse, or rather commend some ejaculations of prayer, which seem to be too bold with God; as, "How long wilt thou turn away thy face from us, O Lord? and forgettest our misery and trouble."[y] So, "Why shouldest thou be as a man asleep? and as a mighty man that cannot save us?"[z] And we do but follow our Saviour's pattern in it upon the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Tell not a troubled heart that is in anguish, tell it not of modesty: it is a compliment it will not be tied to. The Shunamite, swallowed up in sorrow for the loss of her child, runs to mount Carmel to Elisha, and before she said any thing, she caught him fast by the feet. Gehazi thought it irreverent and unwomanlike behaviour, and laid hold to thrust her away: "Let her alone," says the prophet, "for her soul is vexed within her."[a] The passions of an afflicted soul have much indulgence to break out far. They are not in good compass, till vehemency of zeal carry them beyond ordinary rule and fashion. Mary Magdalen did more than this the first time she came to our Saviour;[b] she came into a strange house without leave and admittance; into the house of a Pharisee, and those hypocrites would not admit suspected sinners: she takes opportunity to come at dinner-time, being a guest unbidden: she gives no salutation to the company, but falls down at our Saviour's feet, and lays her kisses thick upon them: says a holy writer to it,—it is Gregory the Great,—"Hast thou no forehead, woman? hath modesty quite left thee?" And he answers himself, "Minimè, pudor intus erat:" "that which she was ashamed of, was within her;" she was so ashamed of her sins, that she forgat all other shamefacedness. You see that zeal will pardon boldness, and will give authority to prayer to expostulate with God, and hath a toleration, as it were, to quarrel with his mercy.

Now a christian, sensible of many imperfections, will cry out, "O that I could attain to some degrees of zeal! I am no Shunamite, no Mary Magdalen, no Paul, fervent in spirit. I am carried away with distractions, when I speak unto the Lord in prayer; and through the multitude of various thoughts, I forget what I am about." O Christ, help our frailties, and keep our minds fixed upon thee, when we ask any thing in thy name. One body cannot be in two places at once: and one heart cannot be in heaven and earth together. O let us cover our faces with the wings of the cherubims,[c] that we may not see enticements to distract us. Watch and pray: watch this wandering heart, that it may not be stolen away by fancies, that move in our mind continually, like motes in the beams of the sun. Defy Satan, and bid him abandon. As they that have committed a robbery, run away from a hue and cry,—so the devil will run away from the noise of your supplications, when you challenge him for sacrilege, that he hath robbed you of your devotion.

To do more yet, I will assay to prescribe a remedy to a disease, I fear, not quite to be cured. But first feel your own pulse, and your fitness for the heavenly work of prayer, before you begin it. See that you be not drowsy and slothful; for a sluggard will be encumbered with various and recurrent thoughts. Neither would I have you to protract prayer to that length, which otherwise you would have done, when your mind and devotion fail you. Short and pithy prayers, collects well filled with words and matter, and not protracted till they may be censured for babbling, are more prevalent with God, when zeal doth manage them, than to spend out time without a fervent and well fixed intention. The prayers of the great men in Scripture are compendious, they are strong in sense, and speak home. A rose is sweeter in the bud, than in the blown flower: and what you abate at one time, in length, to anticipate distraction, you may fill up the measure when you will, by using them the oftener. I have known some servants of God, very circumspect in their ways, that use, for the most part, to read their prayers either printed or written, that seeing the matter of them before their eyes, they might the better contain themselves from all extravagancies. To which end, it is prescribed in the church of Rome, though a priest can say the mass by heart, yet he must read it out of his book, to keep the closer to the intention of his duty. But when all is said, happy are they that offend least in this kind: for all offend.

And whom can we blame but ourselves, that are remiss, and not half so earnest as we should be, to prevail with God? Which I demonstrate thus: let there be any thing in our prayers, which we are more eagerly set upon to obtain than all the rest, we will never start aside, nor run out of our circle when we come to that petition. "Animus est ubi amat," "The mind is with that, and in that which it loves." If we did long for every member of our prayer, as much as for that special thing, which we did so eminently desire, we would continue, from the beginning to the end of prayer, with little or no diversion.

This bottom is not wound up till I give a warning to zeal, as it is,[d] "It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing." Look that your petitions be modelled into such things, as the word and Spirit do appoint, and stir you up to ask, and "you shall not be ashamed of your sacrifice."[e] But

[u] Isaiah vi. 7. [x] Rom. xii. 11, 12. [y] Psalm xliv. [z] Jer. xiv. 9. [a] 2 Kings iv. 27.
[b] Luke vii 37. [c] Isaiah vi. 2. [d] Gal. v. 13. [e] Hos. iv. 19.

if you be frivolous, the prophet will tell you again, "Ye have sown the wind, and ye shall reap the whirlwind."[f] Or the apostle tells you plainly, "Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss."[g] Ask for the kingdom of heaven, for the maintenance of God's glory, for newness of life, and obedience to the will of God; ask for pardon of sins in Christ Jesus, for grace in the Holy Ghost to resist temptations; ask our offended Father for mercy, to be delivered from the wrath which we have deserved: and let the seventh part of our prayer be for the things of this life, and for them with moderation, according to that port and person which we bear in the world, and be content with the portion allotted to you: aim by this level, and you hit the mark. What mighty blessings did fall upon Solomon, because he desired not the advantages of pomp and luxury, when God put it to him in a dream what to ask! He desired an understanding and a wise heart: and "the speech pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this thing."[h]

3. Intercessions, that is, prayers wherein we meditate to God for others, must now be thought of, and the comfort redounding from them. The duty is strictly commanded, to pray for one another.[i] And, "I will that intercessions be made for all men, for kings, and all that are in authority."[k] When we do so, we have done what we are bidden: and having done that, albeit we are unprofitable servants to God, we are not uncomfortable to ourselves. For it is the first part of the reward of a good deed, that we can say to our conscience "we have done it." Beside, the work of love is delightful to the spirit; and to help others in our prayers is the largest and widest work of charity, willing to do good to all upon the face of the earth, and stretching forth its hands that the whole world may be better for the calves of our lips. Chiefly commending the whole state of Christ's church to God's mercy, yet also (as may be seen in our collect used on Good Friday) not forgetting to remember Christ for Jews, Turks, infidels, heretics, to take from them ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of the word: not only that the sheep of Christ's pasture might be blessed, but that it might be well with Nero, and such as he, that were the lions who devoured us. This is charity, not only to have communion with all the saints, but compassion for all the world. Therein we follow the footsteps of Christ in his mediatorship, as far as we are able, who hath an "unchangeable priesthood, and ever lives to make intercession for us."[l] And "who bare the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."[m]

Likewise it is the office of those that have great interest in God's favour, to bless others with their prayers, as the Lord told Abimelech, king of Gerar, "Abraham is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live."[n] So he said to Eliphaz the Temanite, and to his two other friends, "My servant [Job] shall pray for you, for him will I accept."[o] All Israel had been destroyed for worshipping the calf in Horeb, "had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath."[p] "What!" says an old writer, "art thou, Moses, more merciful than God? art thou more pitiful to the people than he that saves us from all evil? No," says he, "thou art infinite short of the loving-kindness of the Lord; but he put thy charity to the proof, to see what vehement entreaties thou wouldest make for the deliverance of the nation." When the same people were like to be overrun by the Philistines, what course did Samuel take? Says he, "Gather all Israel to Mizpeh," (which was a proseucha, or place for public prayer,) "and I will pray for you to the Lord."[q] "And you shall find most victorious success upon it."[r] What comfortable orators are the mighty saints of God! What a safeguard it is unto us all, when they live among us! "A wise man is the price and redemption of many fools," says a heathen: so a mediator that is very dear to God, is a protection not only to the good, but to the wicked that are about him. Have we not cause, then, to pray for the continuance of such, that they may live long to pray for us? Should Paul need to desire the prayers of the Thessalonians?[s] or of the Hebrews?[t] Could they forget that, which so much concerned their welfare? Now the worthy servants of the Lord may prevail much one by one: others of the common rank had need to meet by hundreds, and by thousands, in great congregations, that every single man's prayer may be a drop in a shower, that while every man prays for all, all may pray for every man. So great is the opinion of good consequents from the intercession of God's servants, that infidels and ungodly, who thought it would be labour in vain to speak to God for themselves, have sued unto the saints on earth to prefer petitions for them. Darius, that worshipped false gods, sent to the Jews at Jerusalem, to "pray for the life of the king and his sons."[u] And they that persecuted Jeremy, besought him, "Pray for us unto the Lord our God."[x] And Simon Magus turned himself to Peter and the apostles to intercede for him, "Pray unto the Lord for me, that none of these things which you have spoken come upon me."[y] This is the sum, that intercession of prayer, whether active or passive, whether it be to give or to receive a blessing, is exceeding full of consolation.

2. To go in order to the next head: Who they be that shall get benefit and comfort by prayer, is quickly defined. We know that "all things work together for good to them that love God;"[z]—to none other, you may be sure. He that doth not truly call the God of heaven his Father, as Christ begins his prayer,—shall have no share in the portion of sons. We may intercede for profane and impenitent men, and our prayer shall return into our own bosom. But while they remain such, the mercies of the Lord will be strange unto them. They are not of the body of the mystical church, and all the fresh

[f] Hos. viii. 7. [g] James iv. 3. [h] 1 Kings iii. 10. [i] James v. 16. [k] 1 Tim. ii. 1. [l] Heb. vii. 25.
[m] Isaiah liii. 12. [n] Gen. xx. 7. [o] Job xlii. 8, 9. [p] Psalm cvi. 23. [q] 1 Sam. vii. 5. [r] Verse 10.
[s] 1 Thess. v. 25. [t] Chap. xiii. 18. [u] Ezra i. 10. [x] Jer. xlii. 20. [y] Acts viii. 24. [z] Rom. viii. 28.

springs are derived unto them that are within the sanctuary. While the Jews continued under the hardness of their heart, God discharged the prophet for appearing in their behalf: "Pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me, for I will not hear thee."[a] And with no less, or rather more severity,[b] "Though these three men, Noah, Job, and Daniel, were in the land, they should deliver none but their own souls." And if the wicked commence a suit in their own name, the Lord will not be entreated of them. What have they to do with holy ordinances, that have no fellowship with holy practices? To come before the Lord with a lap full of sins, and a mouth full of prayers, what an heterogeneal sacrifice is it! Will the Mediator, Christ Jesus, bring it for them before his Father? "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me."[c] "And the throne of iniquity shall have no fellowship with thee."[d]

Many in our land, and in our days, pray for the confusion of them that brought all to confusion; but themselves are in pursuance of notorious crimes, and rebellion against God. They would advance that government, to which we have sworn to be faithful by the oaths of supremacy and allegiance; but they make no conscience to break their oaths and covenants, which they have made to God. It is not to suppress sin, and tyranny, and injustice, that they are instant with God; but to be revenged for their own injuries and losses. Their prayers are compounded with such sins as quite mar them. So many a pair of beads have been dropt in corners for the extirpation of the protestant religion. Many a mass hath been said for the good success of Jesuitical treasons. Many a rosary was run over to bring the powder treason to its bloody birth. If they have no better stuff than this in their matins, they had as good pray to devils as to saints. "I will that men pray, always or every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath."[e] Let go wrath, and malice, and bitterness. Holiness becometh the house of prayer, and holiness becometh the mouth of prayer. "If any man be a worshipper of God, and doth his will, him he heareth."[f] Do justly, live chastely, give charitably, walk circumspectly, and then pray confidently. "For whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep commandments, and do those things which are pleasing in his sight."[g]

But then will the trembling christian say, "Woe is me, for I am a great sinner; woe is me, for I am filthy, and polluted, and of unclean lips!"[h] then how shall I turn me to my God in prayer? O thou that fallest low upon the earth, oppressed with the burden of thy sins, stand up, and be cheerful before God: none is fit for prayer in the militant church but such an humble sinner. God draws thee, and none but those that are like unto thee, near unto his mercy. Though thy sins do cleave unto thee, be comforted that thou dost not cleave unto thy sins. Elkanah gave a more worthy portion to Hannah, that was barren, but meek and devout, than to Peninnah, that bare him sons and daughters, but was proud and scornful.[i] God that heard his beloved Son, when he made prayers for sinners; will hear those sinners that are his sons, when they ask any thing in the name of Christ.

3. Good fruit must be brought forth in a good season, which only remains to be thought upon, and to be added to the consolation of prayer. "For every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven."[k] But neither days, nor hours, nor seasons, did ever come amiss to faithful prayer. "Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud, and he shall hear my voice:"[l] which includes all the space of duration; for all time is included in "morning, noon, and night." "Pray without ceasing."[m] "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance."[n] Short passes, quick ejections, concise forms and remembrances, holy breathings, prayers like little posies, may be sent forth without number on every occasion, and God will note them in his book.

But all that have a care to walk with God, fill their vessels more largely as soon as they rise, before they begin the work of the day, and before they lie down again at night: which is to observe what the Lord appointed in the Levitical ministry, a morning and an evening lamb to be laid upon the altar. So with them that are not stark irreligious, prayer is the key to open the day, and the bolt to shut in the night. But as the skies drop the early dew and the evening dew upon the grass,—yet it would not spring and grow green by that constant and double falling of the dew, unless some great showers, at certain seasons, did supply the rest; so the customary devotion of prayer, twice a day, is the falling of the early and the latter dew; but if you will increase and flourish in the works of grace, empty the great clouds sometimes, and let them fall into a full shower of prayer: choose out the seasons in your own discretion, when prayer shall overflow, like Jordan in the time of harvest.

Keep strictly, as much as you are able, to those times of the day, which you have designed to appear in before the Lord: for then you offer up not only your prayers, but the strict observation of set times, which is a double sacrifice, and an evidence that you will not dispense to pretermit that holy work for any avocation. He that refers himself at large to pray, when he is at leisure, gives God the worst of the day; that is, his idle time. I account them prudent, therefore, that are precise in keeping canonical hours of prayer, as they call them, so they pray to God alone, who alone knows their heart: and so they pray "with the Spirit, and with the understanding;"[o] that is, in a tongue wherein they know what they say, and understand the language wherein they vent the meditations of the Spirit.

[a] Jer. vii. 16. [b] Ezek. xiv. 14. [c] Psalm lxvi. 18. [d] Psalm xciv. 20. [e] 1 Tim. ii. 8.
[f] John ix. 31. [g] 1 John iii. 22. [h] Isaiah vi. 5. [i] 1 Sam. i. 5. [k] Eccles. iii. 1.
[l] Psalm lv. 17. [m] 1 Thess. v. 17. [n] Ephes. vi. 18. [o] 1 Cor. xiv. 15.

This was the milk that the church of England gave every day out of her breasts, to praise God in common prayer at set hours, before noon and after, in the assemblies of her devout children. How many have rejoiced to hear the chiming of bells to call them together, and would never miss their station! Thus "Peter and John went together to the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour."[p] O, when will these profane days come to an end, that we may again, so orderly, so delightfully, appear before the living God?

Of one thing the devil hath disappointed us many years past in the time of prayer, which was the night-offices of prayer, called "vigils," which are disused, because it was feared they grew incident to scandal and uncleanness. And though they be left off (I believe for good reason) in a concourse of open meeting, yet let not God lose his tribute of prayer, which should be paid him in the still and quiet opportunity of the night. The day is God's, and the night is God's; the darkness and light to him are both alike; let not so many hours, as run out from our lying down to our rising up again, pass away without any prayer. Says David, "O Lord, I remembered thee in my bed, and meditated on thee in the night-watches."[q] It seems, while the tabernacle of Moses stood, that the priests did some duties in it all night long.[r] "Bless the Lord, ye servants of the Lord, which by night stand in the house of the Lord." The apostle allowed "widows must continue in supplication and prayers night and day;"[s] and Anna, the widow-prophetess, "served God with fasting and prayer night and day."[t] The Lord hath foretold that "he will come as a thief in the night at the great day."[u] Therefore, O Lord, with my soul will I desire thee in the night, and at midnight will I think upon thee, and call unto thee; that if it shall be this night, even now, when Christ Jesus will come to judge the world, my soul may find mercy from him, and both body and soul may be glorified, and so continue with him for ever.

All this about the opportunity of time, shall shut up with one institution of the psalmist:[x] "Every one that is godly, shall pray unto thee, O Lord, in a time that thou mayest be found." When you find stirrings and impulsions more than ordinary to provoke you to prayer, follow the admonition of the Spirit, and let not such a time slip. You know not whether such a Divine presage may roll in your thoughts again. I make no question but there are some critical moments, wherein God offers more than he will do again, if you neglect him, when he courts you with so great advantage. But now change the case from mine to the whole nation's, from private to public, then thus I will be peremptory in my resolution: There is no time too late for any christian that lives, in his single person, to beseech God to be merciful to him; he may find the same propitiousness that the penitent thief did: but there may be a time too late to save a kingdom or a state from ruin, when the Lord hath decreed the period of it. Therefore, when confusions threaten and begin to peep out, watch them betimes, and let the whole land pray for peace, and let the governors prepare conditions for it, to avert public calamity. If you let tumults and conspiracies grow to a head, it will be in vain to struggle by monthly or weekly humiliations, when our destiny is unavoidable. Plutarch says, that a discontented person challenged the oracle of Delphos, that it never gave a comfortable answer. "That is your fault," says the oracle, "for none of you come to me till your case is past help." "Venimus huc lapsis quæsitum oracula rebus," says the poet, that ever keeps decorum in his verses. Therefore, awake right early: seek the Lord in the first season, that the course of misery may not wax too strong and remediless. Otherwise the prophet will say, "The days of visitation are come, the days of recompence are come; Israel shall know it;"[y] and then whither will ye fly for help to be delivered? But prevent such dismal tribulations, while it is called to-day: for nothing is more consolatory than seasonable supplication.

CHAPTER V.

How the Sacraments minister to a Christian's Comfort. A General Survey of Sacraments. Five Reasons why God ordained two Sacraments under the Gospel. What Comforts flow from the Grace of Baptism. What Comforts flow from the Lord's Supper.

THOUGH by that which hitherto hath been set forth, I trust I may assume, that every one that sets his heart to make use of it, hath drunk well; yet, as the ruler of the feast said at the marriage in Cana of Galilee, "I have kept the good," that is, the best, "wine until now:"[a] the water of life in baptism,—the wine that delighteth the spiritual thirst in the Lord's supper. Other things in the word report unto us what a good land the Lord hath promised to his Israel; but these two sacraments are Caleb and Joshua, spies that have seen and searched the land, and bring us sensible and sure tidings, that it is a noble land, flowing with milk and honey; by the grapes which they have brought with them, and by their ocular and diligent survey, they yield evident testimony that God hath provided a

[p] Acts iii. 1. [q] Psalm lxiii. 6. [r] Psalm cxxxiv. 1. [s] 1 Tim. v. 5. [t] Luke ii. 37. [u] 2 Pet. iii. 10. [x] Psalm xxxii. 6. [y] Hos. ix. 7. [a] John ii. 10.

gracious country for us in the kingdom of heaven. To put all my work of consolation into one prospect together, prayer, the best comfortable grace, is married to hope; the Holy Ghost gives it in marriage; faith is the priest that joins them together; and the two sacraments are the outward signs, by which they have declared their consent, as it were, by giving and receiving a ring, and by joining of hands.

First; I will treat of sacraments in general: then of each in particular by itself.

"A sacrament being a visible sign of inward grace, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof;" or, more at large, (which compriseth the end of all such outward signs,) "a token to confirm men's faith in the promises of God:"—observe first, that God hath condescended above all expression to our weakness, that he would have us to take notice of his mercies in gross and sensible things: a way that is framed to our level and dull apprehension. "For God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and truth;"[b] that is purely a heavenly way. But some alterations have been admitted, to bring us forward in our own pace, that is, after human and bodily fancies. "Deus quandoque infantilia loquitur!" for our sakes, the Lord speaks in the Scriptures in a plain and vulgar emphasis, strangely beneath his infinite wisdom: as a nurse useth to babble to her infant, so he is pleased to give himself to our hands, to our eyes, to our taste, in common and obvious matter, but out of his surpassing wisdom, to make us more spiritual, by clothing religion in a bodily attire.

The church began in innocency, and yet it began with a sacrament, the Tree of Life,—instituted to keep mankind on earth immortal by tasting it, if Adam had not ambitiously eaten of the tree of knowledge.

When the old world was drowned, and repaired again, God told Noah,[c] "I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a token of a covenant between me and the earth, that the waters shall no more become a flood, to destroy all the earth." This is the world's covenant, and not the church's; a covenant to save all the earth from a total deluge. And God is to be perceived, and to be thought of in that sign. The glory of the throne of God was "as the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain; this was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord:"[d] and so the same glory is figured in the rainbow.[e]

After this, it being not discovered who did openly and entirely profess the worship of the true God, Abraham was called out of Chaldea, and he and his family were embodied into a church, and received the sign of circumcision, as a mark stamped upon them, to be known to be those whom God had called out for his own, and did admonish them "to circumcise the foreskin of the heart:"[f] chiefly to imprint into them, that the promised Seed should come from that stock, in whom all nations should be blessed.

When Abraham's seed became a national church, before they could get out of Egypt, the blood of a lamb was sprinkled upon their doors, with a statute given upon it, that from thenceforth every family, at that time of the year, should give account for a lamb slain, and be eaten within their houses, till John Baptist's Lamb was slain to take away the sin of the world.

Under the like discipline they were trained up for a while in the wilderness, when Moses set up the figure of a serpent upon a pole, that they might look upon it, and live, that were stung by serpents.[g] The author of the Book of Wisdom writes divinely upon it. "That they might be admonished for a small season it was a sign of salvation,—and he that turned himself toward it, was not saved by the thing he saw, but by thee that art the Saviour of the world."[h]

Neither are we such perfect men under the New Testament, to be taught only by the words of holiness and truth, but are received into the covenant of grace, and preserved in it by mysteries signifying wonderful things to our outward senses, that we may suck, and be satisfied with the church's "two breasts of consolation;"[i] and be filled with the "two golden pipes, that empty the golden oil out of themselves."[k]

I stand upon the number of "two," because they are put together:[l] "The Israelites were all baptized in the cloud, did all eat the same spiritual meat, and all drank of the same spiritual drink." As good account for it is,[m] "By one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, and have been all made to drink into one spirit." Or learn it from St. John:[n] "Christ came not by water alone, but by water and blood. And there are three that bear witness, the Spirit," that is, the ministry of the gospel, "the water," that is, baptism, and "the blood," that is, the Lord's supper. I will not promise a precise testimony out of antiquity, which shall say there are but two sacraments under the gospel, and no more; but learned men have produced out of the fathers as much as amounts unto it, to them that will not be contentious. Justin Martyr,[o] to the emperor, speaks of these two marks, or professed signs of christianity, and no other. Tertullian against Marcion,[p] brings them that are married to baptism and the Lord's supper. St. Cyprian,[q] to Stephen, "Then they are sanctified, when they are born again by both sacraments." St Cyril and St. Ambrose, writing purposely of sacraments, speak but of two. St. Austin,[r] to Januarius, "Christ hath subjected us to a light yoke, to sacraments of the smallest number, easy in observation, excellent in dignity: baptism in the name of the holy Trinity, and the communion of Christ's body and blood;" and if any thing else be commanded in Scripture. And many allude to that number from Cant. iv. 5:

[b] John iv. 24. [c] Gen. ix. [d] Ezek. i. 28. [e] Rev. iv. 3. [f] Deut. x. 16.
[g] Numb. xxi. 9. [h] Chap. xvi. 6, 7. [i] Isaiah lxvi. 11. [k] Zech. iv. 12. [l] 1 Cor. x. 3.
[m] 1 Cor. xii. 13. [n] 1 Epist. v. 6. [o] 2 Apol. [p] Lib. iii. c. 51. [q] Lib. ii. ep. 1. [r] Ep. 118.

"Thy breasts are like two young roes that are twins." Here is a brief survey, how God, in all ages, hath communicated with us in sacraments.

May the reason of it be discovered? Nay, "Who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?"[s] Yet it is no trespass against the sobriety of wisdom, to ask why christian religion depends so much upon visible sacraments?

1. It is to give faith a third manner of corroboration; and a threefold cord is not easily broken. First, God hath promised us all blessings in Christ: Secondly, He gave an oath for it unto Abraham, "That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation:"[t] Thirdly, After he had plighted both oath and promise, he hath given us holy signs to confirm it. When God hath both promised and sworn, durst we of ourselves have asked a sign to confirm it, to make us more believing? No, truly, we durst not; for "an evil and an adulterous generation seeketh after a sign:" it were a great blemish in faith, if we should appoint God to lend us a crutch to lean upon. But God hath prevented us herein; and, as we say in the common prayer, "That which for our unworthiness we durst not ask," he hath supplied of his own accord, and hath instituted sacred signs, wrapt up in the creatures, of most ordinary use, to make it more easy to lay hold of the hope that is set before us.

2. Secondly; Every great deliverance in God's book was accompanied with some outward sign, to make it more comfortable upon so remarkable an impression. As Moses, being appointed to be the captain to lead Israel out of Egypt, was bade to cast his rod before the people, and to let it turn into a serpent, and return unto a rod again; to make his hand leprous, and whole again in an instant, by putting it into his bosom, and by drawing it out. And Moses showed these signs in the sight of the people, and they believed.[u] It would be tedious to recite the stories, of Asa, Hezekiah, Joash, &c. These were persuaded, by the signs of God, that he would visit them with a mighty deliverance. But there is no deliverance like unto that, which is brought to pass for us through the death and bloody passion of Christ. And the two sacraments are the remonstrance of that great salvation, which hath set us free out of the hands of all our enemies.

3. Thirdly; It is meet that great benefits should be fastened to our memories by a sure nail. Therefore, God distrusting man's memory, represents his greatest works of mercy in the ordinances of manifest signs to prevent forgetfulness. The help of some outward mark doth avail by experience, to bring that to mind that else would have slipt away. As upon occasion, we use to tie a thread about our fingers, or to unloose the gemmal of a ring, to make us mindful of a promise or some weighty business.

4. Fourthly; Though all our worship must hold its tenure, as it were, "in capite," from the Spirit, if we hope to have it acceptable to God, yet we are better capable of such worship by the opportunity of material conveyances. Only angels and blessed souls in heaven can serve God in the pure and immaterial zeal of their mind. But while we are clothed with flesh, the mind receives all it takes in from bodily objects; and what passeth in by the pipes of the senses, it is connatural to us to apprehend with more tenacity and fast hold.

Finally; As Christ descended into the womb of his mother, to walk with us upon earth, so God hath vouchsafed to offer his word and promise to us in the creatures of the earth; setting a seal unto the word, which makes the patent very valid, and of force and comfort. For if a commandment of promise were remarkable, that of honouring our parents, "the first commandment of promise" in the second table,[x]—much more is a seal and sacrament of promise remarkable. Doubt not, then, but as faith is our hand to receive Christ, so the sacraments are, as it were, God's hand to give him unto us.

Being past the general survey of visible sacraments, it is time to enter into the consideration of baptism; which God hath exalted to marvellous virtue and consolation, by his omnipotent appointment. The Jews, that first received it, will teach us, that they expected this new and gracious ceremony upon the coming of Christ. For "The priests and Levites sent to ask John, Why baptizest thou, if thou be not the Christ?"[y] &c. It seems they had a tradition, that baptism should come into the church with the Messias; which they derive, as I take it, from two of the prophets. Isaiah[z] states out a famous praise of Christ's kingdom; then it brings in this, "In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious; when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Sion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof." The other place is a plain prophecy of Christ's kingdom,[a] and he thus describes it: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be cleansed from all your filthiness." John made way unto this sacrament, and it came from heaven; therefore, the "Pharisees rejected the counsel of God, being not baptized of John."[b] But in the fulness of the gospel Christ confirmed it. For he that made the promise, was the only able person to set the seal to ratify it. Except his admired doctrine and his miracles, all things else about Christ did make no show to outward appearances, so he would go no higher in the institution of an outward sign of cleansing and regeneration, than to bring the people to a river to be washed, or to a vessel of water to be sprinkled. For faith is drawn through these narrow and abject means, that, like himself, have no comeliness "in specie;" and when we see them, there is no comeliness that we should desire them.[c]

[s] Rom. xi. 34. [t] Heb. vi. 18. [u] Exod. iv. 31. [x] Ephes. vi. 2. [y] John i. 25.
[z] Isaiah iv. 3. [a] Ezek. xxxvi. 25. [b] Luke vii 30. [c] Isaiah liii. 2.

Nevertheless, it is fit we should be well taught in the contemplation of the hidden virtue enclosed in baptism, or else we could never think it worth our labour and obedience. Our Common Prayer-Book (a store-house of rare divinity) tells us what is to be expected at that laver for them that come to be baptized.

1. That God hath promised to be the Father of the faithful and of their seed, and will most surely perform and keep his promise with them; and by this introduction we are incorporated into the holy congregation. Behold, they whom we love above all others by nature, our children, are naturalized to be the citizens of the heavenly kingdom, and enter into it through this door of grace.

2. Secondly; As God did save Noah and his family from perishing by water, and safely led the children of Israel through the Red sea, while their enemies were drowned; so the millions of the nations whom God hath not given to Christ for his inheritance, are drowned in their own lusts and corruptions. But, O what a privilege it is to be among those few, that are received into the ark of Christ's church, to be exempted from the common deluge, and to be the faithful seed of Abraham, led through the channel of the sea, and baptized in the cloud, that went along with them, when the armies of the mighty are mightily consumed!

3. Thirdly; We may gather out of our church-office for baptism, that the everlasting benediction of heavenly washing affords two comforts: it signifies the blood of Christ to cleanse us "per modum pretii," as the price that was paid to ransom us from death; and the sanctifying of the Holy Spirit to cleanse us, "per modum habitûs," by his inbeing and celestial infusion: and both are put together in one collect, "that all that are baptized, may receive remission of sins by spiritual regeneration." "There is no remission of sin without blood,"[d] says the apostle, meaning the invaluable blood of the Lamb of God.[e] And the heavenly thing is represented by the visible element of water; for there must be some aptitude between the sign and the thing signified, else it were not a sacrament;—that as water washeth away the filth of the body, so the blood of Christ delivereth our souls from the guilt and damnableness of sin. "The blood of Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin."[f] The metaphor of cleansing must have respect to baptismal water. Again, "Who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood."[g] Where the Scripture speaks of washing from sin, it must be taken from the water of baptism, figuring the virtue of Christ's blood, that in the sight of his Father makes us white as snow. The scriptures indeed, strike most upon the other string, and more directly, as "Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word."[h] "He saved us by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost:"[i] and in many other places. Therefore, our liturgy falls most upon the purifying operation of the Spirit, to be shadowed in the outward washing of water. As when it prays, "Send thy Holy Spirit to these infants, and grant that they may be baptized with water and with the Holy Ghost:" and, "grant that all that are baptized, may receive the fulness of thy grace." Spiritual regeneration is that which the gospel hath set forth to be the principal correlative of baptism. O happy it is for us to be born again by water and the Holy Ghost! For better it were never to be born than not to be born twice.

God put a good mind unto us, and reform one great fault in us; which is, that, our baptism being past over a great while ago, we cast it out of our memory, and meditate but little upon the benefits and comforts of it. We are got into the church, and do in a sort forget how we got in. Whereas the whole life of a christian man and woman should be a continual reflection how in baptism we entered into covenant with Christ, "to believe in him, to serve him, to forsake the devil, the vanities of the world, and all sinful desires of the flesh." Water is a pellucid element to look through it to the bottom: so often look through the sanctified water, to see what Christ hath done for you, and what you have engaged to do for Christ. And there is no heart so full of blackness and melancholy, but will recover upon it, and be as fresh in sound health, as if it were filled with marrow and fatness. Well did St Paul put baptism among the principals and foundations of christian doctrine;[k] for all the weight of faith, sanctification, and mercy doth lie upon it. Recount this by particulars.

1. The first thought that my soul hath upon it is, that I am no longer a stranger and foreigner, but a fellow-citizen with the saints, and of the household of God.[l] I am no more afar off, but made nigh by the blood of Christ, partaker of the privileges of the church, and called by the new name which the mouth of the Lord shall name,[m]—a christian.

2. Secondly; I find that I have gained to have the highest point of faith unfolded to me, which was but darkly discerned in the Old Testament, to confess the Holy Trinity, in which faith I was baptized. For because that mystery was revealed at Christ's baptism, it goes ever along with this sacrament; all nations being baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

3. Thirdly; I observe that my christian engagement allows me not the liberty of sinning after the custom of the world; but obligeth me to the strict discipline of my Lord, to live holily, justly, and soberly, to walk in newness of life, as planted into the likeness of Christ's death, so to die unto sin; for "he that is dead is freed from sin."[n] In every thing, and at all times, I must remember what the sureties at the font, called godfathers and godmothers, did promise for me in my name; which the liturgy of Geneva retains in these words,—"Do you promise to warn this child to live according to

[d] Heb. ix. 22. [e] Verse 14. [f] 1 John i. 7. [g] Rev. i. 5. [h] Ephes. v. 25. [i] Titus iii. 6.
[k] Heb. vi. 2. [l] Ephes. ii. 19. [m] Isaiah lxii. 2. [n] Rom. vi. 7.

God's word, and make the law of God the square of his life to live by?" It is a binding ceremony, and we are brought up from our tender years in the knowledge of it, that we continually may feel the work of the ordinance, to have our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with clean water.[o] And "as many as are baptized into Christ, have put on Christ."[p] To put on Christ, is to follow Christ in the law of a new creature, and to perfect holiness; without which no man shall see God.

4. Fourthly; I have assurance that the Spirit is not disjoined from the water; for God's word cannot fail, that we shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."[q] The power given to keep the covenant makes it a covenant of grace; else we shall administer but the letter, and not the spirit. The outward act of man, unless we make ourselves unworthy, is certainly assisted with the increase of God. If the good effect ensue not, the sacrament doth not want its virtue, but the receiver marred it. Very much is to be ascribed to the word preached: it is a powerful means to convert us, and to save us. "Take heed unto thy doctrine, for in doing this thou shalt save thyself, and them that hear thee."[r] And, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth in you."[s] The word disposeth and prepares: God is the efficient cause of our regeneration. Now this sacrament, whether we speak of infants, they are to call to mind how they received the outward seal of grace; or whether we speak of converts of ripe years, who, at the same time, were taught the virtue of it, it hath reason to work more powerfully and effectually upon their knowledge and affections, than doctrine alone: because Christ and his benefits are manifested in a sensible operation, which himself did dignify in his own person, at the waters of Jordan, and afterward institute it to be used by his disciples.

5. The fifth thing that I draw from hence, gives me exceeding consolation in Christ, that no man who is made the child of God, is in the damnable state of sin; therefore, in baptism, being made the adopted child of God, I have obtained the pardon of all sins, original and actual: as Naaman was cured of all his leprosy. "Who saved us by the washing of regeneration."[t] "Be baptized every one of you, in the name of the Lord Jesus, for the remission of sins."[u] So Ananias said to Paul,—"Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins."[x] Yea, but some will cavil, "Infants have not faith; and God hath set forth Christ to be a propitiation through faith in his blood: and he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved."[y] I will not contend about it, whether baptized infants have a secret imperceptible habit of faith: I am sure there is innocency of life in them instead of faith. They that are of age to come to the knowledge of faith, must bring their own faith with them to the font: but for infants, they have privilege to be in church communion, by the faith of the church wherein they were born. There is another contest made by some, that, "Notwithstanding baptism, original sin remains in us all the days of our life." True: the sin is not blotted out in the infant, but it is blotted out of the book of God. And as actual sins are pardoned for Christ's sake, yet it cannot be brought about that they should never be done, which are done and past, but it is enough that they shall not be imputed: so original sin cleaves unto us; it is not cast out, for I feel it in me; but it is remitted.

6. For the complement of this subject, the largest and the longest comfort flowing from the grace of baptism, is, that we are to rely upon the covenant, made between God and us therein, for the remission of all our sins, which we commit after baptism to the end of our life. Far be it from me to say, that it sufficeth us to cast our eyes back to the covenant then made, as if the bare and historical memory of it did suffice to blot out sins; that is but an empty flash and a vapour of presumption. But this I say,—build upon the eternity and infallibility of God's truth; and then, by a true and sure grasping faith, joined with repentance, renew yourself in God's mercies by the promise of the old baptismal covenant. Repentance is a condition never to be omitted to lift us up again, when we have been overtaken with sins. But faith doth not comfort itself in the sincerity of repentance, which in us is ever imperfect, but in Christ's merits once for all, consigned to us in baptism. For the Scriptures speak indefinitely, that the laver of regeneration purgeth away all our sins; it doth not speak restrictively of sins past, as if it did operate no longer than in that moment, when the water is sprinkled: for baptism doth now, at the very present time, save us.[z] And some collect it out of that figurative place,[a] "Every thing where the waters do come, shall live." After a shower of rain hath fallen, and ceaseth, the grass continues to grow. By grievous and presumptuous sins we debar ourselves from the sense and comfort of the covenant for the present; yet when we repent, we come not to make a new covenant with God, but to beseech him to be gracious to us for the old covenant's sake; as an adulteress, if she be received again, and pardoned by her husband, is not new married, but accepted for a wife upon the first contract of marriage.

Take some examples of those in the New Testament, that sinned against God, and in their return again did not suppose the first covenant of baptism to be abolished, but they comforted themselves that the mercies promised them would hold firm, and not fail them. St. Paul challengeth the Corinthians,[b] that they had been adulterers, effeminate, and much of the like. Yet he speaks thus to them, "Ye are washed, sanctified, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus."[c] In the same manner he deals with the

[o] Heb. x. 21, 22. [p] Gal. iii. 27. [q] 1 Cor. vi. 11. [r] 1 Tim. iv. 15. [s] 1 Pet. i. 23. [t] Tit. iii. 6. [u] Acts ii. 38. [x] Acts xxii. 16. [y] Mark xvi. 16. [z] 1 Pet. iii. 21 [a] Ezek. xlvii. 9. [b] 1 Cor. vi. [c] Ver. 11.

Galatians, who had embraced much false doctrine, mingled Judaism with the gospel: yet "as many of you as are baptized into Christ have put on Christ."[d] Can any thing equal all these heart-refreshings that swim in the pool of baptism? Therefore, in many ages past, the joy of the neophytes was excessive, that came to be baptized. Many torches were lighted, and carried before them, to show it was the day of their illumination. They came in white garments, and wore them constantly eight days together,—a most festival habit. Yet they affected too much to defer their baptism till their elder, nay, their later years, out of the erroneous principle, that baptism was the healing water for the remission of sins past: and they rather relied upon repentance than upon the baptism which they had received, for the remission of sins that did follow. Whereas repentance is not a new paction with God, but a return to the use of the old; a restitution, as it were, of our blood, when we had been tainted by committing treason against God; that is, repossession of mercy endangered to be forfeited. But were it a new covenant, we should have some new visible sign for it, which never was. Therefore, this is the very soul of mine and every one's baptismal consolation,—that, being once done, it seals pardon for all our sins, through Christ's blood, unto our life's end.

But as if many spouts should open into one cistern, so all comforts conspire to meet in the sacrament of the Lord's supper. Nothing else but the actual enjoying of heaven is above it. The church, which dispenseth all the mysteries of salvation, can bring forth no better. Children that are come to age, can ask no more than the whole portion of their father's goods that come unto them: and what is that but the blood of Christ? and this is the New Testament in that blood. Christ is mine, his body is mine, his blood is mine, all is mine. "O be glad and rejoice, and give honour to the Lord God omnipotent, for the marriage of the Lamb is come."[e] And the Spirit saith, write, "Blessed are they that are called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb."[f] It is much to be received into the covenant with God by the former sacrament: is it not more to be kept in covenant by the other? It is much in baptism to be brought from death to life: but what is life without nourishment to preserve it? This keeps us in the lease of the old covenant, that the years of it shall never run out, and expire.

This is food to keep us in health and strength, that we never decay and faint. By it we lay hold of the promise,—"My kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee."[g] Then why should I not imbolden my heart with holy security against all fears? for the Lord hath put himself into my hand, and into my mouth, and into my spirit: of what then should I be afraid? This is that courage which our liturgy sounds forth, as with a shrill trumpet, to all that come to this banquet well prepared. It begins, that "it is a comfortable thing to all them that receive it worthily;" it bids us "come with a full trust in God's mercy, and with a quiet conscience:" it proclaims aloud, Hear what comfortable words our Saviour Christ saith unto all that truly come unto him, "So God loved the world," &c. "This is a true saying," &c. It hath gathered the sallies of spiritual joy, as it were, into a bundle of myrrh. It adds, "Christ hath instituted and ordained holy mysteries, as pledges of his love, and for a continual remembrance of his death, to our great and endless comfort." And if all this put together will not blandish our conscience, and stablish our joy, we would be dull and spirit-broken, though an angel from heaven should come and say unto us, as he did unto Gideon, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour."[h] For an angel of the Lord cannot plead so much to the solace of the heart, as the great Angel of the covenant hath done in these great demonstrations of love, as followeth.

1. First; As baptism was the former, so this is the second visible publication of God's apparent mercy. It is not a bare message, but a lively apprehension of them by palpable means: not in a vision, or a dream, but in a real object. Call to mind that the Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel, who had appeared unto him twice.[i] Once the Lord hath appeared unto us in the token of his love by water: and once again he appears unto us in the elements of his holy table. Twice he hath appeared to bless thee. Therefore, "eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart."[k] For if you turn away from comfort, when the Lord hath appeared twice unto you to give it you, he will be angry, and leave you to a thick darkness of sorrow, such as fell upon the land of Egypt.

2. Secondly; The Lord can appear comfortably unto us, though with a sword in his hand, and in the midst of a camp, as he did to Joshua:[l] or, in a flame of fire, as he did to Manoah:[m] or, in a tempest upon the sea, as he did to the apostles:[n] or, at the grave's mouth, as he did to Mary Magdalen.[o] But here he appears unto us in a feast, which is a time of innocent delight. The glory of God, which we look for, is set forth unto us in that which our senses apprehend for sweetness and pleasure: as, "I appoint unto you a kingdom—that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom:"[p] which is translated from bodily pleasure to spiritual, that, in the heaven of blessedness, the soul shall feed continually as at a banquet: of which we have now a taste in the kingly provision of Christ's supper. It is a kingly feast, although imparted in a little pittance of bread and wine: yet it is more costly and precious in that which it signifies, than Solomon and all his court had for their diet day by day.[q] We

[d] Gal. iii. 27. [e] Rev. xix. 7. [f] Ver. 9. [g] Isaiah liv. 10. [h] Judg. vi 12. [i] 1 Kings xi. 39. [k] Eccles. ix. 7. [l] Josh. v. 13. [m] Judg. xiii. 20. [n] Matt. xiv. 27. [o] John xx. 14. [p] Luke xxii. 29. [q] 1 Kings iv. 22.

are brought to eat at the king's table, as Mephibosheth was, like one of the king's sons:[r] to eat together is a communion of more than ordinary acquaintance: do you note the endearing favour of God in that? And what are we, that are not thrust, as our kind might look for it, to gather up crumbs under the board, but to eat our portion before the Lord, with the Lord, out of the hands of the Lord? For he that brake bread, and gave it to the apostles, gives it to us, as our High Priest, though he be in heaven. I exhort you, therefore, to enter into the guest-chamber with a quiet and unshaken heart: for the Lord hath not invited us as Absalom did Amnon, to kill us; nor as Esther did Haman, to accuse us; but, as Melchizedec brought forth bread and wine to Abraham, to bless us. He gives us Asher's portion, bread that shall be fat, and royal dainties.[s] Only the case is altered, if Christ shall say, "The hand of him that betrays me, the hand of him that loves me not, the hand of him that believes not in me, the hand of him that will not keep my sayings, is on the table;" that wretch shall be thrown out, and be fed with bread of sorrow and water of affliction, nay, where there shall not be a drop of water to cool his tongue.

3. Thirdly; That which astonisheth the communicant and ravisheth his heart, is, that this feast affords no worse meat than the body and blood of our Saviour. Those he gave for the life of the world, these are the repast of this supper, and these we truly partake. For there is not only the visible reception of the outward signs, but an invisible reception of the thing signified. There is far more than a shadow, than a type, than a figure. Christ did not only propose a sign at that hour, but also he gave us a gift, and that gift, really and effectually, is himself, which is all one, as you would say, spiritually himself; for spiritual union is the most true and real union that can be. That which is promised, and faith takes it, and hath it, is not fiction, fancy, opinion, falsity, but substance and verity. Being strengthened with power, by the Spirit, in the inward mind, Christ dwelleth in our hearts by faith.[t] As by a ring, or a meaner instrument of conveyance, a man may be settled in land, or put into an office; and by such conveyances, the ratification of such grants are held to be real; how much more real is the gift and receipt of Christ's body and blood, when conveyed unto us by the confirmation of the eternal Spirit! For observe, "it is the same Spirit that is in Christ, and that is in us, and we are quickened by one and the same Spirit."[u] Therefore it cannot choose, but that a real union must follow between Christ and us; as there is a union between all the parts of the body, by the animation of one soul. But faith is the mouth wherewith we eat his body, and drink his blood; not the mouth of a man, but of a faithful man; for we hunger after him, not with a corporeal appetite, but a spiritual; therefore, our eating must be spiritual, and not corporeal. Yet, this is a real, a substantial partaking of Christ crucified, broken, his flesh bleeding, his wounds gaping: so he is exhibited, so we are sure we receive him, which doth not only touch our outward senses in the elements, but pass through into the depth of the soul. For, in true divinity, real and spiritual are æquipollent; although with the papists nothing is real, unless it be corporeal: which is a gross way to defraud us of the sublime and soul-ravishing virtue of the mystery. "A mystery neither to be set out in words, nor to be comprehended sufficiently in the mind, but to be adored with faith," says Calvin.[x] But herein we pledge Christ in the cup of love; herein we renew the covenant of forgiveness strongly assured by the sprinkling of blood; the life is in the blood, and without shedding of blood is no remission of sins,—because death is the wages of sin. Sin is the greatest dishonour that can be done to God: and death in Christ's person is the greatest satisfaction that can be made. He died, and gave himself for me; he died, and gave himself to me, as he was dead in his gored and pierced body, that his sacrifice might be in me, and in all those that are redeemed by it. We read of some mothers, that, in a great famine, have eaten their own children;[y] but what mother, in the time of famine, did ever give her own flesh to save the life of her child? But Christ hath given himself for us, that we might not perish. "O Lord, I owe all my life to thee, because thou hast laid down thy life for me; O let me bleed out my sins, that thy blood may fill all the veins of my spirit; O let my body be transfigured to the heavenly by cleanliness and chastity, by being used only for thy worship and service, that the body of my Saviour may come under the roof of it. Then when the King shall set forth his table, and give himself to me in his wonderful feast, my spikenard shall send forth a sweet smell;[z] my soul shall magnify the Lord, and my spirit shall rejoice in Christ my Saviour."

"We have found the Messias," says Philip to Nathanael; and where have we found him? at a feast: a feast of his own body and blood, but set out with no more cost and show than a piece of bread and a sip of wine. In this manner, it is brought to pass by the omnipotency of God's pleasure to institute it, with the efficacy of a strong faith concurring to receive it. The church had done very ill, if, of its own head, it had made so mean a representation of Christ; but the Lord must be obeyed, and ought to be admired in the humility of his ordinance, who hath not given us rich viands, and full cups, but made the feast out of the fragments of the meanest creatures. Let them that will make themselves fit to be his guests, bring a preparation of humility suitable to the exility of those oblations. "The meek shall eat and be satisfied, they shall praise the Lord, and seek him;"[a] and at that season, let the riotous remember his fulness of bread, and excess of wine. God is honoured in a little, and his liberality is abused in the excess of his creatures. And it is worth the noting, that the elements which

[r] 2 Sam. ix. 11. [s] Gen xlix. 20. [t] Ephes. iii. 17. [u] Rom. viii. 11.
[x] Lib. Instit. c. 17. sect. 5. [y] 2 Kings vi. [z] Cant. i. 12 [a] Psalm xxii. 26.

we are invited to take, are of fruits that grow out of the earth; to show that the earth, which was cursed for Adam's sake, is blessed for Christ's sake. As it brings forth thorns and thistles to call to mind our rebellion, so it brings forth bread and wine to call to mind our redemption. Neither doth God supply us with bread only out of the furrows of the earth, but sometimes it hath fallen out of the clouds of heaven. "Behold," says God, "I will rain bread from heaven for you."[b] This was "manna," called "the corn of heaven."[c] This was the spiritual meat or angels' food, in which the old believers in the wilderness did eat Christ with an implicit faith. Our outward sign is the bread of the earth, true bread that grows in the fields; yet the bread signified is that, which the "Father hath given us from heaven."[d] Bread is a great part of man's nourishment; so Christ crucified is the sole refection of faith. Bread is champed in the mouth to make it fit for the stomach; so the body of Christ was ordained to be slain, before it could profit us. "If the corn of wheat fall not into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."[e] By his life we learn to live, and by his death we are made alive. Bread, when it is ground between our teeth, and eaten, is turned by concoction into the substance of our body; which explains our mystical union with Christ, that we are made one spirit with him by faith, as this sensible food is converted into our flesh and bone.

Beside, in the several parts of the outward signs, it is God's meaning we should conceive how he loves the gathering together of many into one, which is thus to be qualified. At a common supper, or any meal, all that are at the board feed of the same meats; yet every one feeds to himself, and to none beside: so, every communicant eats Christ to himself, and the just shall live by his own faith. Nevertheless, it is a sacrament to combine, and to knit together, holding us fast into one communion, that there may be no breaking asunder of the parts and members. Many grains of wheat are kneaded into one loaf, many grapes are trodden, that their liquor may be pressed into one cup. We, being many, are one bread, and one body; for, "we are all partakers of that one bread."[f] Now, natural learning will teach us, what a comfort there is in union, and that fractions and dissolutions are painful and grievous. Behold, how good and pleasant a thing it is! behold, what a strengthening to the mystical body to continue in one fellowship and breaking of bread, to link faith and love together in Jesus Christ! It was but one deliverance common to all Israel, whose solemnity was kept at the passover, though every lamb was eaten by itself in a several family; so, it is one cup of salvation which God hath given us to drink, though distributed to the faithful according to the multitude of persons; and it is one bread of which we do all eat, though some have one share of it, and some another. It is necessary that many pieces be broken off from one loaf, to typify the body of the Lord broken for us, and that the benefits of his passion are distributed among us.

There are many instances that are pregnant to prove, how pieces of something, broken and divided into many shares, do import a communication of somewhat among the dividers. The heathen, at the making of a league, did now and then break a flint-stone into pieces; and they that entered into a league, kept the parts in token of a covenant. Some upon a contract of marriage will break a piece of gold, and the two halves are reserved by the contractors. Shall I go further, and yet come nearest to our case? The Roman soldiers parted our Saviour's garment among them, and in that symbolical accident is shown, that the gentiles should share in the satisfaction of his death. So Peter takes this morsel of bread,—John, another, &c.; yet Christ is not divided. The same ticket, as it were, in words in substance, is put into every hand, on which is written, "Take and eat it in remembrance of me."

"Take it," says Christ: and be not afraid, as Saul was, to take a kingdom, since Christ hath appointed it; be not afraid, as David was, to be a king's son, since such honour is predestinated to thee. Take it, and fear not, as Peter did, saying, "Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man;" it is the Lord's delight to seek and to save that which is lost. Take it, and take heed you let not go your hold; the thing is fast and firm, if you do not let it go and lose it. Take it, but not to hold the pleasures of the world and your sinful lusts in your gripe together; if your hands be full of these things, you can never hold this. Take it, and take Christ with it; for he that made the testament in his blood, hath set the seal unto the testament, which gives you interest and possession of the redemption by his blood. Take it, and reach out your hand, to signify that you receive Christ with the hand of faith. They are too nice, for fear of I know not what, in the Roman church, of losing a crumb, or so forth, that they put the body of Christ into the mouth of their disciples: and in pretence that they give it as a mother doth her breast into the mouth of her child; whereas we receive this sacrament, not as babes, but as those that are grown to the measure of a good age. And if we be not worthy to take it into our hands, we are not worthy to receive it in our mouths. Take it, and eat it; for it is not enough to be sprinkled without, but to feed on Christ, and to digest him within. If upon the supply of corn, and beasts, and cattle, Paul might say, that "God hath filled our hearts with food and gladness;"[g] if we are glad of that which sustains us for a time, and yet we must die; how glad will we be to eat of that, as will give us such a life, that will endure for ever! "Eat of the forbidden tree," says the serpent to Eve, "and you shall not die;" but he lied unto her. Therefore, to dissolve the works of the devil, our Saviour hath appointed that which we shall eat, and assured the promise of everlasting life unto it. Eat, as Jonathan did of the honey-comb, that you may be lusty to pursue your enemies; and though Satan hath sworn your death, as Saul did Jonathan's;[h] the Lord will deliver you. Pine not away with

[b] Exod. xvi. 4. [c] Psalm lxxviii. 24. [d] John vi. 31. [e] John xii. 24 [f] 1 Cor. x. 17. [g] Acts xiv. 17. [h] 1 Sam. xiv. 44.

the consumption of an evil conscience; but eat, and be strong in the Lord and in his mercy; as the spirit of the Egyptian, who was half dead, came to him again, when he had eaten a little.[i] Eat, and grind the bread between your teeth, to show the Lord's death. For Christ could have said,—"This is my body *slain*,—This is my body *crucified*," but he had rather say, "This is my body *broken* for you;" to show the great injuries of his sufferings. Eat, then, and remember you eat the body as it was broken; and remember that you drink the blood, as it flowed out of his wounds.

To keep these things in remembrance is the great design of the sacrament; an object which keeps the fancy of the soul waking, that otherwise, it may be, would fall asleep. In the sixth of St. John, Christ preacheth over and over of eating his flesh, and drinking his blood without a sacrament, by the power of faith. But to keep it in fresh and frequent meditation, the Lord hath given us a palpable and signal token, as if he would engrave it upon the palms of our hands, and upon the roofs of our mouths, upon the membranes of our brain, and upon the foreskin of our heart. This is a blessing twice, and twenty times given, because it is given that it may never be forgotten. They that love others, would live in the memory of those they love; it is because Christ loves us entirely, that he would be remembered of us. And no friend will say to another, "remember me when I am gone," but that he means reciprocally to remember his friend, to whom he spake it. If you will remember Christ, he will remember you. And the thief on the cross will teach you, that it is good to continue in his memory; "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." O blessed Christ! thou art good, and dost good: thou hast not only provided an invaluable benefit for thy church, but dost put it into our hands, that we may not lose it; and dost bring it into our eyes by clear ostension, that we may not forget it. We are apt to remember injuries and to forget benefits; unthankfulness will undo us, if we take not heed of it. O rub over your memory, and consider the noble works of the Lord, especially this great work, how he suffered for us unto death. Remember seriously this one thing as you ought, and God will let you forget nothing that will do you good. There is no grievous sin which we incur, but, for the present, Christ is forgotten, as if he had never come to charge us to keep ourselves unspotted from the world. But look upon his wounds which bleed for our transgressions, and it will stanch the flux of sin, and make our hearts bleed, because we have forgotten obedience. In our distresses, our sickness, and losses, we cry out that God hath forgotten us, he hath forgotten to be gracious, and shuts up his loving-kindness in displeasure. But distrust him not; a mother cannot forget her child, much less such a father. Every tribulation which he inflicts, is but a thorn in our sides to prick us and awake us, because we have forgotten God.

And remember the death of Christ, not only casting your eyes back to the large histories of it in the Gospels, as if that would suffice,—but affectedly, practically, zealously; and then every thing else will come to mind to perfect holiness. When we remember his death, we are sure he is past death, and risen again, now to die no more, and that he is ascended into heaven, and makes intercession for us. We have obtained that faith that we partake in the New Testament of his blood, and that, our names being found in the Testament, we are heirs of God, co-heirs with Christ. The custom of the world will teach us, that an heir is bound to execute the will of the testator, to see every thing performed, that he hath charged and bequeathed. Do your part like a good executor, with a righteous administration in remembrance of him. But forgetfulness cannot creep upon us, when there is so visible a monument before us to bring it often into our thoughts. Luther says, "It will help a man more in the study of piety, to meditate profoundly upon Christ's passion one day, than to read over all the Psalms of David." A bold comparison: it will, indeed, ravish the soul with trembling, to consider how much Christ loved us, by how much he suffered for us; it will make us look upon sin with horror, which begat such torment and ignominy to the innocent Lamb of God; it will comfort our weak faith, that he who hath done so great things for us, will not abandon us,—and having subdued our enemies, will not let them renew the battle to overcome us: it will encourage us to lay down our life for him, who hath laid down his life for us. "My meditation of him shall be sweet, I will be glad in the Lord."[k] He hath drunk up the cup of sorrow, that I might drink of nothing but the cup of salvation. This is the wine,[l] which, being given unto him that hath a heavy heart, confutes all the objections of infidelity, despair, an evil conscience, or whatsoever the tempter can suggest against the hope of my glorification. Says the son of Sirach,[m] "The remembrance of Josias was sweet as honey in all mouths, and as music at a banquet of wine." If the name of Josias was so precious for restoring religion, what melody is there in remembrance of Christ's name, what music in his banquet, which is the very mercy-seat, from whence the voice of the Lord gives the principal oracles of consolation! whose definition I have reserved to be the last words of all: "Consolatio est conveniens unio potentiæ cum objecto;" as our best scholars have it, "Consolation is convenient union of any faculty with its object." As when the eye meets with light, it is the comfort of the eye: when the ear meets with harmony, it is the comfort of the ear. What is the most transcendent consolation, therefore, but the union of the soul with God, the best object, in a real and most significative manner, the union of the Spirit with Christ in the sacrament of his holy supper! To whom be praise, and glory, and thanksgiving. Amen.

[i] 1 Sam. xxx. 12. [k] Psalm civ. 34. [l] Prov. xxxi. 6. [m] Chap. xlix. 1.

THE

SECOND EPISTLE DEDICATORY

TO

A NEW AND EASY INSTITUTION OF GRAMMAR,

1647.*

TO THE MOST HOPEFUL CHRISTOPHER HATTON, ESQUIRE,

SON AND HEIR TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE LORD HATTON, OF KIRBY.

SIR,

ALL that know the infinite desires and the many cares, my lord your most honoured father hath of your education in learning and exemplary piety, will expound this address to you, as a compliance with those thoughts and designs of his, by which he intends hereafter to represent you to the world, to be a person like himself; that is, an able instrument of serving God, and promoting the just and religious interests of God's vicegerent and God's church. It is yet but early day with you, "Adhuc tua messis in herbâ:" but if we may conjecture by the most hopeful prognostics of a clear morning, we who are servants and relatives of my lord your father, promise to ourselves the best concerning you: and those are, that you will become such as your honourable father intends you, who had rather secure to you a stock of wisdom than of wealth, or of the most pompous honours. These sadnesses, which cloud many good men at this present, have taught us all, that nothing can secure a happiness or create one, but those inward excellencies, which, like diamonds in the night, sparkle in despite of darkness. And give me leave to tell you this truth, that however nature and the laws of the kingdom may secure you a great fortune, and mark you with the exterior character of honour,—yet your fortune will be but a load of baggage, and your honour an empty gaiety, unless you build and adorn your house as your father does, with the advantages and ornaments of learning, upon the foundation of piety. In order to which give me leave to help you in laying this first stone, which is cut small, and yet according to the strictest rules of art, but with a design justly complying with your end; for it is contrived with no small brevity, that since you are intended for a long journey, to a great progress of wisdom and knowledge, you may not be stopped at your setting out, but proceed like the sun, whose swiftness is just proportionable to the length of his course. For, sir, you will neither satisfy your honourable father's care, nor the expectation of your friends, nor the humblest desires of your servants, if you hereafter shall be wise and pious but in the even rank of other men.

We expect you to show to the world an argument, and make demonstration whose son you are, that you may be learned even to an example, pious up to a proverb: and unless you excel those bounds, which custom and indevotion hath made to be the term and utmost aim of many of your rank, we shall only say "you are not vicious, not unlearned;" and what a poor character that will be of you, yourself will be the best judge, when you remember who and what your father is. Sir, this freedom of expression I hope you will pardon, when you shall know that it is the sense and desires of one of the heartiest and devoutest of your honoured father's servants; who hath had the honour to have so much of his privacies communicated to him, as to be witness of his cares, his sighs, his hopes, and fears concerning you; and for the advantage and promotion of your best interests. I hope, Sir, that neither this monition, nor the present Institution of the first, but the most necessary, art and instrument of knowledge, will become displeasing to you, especially if you shall accept this testimony from me, that it is done with much care and choice: and though the scene lies in Wales, yet the representment and design is one of the instances for Kirby, and that it is the first and the least testimony of the greatest service and affection which can proceed from the greatest affections and obligations; such as are those of, Honoured Sir,

Your most obliged and affectionate servant,

J. T.

* See page v. of the Essay on the Genius and Writings of Jeremy Taylor.

THE

GREAT EXEMPLAR OF SANCTITY AND HOLY LIFE,

ACCORDING TO THE CHRISTIAN INSTITUTION;

DESCRIBED IN THE

HISTORY OF THE LIFE AND DEATH

OF THE

EVER-BLESSED JESUS CHRIST,

THE SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD.

WITH CONSIDERATIONS AND DISCOURSES UPON THE SEVERAL PARTS OF THE STORY, AND PRAYERS FITTED TO THE SEVERAL MYSTERIES.

IN THREE PARTS.

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

AND MOST TRULY NOBLE LORD,

CHRISTOPHER LORD HATTON,

BARON HATTON OF KIRBY, &c.

My Lord,

When interest divides the church, and the calentures of men breathe out in problems and unactive discourses, each part, in pursuance of its own portion, follows that proposition, which complies with and bends in all the flexures of its temporal ends; and while all strive for truth, they hug their own opinions dressed up in her imagery, and they dispute for ever; and either the question is indeterminable, or, which is worse, men will never be convinced. For such is the nature of disputings, that they begin commonly in mistakes, they proceed with zeal and fancy, and end not at all but in schisms and uncharitable names, and too often dip their feet in blood. In the mean time, he that gets the better of his adversary, oftentimes gets no good to himself; because, although he hath fast hold upon the right side of the problem, he may be an ill man in the midst of his triumphant disputations. And therefore it was not here, that God would have man's felicity to grow: for our condition had been extremely miserable, if our final state had been placed upon an uncertain hill, and the way to it had been upon the waters, upon which no spirit but that of contradiction and discord did ever move: for the man should have tended to an end of an uncertain dwelling, and walked to it by ways not discernible, and arrived thither by chance; which, because it is irregular, would have discomposed the pleasures of a christian hope, as the very disputing hath already destroyed charity, and disunited the continuity of faith; and in the consequent there would be no virtue and no felicity. But God, who never loved that man should be too ambitiously busy in imitating his wisdom, (and man lost paradise for it,) is most desirous we should imitate his goodness, and transcribe copies of those excellent emanations from his holiness, whereby as he communicates himself to us in mercies, so he propounds himself imitable by us in graces. And in order to this, God hath described our way plain, certain, and determined: and although he was pleased to leave us undetermined in the questions of exterior communion, yet he put it past all question, that we are bound to be charitable. He hath placed the question of the state of separation in the dark, in hidden and undiscerned regions; but he hath opened the windows of heaven, and given great light to us, teaching how we are to demean ourselves in the state of conjunction. Concerning the salvation of the heathens he was not pleased to give us account; but he hath clearly described the duty of Christians, and tells upon what terms alone we shall be saved. And although the not inquiring into the ways of God and the strict rules of practice has been instrumental to the preserving them free from the serpentine enfoldings and labyrinths of dispute, yet God also, with a great design of mercy, hath writ his commandments in so large characters, and engraven them in such tables, that no man can want the records, nor yet skill to read the hand-writing upon this wall, if he understands what he understands, that is, what is placed in his own spirit. For God was therefore desirous that human nature should be perfected with moral, not intellectual excellencies; because these only are of use and compliance with our present state and conjunction. If God had given to eagles an appetite to swim, or to the elephant strong desires to fly, he would have ordered that an abode in the sea and the air respectively should have been proportionable to their manner of living; for so God hath done to man, fitting him with such excellencies, which are useful to him in his ways and progress to perfection. A man hath great use and need of justice, and all the instances of morality serve his natural and political ends; he cannot live without them, and be happy: but the filling the rooms of the under-

standing with airy and ineffective notions, is just such an excellency, as it is in a man to imitate the voice of birds; at his very best the nightingale shall excel him, and it is of no use to that end, which God designed him in the first intentions of creation.

In pursuance of this consideration, I have chosen to serve the purposes of religion by doing assistance to that part of theology which is wholly practical; that which makes us wiser, therefore, because it makes us better. And truly, my lord, it is enough to weary the spirit of a disputer, that he shall argue till he hath lost his voice, and his time, and sometimes the question too; and yet no man shall be of his mind more than was before. How few turn Lutherans, or Calvinists, or Roman catholics, from the religion either of their country or interest! Possibly two or three weak or interested, fantastic and easy, prejudicate and effeminate understandings, pass from church to church, upon grounds as weak as those, for which formerly they did assent; and the same arguments are good or bad, as exterior accidents or interior appetites shall determine. I deny not but, for great causes, some opinions are to be quitted: but when I consider how few do forsake any, and when any do, oftentimes they choose the wrong side, and they that take the righter, do it so by contingency, and the advantage also is so little, I believe that the triumphant persons have but small reason to please themselves in gaining proselytes, since their purchase is so small, and as inconsiderable to their triumph, as it is unprofitable to them who change for the worse or for the better upon unworthy motives. In all this there is nothing certain, nothing noble. But he that follows the work of God, that is, labours to gain souls, not to a sect and a subdivision, but to the christian religion, that is, to the faith and obedience of the Lord Jesus, hath a promise to be assisted and rewarded: and all those that go to heaven, are the purchase of such undertakings, the fruit of such culture and labours; for it is only a holy life that lands us there.

And now, my lord, I have told you my reasons, I shall not be ashamed to say, that I am weary and toiled with rowing up and down in the seas of questions, which the interests of Christendom have commenced, and in many propositions, of which I am heartily persuaded I am not certain that I am not deceived; and I find that men are most confident of those articles, which they can so little prove, that they never made questions of them: but I am most certain, that by living in the religion and fear of God, in obedience to the king, in the charities and duties of communion with my spiritual guides, in justice and love with all the world in their several proportions, I shall not fail of that end, which is perfective of human nature, and which will never be obtained by disputing.

Here, therefore, when I had fixed my thoughts, upon sad apprehensions that God was removing our candlestick, (for why should he not, when men themselves put the light out, and pull the stars from their orbs, so hastening the day of God's judgment?) I was desirous to put a portion of the holy fire into a repository, which might help to re-enkindle the incense, when it shall please God religion shall return, and all his servants sing, "In convertendo captivitatem Sion," with a voice of eucharist.

But now, my lord, although the results and issues of my retirements and study do naturally run towards you, and carry no excuse for their forwardness, but the confidence that your goodness rejects no emanation of a great affection; yet in this address I am apt to promise to myself a fair interpretation, because I bring you an instrument and auxiliaries to that devotion, whereby we believe you are dear to God, and know that you are to good men. And if these little sparks of holy fire, which I have heaped together, do not give life to your prepared and already enkindled spirit, yet they will sometimes help to entertain a thought, to actuate a passion, to employ and hallow a fancy, and put the body of your piety into fermentation, by presenting you with the circumstances and parts of such meditations, which are symbolical to those of your daily office, and which are the *passe-temps* of your severest hours. My lord, I am not so vain to think, that in the matter of devotion, and the rules of justice and religion, (which is the business of our life,) I can add any thing to your heap of excellent things: but I have known and felt comfort by reading, or hearing from other persons, what I knew myself; and it was unactive upon my spirit, till it was made vigorous and effective from without. And in this sense I thought I might not be useless and impertinent.

My lord, I designed to be instrumental to the salvation of all persons, that shall read my book: but unless (because souls are equal in their substance, and equally redeemed) we are obliged to wish the salvation of all men, with the greatest, that is, with equal desires, I did intend, in the highest manner I could, to express how much I am to pay to you, by doing the offices of that duty, which, although you less need, yet I was most bound to pay, even the duties and charities of religion; having this design, that when posterity (for certainly they will learn to distinguish things and persons) shall see your honoured name employed to separate and rescue these papers from contempt, they may with the more confidence expect in them something fit to be offered to such a personage. My lord, I have my end, if I serve God and you, and the needs and interests of souls; but shall think my return full of reward, if you shall give me pardon, and put me into your litanies, and account me in the number of your relatives and servants; for indeed, my lord, I am most heartily,

Your Lordship's most affectionate

And most obliged Servant,

JER. TAYLOR.

THE PREFACE.

CHRISTIAN religion hath so many exterior advantages to its reputation and advancement, from the Author and from the ministers, from the Fountain of its origination and the channels of conveyance, (God being the Author, the Word incarnate being the great Doctor and Preacher of it, his life and death being its consignation, the Holy Spirit being the great argument and demonstration of it, and the apostles the organs and conduits of its dissemination,) that it were glorious beyond all opposition and disparagement, though we should not consider the excellency of its matter, and the certainty of its probation, and the efficacy of its power, and the perfection and rare accomplishment of its design. But I consider that christianity is therefore very little understood, because it is reproached upon that pretence, which its very being and design does infinitely confute. It is esteemed to be a religion contrary in its principles or in its precepts to that wisdom,[a] whereby the world is governed, and commonwealths increase, and greatness is acquired, and kings go to war, and our ends of interest are served and promoted; and that it is an institution so wholly in order to another world, that it does not at all communicate with this, neither in its end nor in its discourses, neither in the policy nor in the philosophy; and therefore, as the doctrine of the cross was entertained at first in scorn by the Greeks, in offence and indignation by the Jews, so is the whole system and collective body of christian philosophy esteemed imprudent by the politics of the world, and flat and irrational by some men of excellent wit and sublime discourse; who, because the permissions and dictates of natural, true, and essential reason, are at no hand to be contradicted by any superinduced discipline, think that whatsoever seems contrary to their reason is also violent to our nature, and offers indeed a good to us, but by ways unnatural and unreasonable. And I think they are very great strangers to the present affairs and persuasions of the world, who know not that christianity is very much undervalued upon this principle, men insensibly becoming unchristian, because they are persuaded, that much of the greatness of the world is contradicted by the religion. But certainly no mistake can be greater; for the holy Jesus by his doctrine did instruct the understandings of men, made their appetites more obedient, their reason better principled, and argumentative with less deception, their wills apter for noble choices, their governments more prudent, their present felicities greater, their hopes more excellent, and that duration, which was intended to them by their Creator, he made manifest to be a state of glory: and all this was to be done and obtained respectively by the ways of reason and nature, such as God gave to man then, when at first he designed him to a noble and an immortal condition; the christian law being, for the substance of it, nothing but the restitution[b] and perfection of the law of nature. And this I shall represent in all the parts of its natural progression; and I intend it not only as a preface to the following books, but for an introduction and an invitation to the whole religion.

2. For God, when he made the first emanations of his eternal being, and created man as the end of all his productions here below, designed him to an end such as himself was pleased to choose for him, and gave him abilities proportionable to attain that end. God gave man a reasonable and intelligent nature;[c] and to this noble nature he designed as noble an end: he intended man should live well and happily, in proportion to his appetites, and in the reasonable doing and enjoying those good things, which God made him naturally to desire. For, since God gave him proper and peculiar appetites

[a] ————Fatis accede deisque,
Et cole felices, miseros fuge. Sidera terrâ
Ut distant, et flamma mari, sic utile recto.
Sceptrorum vis tota perit, si pendere justa
Incipit; evertitque arces respectus honesti.
Libertas scelerum est, quæ regna invisa tuetur,
Sublatusque modus gladiis. Facere omnia sævè
Non impunè licet, nisi dum facis. Exeat aulâ
Qui volet esse pius: virtus et summa potestas
Non coëunt. Semper metuet quem sæva pudebunt.
LUCAN. l. viii. 486.

[b] Οὐκ Ἰουδαϊσμὸς, οὐχ ἄιρεσίς τις ἑτέρα, (scil. ante diluvium) ἀλλ' ὡς εἰπεῖν, ἡ νῦν πίστις ἐμπολιτευομένη ἐν τῇ ἄρτι ἁγίᾳ τοῦ Θεοῦ καθολικῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, ἀπ' ἀρχῆς οὐσα, καὶ ὕστερον πάλιν ἀποκαλυφθεῖσα.—EPIPH. Panar. l. i. tom. i. num. 5.

Nihil autem magis congruit cum hominis naturâ quàm Christi philosophia, quæ penè nihil aliud agit quàm ut naturam collapsam suæ restituat innocentiæ.—ERASM. in xi. cap. Matt.

[c] Ratio Dei Deus est humanis rebus consulens, quæ causa est hominibus benè beatèque vivendi, si non concessum sibi munus à summo Deo negligant.—CHALCID. ad Timæ. 16.

with proportion to their own objects, and gave him reason and abilities not only to perceive the sapidness and relish of those objects, but also to make reflex acts upon such perceptions, and to perceive that he did perceive, which was a rare instrument of pleasure and pain respectively; it is but reasonable to think, that God, who created him in mercy, did not only proportion a being to his nature, but did also provide satisfaction for all those appetites and desires, which himself had created and put into him. For, if he had not, then the being of a man had been nothing but a state of perpetual affliction, and the creation of men had been the greatest unmercifulness in the world; disproportionate objects being mere instances of affliction, and those unsatisfied appetites nothing else but instruments of torment.

3. Therefore, that this intendment of God and nature should be affected, that is, that man should become happy, it is naturally necessary that all his regular appetites should have an object appointed them, in the fruition of which felicity must consist: because nothing is felicity but when what was reasonably or orderly desired is possessed; for the having what is not desired, or the wanting of what we desired, or the desiring what we should not, are the several constituent parts of infelicity; and it can have no other constitution.

4. Now the first appetite man had in order to his great end was, to be as perfect as he could, that is, to be as like the best thing he knew as his nature and condition would permit.[d] And although by Adam's fancy and affection to his wife, and by God's appointing fruit for him, we see the lower appetites were first provided for; yet the first appetite which man had, as he distinguishes from lower creatures, was to be like God; (for by that the devil tempted him;) and in order to that he had naturally sufficient instruments and abilities. For although by being abused with the devil's sophistry he chose an incompetent instrument, yet because it is naturally certain, that love is the greatest assimilation of the object and the faculty, Adam by loving God might very well approach nearer him according as he could. And it was natural to Adam to love God, who was his Father, his Creator, the fountain of all good to him, and of excellency in himself; and whatsoever is understood to be such, it is as natural for us to love, and we do it for the same reasons, for which we love any thing else; and we cannot love for any other reason, but for one or both these in their proportion apprehended.

5. But because God is not only excellent and good, but, by being supreme Lord, hath power to give us what laws he pleases, obedience to his laws therefore becomes naturally, but consequently, necessary, when God decrees them; because he does make himself an enemy to all rebels and disobedient sons, by affixing penalties to the transgressors: and therefore disobedience is naturally inconsistent, not only with love to ourselves, because it brings afflictions upon us, but with love to our supreme Lawgiver: it is contrary to the natural love we bear to God so understood, because it makes him our enemy, whom naturally and reasonably we cannot but love; and therefore also opposite to the first appetite of man, which is to be like God, in order to which we have naturally no instrument but love, and the consequents of love.

6. And this is not at all to be contradicted by a pretence that a man does not naturally know there is a God; because by the same instrument by which we know that the world began, or that there was a first man, by the same we know that there is a God, and that he also knew it too, and conversed with that God, and received laws from him. For if we discourse of man, and the law of nature, and the first appetites, and the first reasons abstractedly, and in their own complexions, and without all their relations and provisions, we discourse jejunely, and falsely, and unprofitably. For as man did not come by chance, nor by himself, but from the universal Cause, so we know that this universal Cause did do all that was necessary for him, in order to the end he appointed him. And therefore to begin the history of a man's reason, and the philosophy of his nature, it is not necessary for us to place him there, where without the consideration of a God,[e] or society, or law, or order, he is to be placed, that is, in the state of a thing rather than a person; but God by revelations and scriptures having helped us with propositions and parts of story relating man's first and real condition, from thence we can take the surest account, and make the most perfect derivation of propositions.

7. From this first appetite of man to be like God, and the first natural instrument of it, love, descend all the first obligations of religion; in which there are some parts more immediately and naturally expressive, others by superinduction and positive command. Natural religion I call such actions, which either are proper to the nature of the thing we worship, (such as are giving praises to him, and speaking excellent things of him, and praying to him for such things as we need, and a readiness to obey him in whatsoever he commands,) or else such as are expressions proportionate to our natures that make them; that is, giving to God the best things we have, and by which we can declare our esteem of his honour and excellency; assigning some portion of our time, of our estate, the labours of our persons, the increase of our store, first-fruits, sacrifices, oblations, and tithes;[f] which therefore God rewards, because he hath allowed to our natures no other

[d] Ἐν τοῖς φύσει δεῖ τὸ βέλτιον, ἐὰν ἐνδέχεται, ὑπάρχειν μᾶλλον. ἡ φύσις ἀεὶ ποιεῖ τῶν ἐνδεχομένων τὸ βέλτιστον.—Arist. de Cœlo.

[e] Οὐ γὰρ ἐστιν εὑρεῖν τῆς δικαιοσύνης ἄλλης ἀρχὴν, οὐδὲ ἄλλην γένεσιν, ἢ τὴν ἐκ τοῦ Διὸς, καὶ τὴν ἐκ τῆς κοινῆς φύσεως· ἐντεῦθεν γὰρ δεῖ πᾶν τὸ τοιοῦτον ἀρχὴν ἔχειν, εἴ μέλλομέν τι ἐρεῖν περὶ ἀγαθῶν καὶ κακῶν.—Chrysip. de Diis, 3.

[f] Σπένδειν, καὶ θύειν, καὶ ἀπάρχεσθαι κατὰ τὰ πάτρια, ἑκάστοις προσήκει καθαρῶς, καὶ μὴ ἐπισεσυρμένως, μηδὲ ἀμελῶς, μηδὲ γλισχρῶς, μηδὲ ὑπὲρ δύναμιν.—Epict. c. xxxviii.

instruments of doing him honour, but by giving to him in some manner, which we believe honourable and apt, the best things we have.

8. The next appetite a man hath is to beget one like himself, God having implanted that appetite into man for the propagation of mankind, and given it as his first blessing and permission: "It is not good for man to be alone;" and "Increase and multiply." And Artemidorus[g] had something of this doctrine, when he reckons these two laws of nature, "Deum colere, mulieribus vinci," "to worship God, and to be overcome by women," in proportion to his two first appetites of nature, "to be like God, and to have another like himself." This appetite God only made regular by his first provisions of satisfaction. He gave to man a woman for a wife, for the companion of his sorrows, for the instrument of multiplication; and yet provided him but of one, and intimated he should have no more: which we do not only know by an after revelation, the holy Jesus having declared it to have been God's purpose; but Adam himself understood it, as appears by his first discourses at the entertainment of his new bride.[h] And although there were permissions afterward of polygamy, yet there might have been a greater pretence of necessity at first, because of enlarging and multiplying fountains rather than channels; and three or four at first would have enlarged mankind by greater proportion than many more afterwards; little distances near the centre make greater and larger figures, than when they part near the fringes of the circle; and therefore those after permissions were to avoid a greater evil, not a hallowing of the license, but a reproach of their infirmity. And certainly the multiplication of wives is contrariant to that design of love and endearment, which God intended at first between man and wife.

——— Connubia mille
Non illis generis nexus, non pignora curæ,
Sed numero languet pietas:[i] ———

And amongst them that have many wives,[k] the relation and necessitude is trifling and loose, and they are all equally contemptible; because the mind entertains no loves or union where the object is multiplied, and the act unfixed and distracted. So that this having a great commodity in order to man's great end, that is, of living well and happily, seems to be intended by God in the nature of things and instruments natural and reasonable towards man's end; and therefore to be a law, if not natural, yet at least positive and superinduced at first, in order to man's proper end. However, by the provision which God made for satisfaction of this appetite of nature, all those actions, which deflect and err from the order of this end, are unnatural and inordinate, and not permitted by the concession of God, nor the order of the thing; but such actions only, which naturally produce the end of this provision and satisfaction, are natural, regular, and good.

9. But by this means man grew into a society and a family, and having productions of his own kind, which he naturally desired, and therefore loved, he was consequently obliged to assist them in order to their end, that they might become like him, that is, perfect men, and brought up to the same state: and they also by being at first impotent, and for ever after beneficiaries[l] and obliged persons, are for the present subject to their parents, and for ever after bound to duty; because there is nothing which they can do, that can directly produce so great a benefit to the parents as they have to the children. From hence naturally descend all those mutual obligations between parents and children, which are instruments of protection and benefit on the one side, and duty and obedience on the other; and all these to be expressed according as either of their necessities shall require, or any stipulation or contract shall appoint, or shall be superinduced by any positive laws of God or man.

10. In natural descent of the generations of man this one first family was multiplied so much, that for conveniency they were forced to divide their dwellings; and this they did by families especially, the great father being the major-domo to all his minors. And this division of dwellings, although it kept the same form and power in the several families, which were in the original, yet it introduced some new necessities, which, although they varied in the instance, yet were to be determined by such instruments of reason, which were given to us at first upon foresight of the public necessities of the world. And when the families came to be divided, that their common parent being extinct, no master of a family had power over another master; the rights of such men and their natural power became equal, because there was nothing to distinguish them, and because they might do equal injury, and invade each other's possessions, and disturb their peace, and surprise their liberty. And so also was their power of doing benefit equal, though not the same in kind. But God, who made man a sociable creature, because he knew it was "not good for him to be alone," so dispensed the abilities and possibilities of doing good, that in something or other every man might need or be benefited by every man.[m] Therefore, that they might pursue the end of nature, and their own appetites of living well and happily, they were forced to consent to such contracts, which might secure and supply to every one those good things, without which he could not live happily. Both the appetites, the irascible and the concupiscible, fear of evil and desire of benefit, were the suf-

[g] De Somn. Sign.
[h] Gen. ii. 24.
[i] Claudian Bell. Gildon. 441.
[k] Sallust. Jugurth. c. lxxx.

——— οὐδὲ γὰρ καλὸν,
Δυοῖν γυναικοῖν ἄνδρ' ἕν' ἡνίας ἔχειν·
Ἀλλ' εἰς μίαν βλέποντες ἐυναίαν κύπριν
Στέργουσιν, ὅστις μὴ κακῶς οἰκεῖν θέλει.
EURIP. Androm. 179.

[l] Nihil enim est liberis proprium, quod non parentum sit priùs, qui aut de suo dederant, aut acquirendi præbuerant causas.—PHILO.
[m] Animus inveniet liberalitatis materiam, etiam inter angustias paupertatis.—SENEC. de Benefic. c. i.

ficient endearments of contracts, of societies, and republics. And upon this stock were decreed and hallowed all those propositions, without which bodies politic and societies of men cannot be happy.[n] And in the transaction of these, many accidents daily happening, it grew still reasonable, that is, necessary to the end of living happily, that all those after obligations should be observed with the proportion of the same faith and endearment which bound the first contracts. For though the natural law be always the same, yet some parts of it are primely necessary, others by supposition and accident; and both are of the same necessity, that is, equally necessary in the several cases. Thus, to obey a king is as necessary and naturally reasonable as to obey a father, that is, supposing there be a king, as it is certain naturally a man cannot be, but a father must be supposed. If it be made necessary that I promise, it is also necessary that I perform it: for else I shall return to that inconvenience, which I sought to avoid when I made the promise; and though the instance be very far removed from the first necessities and accidents of our prime being and production, yet the reason still pursues us, and natural reason reaches up to the very last minutes, and orders the most remote particulars of our well-being.

11. Thus, not to steal, not to commit adultery, not to kill, are very reasonable prosecutions of the great end of nature, of living well and happily; but when a man is said to steal, when to be a murderer, when to be incestuous, the natural law doth not teach in all cases; but when the superinduced constitution hath determined the particular law, by natural reason we are obliged to observe it: because, though the civil power makes the instance, and determines the particular; yet right reason makes the sanction, and passes the obligation. The law of nature makes the major proposition; but the civil constitution, or any superinduced law, makes the assumption in a practical syllogism. To kill is not murder; but to kill such persons, whom I ought not. It was not murder, among the Jews, to kill a manslayer, before he entered a city of refuge; to kill the same man after his entry, was. Among the Romans,[o] to kill an adulteress or a ravisher in the act, was lawful; with us, it is murder. Murder, and incest, and theft, always were unlawful; but the same actions were not always the same crimes. And it is just with these, as with disobedience, which was ever criminal; but the same thing was not estimated to be disobedience; nor indeed could any thing be so, till the sanction of a superior had given the instance of obedience. So for theft: to catch fish in rivers, or deer, or pigeons, when they were esteemed feræ naturæ, of a wild condition, and so primò occupantis, was lawful; just as to take or kill badgers or foxes, and beavers and lions: but when the laws had appropriated rivers, and divided shores, and imparked deer, and housed pigeons, it became theft to take them without leave. To despoil the Egyptians was not theft, when God, who is the Lord of all possessions, had bidden the Israelites; but to do so now, were the breach of the natural law, and of a divine commandment. For the natural law, I said, is eternal in the sanction, but variable in the instance and the expression. And indeed the laws of nature are very few; they were but two at first, and but two at last, when the great change was made from families to kingdoms. The first is, to do duty to God; the second is, to do to ourselves and our neighbours, that is, to our neighbours as to ourselves, all those actions, which naturally, reasonably, or by institution or emergent necessity, are in order to a happy life. Our blessed Saviour reduces all the law to these two: 1. Love the Lord with all thy heart: 2. Love thy neighbour as thyself. In which I observe, in verification of my former discourse,[p] that love is the first natural bond of duty to God, so also it is to our neighbour. And therefore all intercourse with our neighbour was founded in, and derived from, the two greatest endearments of love in the world. A man came to have a neighbour, by being a husband and a father.

12. So that still there are but two great natural laws, binding us in our relations to God and man; we remaining essentially, and, by the very design of creation, obliged to God in all, and to our neighbours in the proportions of equality, as thyself; that is, that he be permitted and promoted, in the order to his living well and happily, as thou art; for love being there not an affection, but the duty that results from the first natural bands of love, which began neighbourhood, signifies justice, equality, and such reasonable proceedings, which are in order to our common end of a happy life; and is the same with that other, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do you to them;" and that is certainly the greatest and most effective love; because it best promotes that excellent end, which God designed for our natural perfection. All other particulars are but prosecutions of these two, that is, of the order of nature: save only that there is a third law, which is a part of love too; it is self-love; and therefore is rather supposed, than at the first expressed, because a man is reasonably to be presumed to have in him a sufficient stock of self-love, to serve the ends of his nature and creation; and that is, that man demean and use his own body in that decorum, which is most orderly and proportionate to his perfective end of a happy life; which christian religion calls sobriety; and it is a prohibition of those uncharitable, self-destroying sins of drunkenness, gluttony, and inordinate and unreasonable manners of lust, destructive of nature's intendments, or at least no ways promoting them. For it is naturally lawful to satisfy any of these desires, when the desire does not carry the satisfaction beyond the design of nature, that is, to the violation of health, or that happy living, which consists in observing those contracts, which mankind thought necessary to be made, in order to the same great end; unless where

[n] Commoda præterea patriæ tibi prima putare.—Lucilius.

[o] A. Gellius, l. x. 23.

[p] Num. 4.

God hath superinduced a restraint, making an instance of sobriety to become an act of religion, or to pass into an expression of duty to him: but then it is not a natural, but a religious sobriety, and may be instanced in fasting or abstinence from some kinds of meat, or some times or manners of conjugation. These are the three natural laws, described in the christian doctrine; that we live, 1. godly; 2. soberly; 3. righteously. And the particulars of the first are ordinarily to be determined by God immediately, or his vicegerents, and by reason observing and complying with the accidents of the world, and dispositions of things and persons; the second, by the natural order of nature, by sense, and by experience; and the third, by human contracts and civil laws.

13. The result of the preceding discourse is this. Man, who was designed by God to a happy life, was fitted with sufficient means to attain that end, so that he might, if he would, be happy; but he was a free agent, and so might choose. And it is possible, that man may fail of his end, and be made miserable, by God, by himself, or by his neighbour; or, by the same persons, he may be made happy in the same proportions, as they relate to him. If God be angry or disobeyed, he becomes our enemy, and so we fail: if our neighbour be injured or impeded in the direct order to his happy living, he hath equal right against us, as we against him, and so we fail that way: and if I be intemperate, I grow sick and worsted in some faculty, and I so am unhappy in myself. But if I obey God, and do right to my neighbour, and confine myself within the order and design of nature; I am secured in all ends of blessing, in which I can be assisted by these three, that is, by all my relatives; there being no end of man designed by God in order to his happiness, to which these are not proper and sufficient instruments. Man can have no other relations, no other discourses, no other regular appetites, but what are served and satisfied by religion, by sobriety, and by justice. There is nothing, whereby we can relate to any person, who can hurt us, or do us benefit, but is provided for in these three. These, therefore, are all; and these are sufficient.

14. But now it is to be inquired, how these become laws; obliging us to sin, if we transgress, even before any positive law of God be superinduced: for else, how can it be a natural law, that is, a law obliging all nations and all persons, even such who have had no intercourse with God by way of special revelation, and have lost all memory of tradition? For either such persons, whatsoever they do, shall obtain that end, which God designed for them in their nature, that is, a happy life according to the duration of an immortal nature; or else they shall perish for prevaricating of these laws. And yet, if they were no laws to them, nor decreed and made sacred by sanction, promulgation, and appendant penalties, they could not so oblige them, as to become the rule of virtue or vice.

15. When God gave us natural reason, that is, sufficient ability to do all that should be necessary to live well and happily, he also knew, that some appetites might be irregular, just as some stomachs would be sick, and some eyes blind; and a man, being a voluntary agent, might choose an ill with as little reason, as the angels of darkness did, that is, they might do unreasonably, because they would do so; and then a man's understanding should serve him but as an instrument of mischief, and his will carry him on to it with a blind and impotent desire; and then the beauteous order of creatures would be discomposed by unreasonable, and unconsidering, or evil persons. And therefore it was most necessary, that man should have his appetites confined within the designs of nature, and the order to his end; for a will, without the restraint of a superior power or a perfect understanding, is like a knife in a child's hand, as apt for mischief as for use. Therefore it pleased God to bind man, by the signature of laws, to observe those great natural reasons, without which man could not arrive at the great end of God's designing; that is, he could not live well and happily. God, therefore, made it the first law to love him; and, which is all one, to worship him, to speak honour of him, and to express it in all our ways, the chief whereof is obedience. And this we find in the instance of that positive precept, which God gave to Adam, and which was nothing but a particular of the great general. But in this there is little scruple, because it is not imaginable, that God would, in any period of time, not take care, that himself be honoured, his glory being the very end why he made man; and therefore it must be certain, that this did, at the very first, pass into a law.

16. But concerning this and other things, which are usually called natural laws, I consider, that the things themselves were such, that the doing them was therefore declared to be a law, because the not doing them did certainly bring a punishment proportionable to the crime, that is, 1. a just deficiency from the end of creation, from a good and happy life: 2. and also a punishment of a guilty conscience: which I do not understand to be a fear of hell, or of any supervening penalty, unless the conscience be accidentally instructed into such fears by experience or revelation; but it is a "malum in genere rationis," a disease or evil of the reasonable faculty; that, as there is a rare content in the discourse of reason, there is a satisfaction, an acquiescency, like that of creatures in their proper place, and definite actions, and competent perfections; so, in prevaricating the natural law, there is a dissatisfaction, a disease, a removing out of the place, an unquietness of spirit, even when there is no monitor or observer. "Adeò facinora atque flagitia sua ipsi quoque in supplicium verterant. Neque frustrà præstantissimus [Plato] sapientiæ firmare solitus est, si recludantur tyrannorum mentes, posse aspici laniatus et ictus, quando ut corpora verberibus, ità sævitiâ, libidine, malis consultis animus dilaceretur," said Tacitus[q] out of Plato,[r] whose words are; Ἀλλὰ πολλάκις τοῦ μεγάλου βασιλέως ἐπιλαβόμενος, ἢ ἄλλου ὁτιοῦν βασι-

[q] Annal. vi. 6.

[r] In Gorgia, § 61.

λέως ἢ δυνάστου, κατεῖδεν οὐδὲν ὑγιὲς ὂν τῆς ψυχῆς, ἀλλὰ διαμεμαστιγωμένην καὶ οὐλῶν μεστὴν, ὑπὸ ἐπιορκιῶν καὶ ἀδικίας. It is naturally certain, that the cruelty of tyrants torments themselves, and is a hook in their nostrils, and a scourge to their spirit;[s] and the pungency of forbidden lust is truly a thorn in the flesh, full of anguish and secret vexation.

> Quid, demens, manifesta negas? En pectus inustæ
> Deformant maculæ, vitiisque inolevit imago,

said Claudian[t] of Rufinus. And it is certain to us, and verified by the experience and observation of all wise nations, though not naturally demonstrable, that this secret punishment is sharpened and promoted in degrees by the hand of Heaven, the finger of the same hand, that writ the law in our understandings.

17. But the prevarications of the natural law have also their portion of a special punishment, besides the scourge of an unquiet spirit. The man that disturbs his neighbour's rest, meets with disturbances himself: and since I have naturally no more power over my neighbour than he hath over me, (unless he descended naturally from me,) he hath an equal privilege to defend himself, and to secure his quiet by disturbing the order of my happy living, as I do his. And this equal permission is certainly so great a sanction and signature of the law of justice, that, in the just proportion of my receding from the reasonable prosecution of my end, in the same proportion and degree my own infelicity is become certain; and this in several degrees up to the loss of all, that is, of life itself: for where no farther duration or differing state is known, there death is ordinarily esteemed the greatest infelicity; where something beyond it is known, there also it is known, that such prevarication makes that farther duration to be unhappy. So that an affront is naturally punished by an affront, the loss of a tooth with the loss of a tooth, of an eye with an eye, the violent taking away of another man's goods by the losing my own. For I am liable to as great an evil as I infer, and naturally he is not unjust that inflicts it. And he that is drunk is a fool or a madman for the time; and that is his punishment, and declares the law and the sin: and so in proportions to the transgressions of sobriety. But when the first of the natural laws is violated, that is, God is disobeyed or dishonoured, or when the greatest of natural evils is done to our neighbour, then death became the penalty: to the first, in the first period of the world; to the second, at the restitution of the world, that is, at the beginning of the second period. He that did attempt to kill, from the beginning of ages might have been resisted and killed, if the assaulted could not else be safe; but he that killed actually, as Cain did, could not be killed himself, till the law was made in Noah's time; because there was no person living that had equal power on him, and had been naturally injured. While the thing was doing, the assailant and the assailed had equal power; but when it was done, and one was killed, he that had the power or right of killing his murderer, is now dead, and his power is extinguished with the man. But after the flood, the power was put into the hand of some trusted person, who was to take the forfeiture. And thus, I conceive, these natural reasons, in order to their proper end, became laws, and bound fast by the band of annexed and consequent penalties. "Metum prorsus et noxiam conscientiæ pro fœdere haberi," said Tacitus;[u] and that fully explains my sense.

18. And thus death was brought into the world; not by every prevarication of any of the laws, by any instance of unreasonableness: for in proportion to the evil of the action would be the evil of the suffering, which in all cases would not arrive at death; as every injury, every intemperance, should not have been capital. But some things were made evil by a superinduced prohibition, as eating one kind of fruit; some things were evil by inordination: the first was morally evil, the second was evil naturally. Now the first sort brought in death by a prime sanction; the second by degrees and variety of accident. For every disobedience and transgression of that law, which God made as the instance of our doing him honour and obedience, is an integral violation of all the band between him and us; it does not grow in degrees, according to the instance and subject matter; for it is as great a disobedience to eat, when he hath forbidden us, as to offer to climb to heaven with an ambitious tower. And therefore it is but reasonable for us to fear, and just in him to make us at once to suffer death, which is the greatest of natural evils, for disobeying him: to which death we may arrive by degrees, in doing actions against the reasonableness of sobriety and justice, but cannot arrive by degrees of disobedience to God, or irreligion; because every such act deserves the worst of things, but the other naturally deserves no greater evil than the proportion of their own inordination, till God, by a superinduced law, hath made them also to become acts of disobedience as well as inordination, that is, morally evil, as well as naturally; for, "by the law," saith St. Paul, "sin became exceeding sinful,"[w] that is, had a new degree of obliquity added to it. But this was not at first. For therefore saith St. Paul, "Before," or until "the law, sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law:"[x] meaning, that those sins, which were forbidden by Moses's law, were actually in the manners of men and the customs of the world; but they were not imputed, that is, to such personal punishments and consequent evils, which afterwards those sins did introduce; because those sins, which were only evil by inordination, and discomposure of the order of man's end of living happily, were made unlawful upon no other stock, but that God would have man

[s] Lucian. in Catapl. Rhadamanthus, Ὁπόσα ἄν τις ὑμῶν πονηρὰ ἐργάσηται παρὰ τὸν βίον, καθ' ἕκαστον αὐτῶν ἀφανῆ στίγματα ἐπὶ τῆς ψυχῆς περιφέρει.—Bipont. t. iii. p. 205.

[t] Claudian de Rufin. lib. ii. 504.

[u] Ann. vi. 4.

[w] Rom. vii. 13.

[x] Rom. v. 13.

to live happily; and therefore gave him reason, to effect that end; and if a man became unreasonable, and did things contrary to his end, it was impossible for him to be happy; that is, he should be miserable in proportion. But in that degree and manner of evil they were imputed; and that was sanction enough to raise natural reason up to the constitution of a law.

19. Thirdly, the law of nature, being thus decreed and made obligatory, was a sufficient instrument of making man happy, that is, in producing the end of his creation. But as Adam had evil discourses and irregular appetites before he fell, (for they made him fall,) and as the angels, who had no original sin, yet they chose evil at the first, when it was wholly arbitrary in them to do so or otherwise; so did man. "God made man upright, but he sought out many inventions." Some men were ambitious, and by incompetent means would make their brethren to be their servants; some were covetous, and would usurp that, which, by an earlier distinction, had passed into private possession: and then they made new principles, and new discourses, such which were reasonable in order to their private indirect ends, but not to the public benefit, and therefore would prove unreasonable and mischievous to themselves at last.

20. And when once they broke the order of creation, it is easy to understand, by what necessities of consequence they ran into many sins and irrational proceedings.[y] Ælian tells of a nation, who had a law binding them to beat their parents to death with clubs, when they lived to a decrepit and unprofitable age. The Persian Magi mingled with their mothers and all their nearest relatives. And by a law of the Venetians, says Bodinus,[z] a son in banishment was redeemed from the sentence, if he killed his banished father. And in Homer's time, there were a sort of pirates,[a] who professed robbing, and did account it honourable. But the great prevarications of the laws of nature were in the first commandment; when the tradition concerning God was derived by a long line, and there were no visible remonstrances of an extraordinary power, they were quickly brought to believe, that he whom they saw not, was not at all, especially being prompted to it by pride, tyranny, and a loose, imperious spirit.[b] Others fell to low opinions concerning God, and made such as they list of their own; and they were like to be strange gods, which were of man's making. When man, either maliciously or carelessly, became unreasonable in the things that concerned God, God was pleased to "give him over to a reprobate mind," [c] that is, an unreasonable understanding, and false principles concerning himself and his neighbour, that his sin against the natural law might become its own punishment, by discomposing his natural happiness. Atheism and idolatry brought in all unnatural lusts, and many unreasonable injustices. And this we learn from St. Paul: "As they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;" [d] that is, incongruities towards the end of their creation; and so they became "full of unrighteousness, lust, covetousness, malice, envy, strife, and murder, disobedient to parents, breakers of covenants, unnatural in their affections," and in their passions: and all this was the consequent of breaking the first natural law. "They changed the truth of God into a lie: for this cause God gave them up unto vile affections."[e]

21. Now God, who takes more care for the good of man, than man does for his own, did not only imprint these laws in the hearts and understandings of man, but did also take care to make this light shine clear enough to walk by, by adopting some instances of the natural laws into religion. Thus the law against murder became a part of religion in the time of Noah; and some other things were then added concerning worshipping God, against idolatry, and against unnatural and impure mixtures. Sometimes God superadded judgments, as to the 23,000 Israelites for fornication. For although these punishments were not threatened to the crime in the sanction and expression of any definite law, and it could not naturally arrive to it by its inordination; yet it was as agreeable to the Divine justice to inflict it, as to inflict the pains of hell upon evil livers, who yet had not any revelation of such intolerable danger: for it was sufficient, that God had made such crimes to be against their very nature; and they who will do violence to their nature, to do themselves hurt, and to displease God, deserve to lose the title to all those good things, which God was pleased to design for man's final condition. And because it grew habitual, customary, and of innocent reputation, it pleased God to call this precept out of the darkness, whither their evil customs and false discourses had put it; and by such an extraregular, but very signal punishment, to remind them, that the natural permissions of concubinate were only confined to the ends of mankind, and were hallowed only by the faith and the design of marriage. And this was signified by St. Paul, in these words: "They that sin without the law, shall also perish without the law;" [f] that is, by such judgments, which God hath inflicted on evil livers in several periods of the world, irregularly indeed, not signified in kind, but yet sent into the world with designs of a great mercy; that the ignorances, and prevarications, and partial abolitions of the natural law, might be cured and restored, and by the dispersion of prejudices the state of natural reason be redintegrate.

22. Whatsoever was besides this, was accidental and emergent; such as were the discourses of wise men, which God raised up in several countries and

[y] Τινὰ τῶν ἐθνῶν ἐξηγρίωται, dixit Porphyrius.

[z] De Rep. l. i. c. 4.

[a] Οὐκ ἄδοξον ἦν παρὰ τοῖς παλαιοῖς τὸ λῃστεύειν, ἀλλ' ἔνδοξον.—Scholiast. in Hom. Odyss. τ'. Vide etiam A. Gel. l. xi. c. 18.

[b] Ὅσοι ἀπὸ ἀκαθάρτου πνεύματος ἐμπιφορημένοι, καὶ ὑπὸ φαύλης ἀνατροφῆς καὶ ἐθῶν φαύλων καὶ νόμων πονηρῶν διαφθαρέντες τὰς φυσικὰς ἐννοίας ἀπώλεσαν.—Just. Mart. Dial. Tryph.

[c] Rom. i. 25, 26, &c.

[d] Ver. 28, &c.

[e] Ver. 25, 26.

[f] Rom. ii. 12.

ages, as Job, and Eliphaz, and Bildad, and those of the families of the patriarchs dispersed into several countries; and constant tradition in some noble and more eminent descents. And yet all this was so little and imperfect, not in itself, but in respect of the thick cloud man had drawn before his understanding, that darkness covered the face of the earth in a great proportion. Almost all the world were idolaters; and when they had broken the first of the natural laws, the breach of the other was not only naturally consequent, but also, by Divine judgment, it descended infallibly. And yet God, pitying mankind, did not only still continue the former remedies, and added blessings, "giving them fruitful seasons, and filling their hearts with food and gladness," so leaving the nations without excuse; but also made a very noble change in the world: for having chosen an excellent family, the fathers of which lived exactly according to the natural law, and with observation of those few superadded precepts, in which God did specificate their prime duty; and having swelled that family to a great nation, and given them possession of an excellent land, which God took from seven nations, because they were egregious violators of the natural law; he was pleased to make a very great restitution and declaration of the natural law, in many instances of religion and justice, which he framed into positive precepts, and adopted them into the family of the first original instances, making them as necessary in the particulars, as they were in the primary obligation: but the instances were such, whereof some did relate only to the present constitution of the commonwealth; others to such universal contracts, which obliged all the world, by reason of the equal necessity of all mankind, to admit them. And these himself writ on tables of stone, and dressed up their nation in a body politic by an excellent system of politic laws, and adorned it with a rare religion, and left this nation as a piece of leaven in a mass of dough, not only to do honour to God, and happiness to themselves, by those instruments, which he had now very much explicated, but also to transmit the same reasonable propositions into other nations: and he therefore multiplied them to a great necessity of a dispersion, that they might serve the ends of God and of the natural law, by their ambulatory life and their numerous disseminations. And this was it which St. Paul affirms, "The law was added because of transgression:"[g] meaning, that because men did transgress the natural, God brought Moses's law into the world, to be as a strand to the inundation of impiety. And thus the world stood, till the fulness of time was come: for so we are taught by the apostle, "The law was added because of transgression;" but the date of this was to expire at a certain period, it was added to serve but "till the seed should come, to whom the promise was made."

23. For, because Moses's law was but an imperfect explication of the natural; there being divers parts of the three laws of nature not at all explicated by that covenant, not the religion of prayers, not the reasonableness of temperance and sobriety in opinion and diet; and in the more noble instances of humanity and doing benefit, it was so short, that, as St. Paul says, "The law could not make the comers thereunto perfect;" and, which was most of all considerable, it was confined to a nation; and the other parts of mankind had made so little use of the records of that nation, that all the world was placed "in darkness, and sate in the shadow of death:" therefore it was, that in great mercy God sent his Son, "a light to lighten the gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel:" to instruct those, and consummate these; that the imperfection of the one, and the mere darkness of the other, might be illustrated by the Sun of righteousness. And this was by restoring the light of nature, which they, by evil customs, and false principles, and evil laws, had obscured; by restoring man to the liberty of his spirit, by freeing him from the slavery of sin, under which they were so lost and oppressed, that all their discourses and conclusions, some of their moral philosophy, and all their habitual practices, were but servants of sin, and made to co-operate to that end, not which God intended as perfective of human nature, but which the devil and vicious persons superinduced, to serve little ends and irregular, and to destroy the greater.

24. For certain it is, christianity is nothing else but the most perfect design that ever was, to make a man happy in his whole capacity: and as the law was to the Jews, so was philosophy to the gentiles, a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ, to teach them the rudiments of happiness, and the first and lowest things of reason; that when Christ was come, all mankind might become perfect; that is, be made regular in their appetites, wise in their understandings, assisted in their duties, directed to and instructed in their great ends. And this is that which the apostle calls "being perfect men in Christ Jesus;" perfect in all the intendments of nature, and in all the designs of God. And this was brought to pass by discovering, and restoring, and improving the law of nature, and by turning it all into religion.

25. For the natural law being a sufficient and a proportionate instrument and means to bring a man to the end designed in his creation, and this law being eternal and unalterable, (for it ought to be as lasting and as unchangeable as the nature itself, so long as it was capable of a law,) it was not imaginable, that the body of any law should make a new morality, new rules, and general proportions, either of justice, or religion, or temperance, or felicity; the essential parts of all these consisting in natural proportions, and means toward the consummation of man's last end, which was first intended, and is always the same. It is as if there were a new truth in an essential and a necessary proposition. For although the instances may vary, there can be no new justice, no new temperance, no new relations, proper and natural relations and intercourses between God and us; but what always were in praises and prayers, and in adoration and honour, and in

[g] Gal. iii. 19.

the symbolical expressions of God's glory and our needs.

26. Hence it comes, that that which is the most obvious and notorious appellative of the law of nature, that it is "a law written in our hearts," was also recounted as one of the glories and excellencies of christianity. Plutarch, saying that "kings ought to be governed by laws," explains himself, that this law must be "a word, not written in books and tables, but dwelling in the mind, a living rule, the interior guide of their manners, and monitor of their life."[h] And this was the same which St. Paul expresses to be the guide of the gentiles, that is, of all men naturally. "The gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law; which shows the work of the law written in their hearts."[i] And that we may see it was the law of nature, that returned in the sanctions of christianity, God declares, that, in the constitution of this law, he would take no other course than at first, that is, he would write them in the hearts of men: indeed with a new style, with a quill taken from the wings of the holy Dove; the Spirit of God was to be the great engraver and the scribe of the new covenant, but the hearts of men should be the tables. "For this is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their hearts, and into their minds will I write them: and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more:"[k] that is, I will provide a means to expiate all the iniquities of man, and restore him to the condition of his first creation, putting him into the same order towards felicity which I first designed to him, and that also by the same instruments. Now I consider, that the Spirit of God took very great care, that all the records of the law of Jesus should be carefully kept and transmitted to posterity in books and sermons, which, being an act of providence and mercy, was a provision, lest they should be lost or mistaken, as they were formerly, when God writ some of them in tables of stone for the use of the sons of Israel, and all of them in the first tables of nature with the finger of creation, as now he did in the new creature, by the finger of the Spirit. But then, writing them in the tables of our minds, besides the other, can mean nothing but placing them there, where they were before, and from whence we blotted them by the mixtures of impure principles and discourses. But I descend to particular and more minute considerations.

27. The laws of nature either are bands of religion, justice, or sobriety. Now I consider concerning religion, that whenever God hath made any particular precepts to a family, as to Abraham's; or to a single person, as to the man of Judah prophesying against the altar of Bethel; or to a nation, as to the Jews at Sinai; or to all mankind, as to the world descending from Noah; it was nothing else but a trial or an instance of our obedience, a particular prosecution of the law of nature, whereby we are obliged to do honour to God, which was to be done by such expressions, which are natural intercourses between God and us, or such as he hath made to be so. Now in christianity we are wholly left to that manner of prosecuting this first natural law, which is natural and proportionable to the nature of the thing, which the holy Jesus calls "worshipping God in spirit and truth:" in spirit, that is, with our souls heartily and devoutly, so as to exclude hypocrisy and indifferency; and in truth, that is, without a lie, without vain imaginations and phantastic resemblances of him, which were introduced by the evil customs of the gentiles, and without such false guises and absurd indecencies, which, as they are contrary to man's reason, so are they contrary to the glory and reputation of God;[l] such as was that universal custom of all nations, of sacrificing in man's blood, and offering festival-lusts and impurities in the solemnities of their religion; for these being against the purpose and design of God, and against right reason, are a lie, and enemies to the truth of a natural and proper religion. The holy Jesus only commanded us to pray often, and to praise God, to speak honour of his name, not to use it lightly and vainly, to believe him, to revere the instruments and ministers of religion, to ask for what we need, to put our trust in God, to worship him, to obey him, and to love him; for all these are but the expressions of love. And this is all Christ spake concerning the first natural law, the law of religion. For concerning the ceremonies or sacraments, which he instituted, they are but few, and they become matter of duty but by accident; as being instruments and rites of consigning those effects and mercies, which God sent to the world by the means of this law, and relate rather to the contract and stipulation, which Christ made for us, than to the natural order between duty and felicity.

28. Now all these are nothing but what we are taught by natural reason, that is, what God enabled us to understand, to be fit instruments of intercourse between God and us, and what was practised and taught by sober men in all ages and all nations, whose records we have received, as I shall remark at the margin of the several precepts. For to make these appear certainly and naturally necessary, there was no more requisite, but that man should know there was a God, that is, an eternal Being, which gave him all that he had or was; and to know what himself was, that is, indigent and necessitous of himself, needing help of all the creatures, exposed to accidents and calamity, and defensible no ways but by the same hand that made him; creation and conservation, in the philosophy of all the world, being but the same act, continuing and flowing on him from an instant to duration, as a line from its mathematical point. And for this God took sufficient care; for he conversed with man, in the very first, in such clear, and certain, and perceptible transaction, that a

[h] Οὐκ ἐν βιβλίοις ἔξω γεγραμμένος, οὐδὲ ἐν ξύλοις, ἀλλ' ἔμψυχος ὢν ἑαυτῷ λόγος, ἀεὶ συνοικῶν, καὶ μηδέποτε τὴν ψυχὴν ἐῶν ἔρημον κηδεμονίας.

[i] Rom. ii. 14, 15.

[k] Heb. x. 16, 17.

[l] Polyd. Virg. de Invent. l. v. c. 8.

man could as certainly know that God was, as that man was. And in all ages of the world he hath not left himself without witness, but gave such testimonies of himself that were sufficient; for they did actually persuade all nations, barbarous and civil, into the belief of a God.[m] And it is but a nicety to consider, whether or no that proposition can be naturally demonstrated. For it was sufficient to all God's purposes, and to all man's, that the proposition was actually believed; the instances were therefore sufficient to make faith because they did it. And a man may remove himself so far from all the degrees of aptness to believe a proposition, that nothing shall make them join. For if there were a sect of witty men, that durst not believe their senses, because they thought them fallible, it is no wonder if some men should think every reason reprovable. But in such cases demonstration is a relative term, and signifies every probation, greater or lesser, which does actually make faith in any proposition; and in this God hath never been deficient, but hath to all men, that believe him, given sufficient to confirm them; to those few, that believed not, sufficient to reprove them.

29. Now in all these actions of religion, which are naturally consequent to this belief, there is no scruple, but in the instance of faith, which is presented to be an infused grace, an immission from God, and that for its object it hath principles supernatural, that is, naturally incredible; and therefore faith is supposed a grace above the greatest strength of reason. But in this I consider, that if we look into all the sermons of Christ,[n] we shall not easily find any doctrine that, in any sense, troubles natural philosophy, but only that of the resurrection (for I do not think those mystical expressions of plain truths, such as are, "being born again, eating the flesh of the Son of man, being in the Father, and the Father in him," to be exceptions in this assertion). And although some gentiles did believe and deliver that article, and particularly Chrysippus, and the Thracians; (as Mela and Solinus report of them;) yet they could not naturally discourse themselves into it, but had it from the imperfect report and opinion of some Jews that dwelt among them: and it was certainly a revelation or a proposition sent into the world by God. But then the believing it is so far from being above or against nature, that there is nothing in the world more reasonable, than to believe any thing which God tells us, or which is told us by a man sent from God, with mighty demonstration of his power and veracity. Naturally our bodies cannot rise, that is, there is no natural agent or natural cause sufficient to produce that effect; but this is an effect of a Divine power: and he hath but a little stock of natural reason, who cannot conclude, that the same power, which made us out of nothing, can also restore us to the same condition, as well and easily, from dust and ashes certainly, as from mere nothing. And in this, and in all the like cases, faith is a submission of the understanding to the word of God, and is nothing else but a confessing, that God is truth, and that he is omnipotent; that is, he can do what he will, and he will, when he hath once said it. And we are now as ignorant of the essence and nature of forms, and of that which substantially distinguishes man from man, or an angel from an angel, as we were of the greatest article of our religion, before it was revealed; and we shall remain ignorant for ever of many natural things, unless they be revealed; and unless we knew all the secrets of philosophy, the mysteries of nature, and the rules and propositions of all things and all creatures, we are fools, if we say, that what we call an article of faith, I mean, truly such, is against natural reason. It may be indeed as much against our natural reasonings, as those reasonings are against truth. But if we remember, how great an ignorance dwells upon us all, it will be found the most reasonable thing in the world only to inquire, whether God hath revealed any such proposition; and then not to say, It is against natural reason, and therefore an article of faith; but, I am told a truth which I knew not till now, and so my reason is become instructed into a new proposition. And although Christ hath given us no new moral precepts, but such which were essentially and naturally reasonable, in order to the end of man's creation; yet we may easily suppose him to teach us many a new truth, which we knew not, and to explicate to us many particulars of that estate, which God designed for man in his first production, but yet did not then declare to him; and to furnish him with new revelations, and to signify the greatness of the designed end, to become so many arguments of endearment to secure his duty, that is, indeed, to secure his happiness, by the infallible using the instruments of attaining it.

30. This is all I am to say concerning the precepts of religion Jesus taught us: he took off those many superinduced rites, which God enjoined to the Jews, and reduced us to the natural religion; that is, to such expressions of duty, which all wise men and nations used; save only, that he took away the rite of sacrificing beasts,[o] because it was now determined in the great sacrifice of himself, which sufficiently and eternally reconciled all the world to God. All the other things, as prayers, and adoration, and eucharist, and faith in God, are of a natural order and an unalterable expression: and, in the nature of the thing, there is no other way of address to God than these, no other expression of his glories and our needs; both which must for ever be signified.

31. Secondly; concerning the second natural precept, christian religion hath also added nothing beyond the first obligation, but explained it all: "Whatsoever ye would men should do to you, do ye so to them;"[p] that is the eternal rule of justice;

[m] Maxim. Tyr. Dissert. Ταῦτα ὁ Ἕλλην λέγει, καὶ ὁ βάρβαρος λέγει, καὶ ὁ ἠπειρώτης, καὶ ὁ θαλάττιος, καὶ ὁ σοφὸς, καὶ ὁ ἄσοφος.—p. 6. ed. Dav.

[n] Apud Lactant. l. vii. c. 23.

[o] Just. Mart. Resp. ad Orthodox. ad qu. 83. Tertul. adv. Marcion. ii. 2. Maimon. Moreh Nevochim, l. iii. c. 32.

[p] Hæc sententia sæpissimè à Severo Imperatore prolata. Ὅ μισεις, μηδενὶ ποιήσεις, Tob. iv. 15. Dixit Mimus, "Ab alio expectes, alteri quod feceris."

and that binds contracts, keeps promises, affirms truth, makes subjects obedient, and princes just; it gives security to marts and banks, and introduces an equality of condition upon all the world, save only when an inequality is necessary, that is, in the relations of government, for the preservation of the common[q] rights of equal titles and possessions, that there be some common term endued with power, who is to be the father of all men by an equal provision, that every man's rights be secured by that fear, which naturally we shall bear to him, who can, and will, punish all unreasonable and unjust violations of property. And concerning this, also, the holy Jesus hath added an express precept of paying tribute, and all Cæsar's dues, to Cæsar: in all other particulars it is necessary, that the instances and minutes of justice be appointed by the laws and customs of the several kingdoms and republics. And therefore it was, that christianity so well combined with the government of heathen princes;[r] because, whatsoever was naturally just, or declared so by the political power, their religion bound them to observe, making obedience to be a double duty, a duty both of justice and religion: and the societies of christians growing up from conventicles to assemblies, from assemblies to societies, introduced no change in the government; but by little and little turned the commonwealth into a church, till the world being christian, and justice also being religion, obedience to princes, observation of laws, honesty in contracts, faithfulness in promises, gratitude to benefactors, simplicity in discourse, and ingenuity in all pretences and transactions, became the characterisms of christian men, and the word of a christian the greatest solemnity of stipulation in the world.

32. But concerning the general, I consider, that in two very great instances it was remonstrated, that christianity was the greatest prosecution of natural justice and equality in the whole world. The one was in an election of an apostle into the place of Judas: when there were two equal candidates of the same pretension and capacity, the question was determined by lots, which naturally was the arbitration in questions whose parts were wholly indifferent; and as it was used in all times, so it is to this day used with us in many places, where, lest there be a disagreement concerning the manner of tithing some creatures, and to prevent unequal arts and unjust practices, they are tithed by lot, and their fortuitous passing through the door of their fold. The other is in the cenobitic life of the first christians and apostles: they had all things in common, which was that state of nature, in which men lived charitably and without injustice, before the distinction of dominions and private rites. But from this manner of life they were soon driven by the public necessity and constitution of affairs.

33. Thirdly, whatsoever else is in the christian law, concerns the natural precept of sobriety, in which there is some variety and some difficulty. In the matter of carnality, the holy Jesus did clearly reduce us to the first institution of marriage in paradise, allowing no other mixture, but what was first intended in the creation and first sacramental union: and in the instance he so permitted us to the natural law, that he was pleased to mention no instance of forbidden lust, but in general and comprehensive terms of adultery and fornication: in the other, which are still more unnatural, as their names are concealed and hidden in shame and secrecy, we are to have no instructor, but the modesty and order of nature.

34. As an instance of this law of sobriety, Christ superadded the whole doctrine of humility, which Moses did not, and which seemed almost to be extinguished in the world; and it is called by St. Paul, "sapere ad sobrietatem," the reasonableness or wisdom of sobriety. And it is all the reason in the world, that a man should think of himself but just as he is. He is deceived that thinks otherwise, and is a fool. And when we consider, that pride makes wars, and causes affronts, and no man loves a proud man, and he loves no man but himself and his flatterers, we shall understand, that the precept of humility is an excellent art, and a happy instrument towards human felicity. And it is no way contradicted by a natural desire of honour; it only appoints just and reasonable ways of obtaining it. We are not forbidden to receive honour; but to seek it for designs of pride and complacency, or to make it rest in our hearts. But when the hand of virtue receives the honour, and transmits it to God from our own head, the desires of nature are sufficiently satisfied, and nothing of religion contradicted. And it is certain, by all the experience of the world, that in every state and order of men, he, that is most humble in proportion to that state, is (if all things else be symbolical) the most honoured person. For it is very observable, that when God designed man to a good and happy life, as the natural end of his creation, to verify this, God was pleased to give him objects sufficient and apt to satisfy every appetite: I say, to satisfy it naturally, not to satisfy those extravagancies, which might be accidental, and procured by the irregularity either of will or understanding;[s] not to answer him in all that his desires could extend to, but to satisfy the necessity of every appetite; all the desires that God made, not all that man should make. For we see, even in those appetites which are common to men and beasts, all the needs of nature, and all the ends of creation, are served, by the taking such proportions of their objects, which are ordinate to their end, and which in man we call temperance (not as much as they naturally can); such as are mixtures of sexes merely for production of their kind, eating

[q] Singulorum interest, si universi regantur.

[r] Nec natura potest justo secernere iniquum,
Dividit ut bona diversis, fugienda petendis.
HOR. l. i. Sat. 3.

[s] Vina sitim sedant, natis Venus alma creandis
Serviat: hos fines transiliisse nocet.—VIRG.

Ὁ μὲν τὰς ὑπερβολὰς διώκων τῶν ἡδέων, ἢ καθ' ὑπερβολάς, ἢ διὰ προαίρεσιν, καὶ δι' αὐτάς, καὶ μηδὲν δι' ἕτερον ἀποβαῖνον, ἀκόλαστος.—ARIST. Ethic. l. vii. c. 7. p. 294, ed. Wilk

and drinking for needs and hunger. And yet God permitted our appetites to be able to extend beyond the limits of the mere natural design, that God, by restraining them, and putting the fetters of laws upon them, might turn natural desires into sobriety, and sobriety into religion, they becoming servants of the commandment. And now we must not call all those swellings of appetites natural inclination, nor the satisfaction of such tumours and excrescencies any part of natural felicities; but that, which does just co-operate to those ends, which perfect human nature in order to its proper end. For the appetites of meat, and drink, and pleasures, are but intermedial and instrumental to that end, and are not made for themselves, but first for the end, and then to serve God in the instances of obedience. And just so is the natural desire of honour intended to be a spur to virtue; (for to virtue only it is naturally consequent, or to natural and political superiority;) but to desire it beyond, or besides, the limit, is the swelling and the disease of the desire. And we can take no rule for its perfect value, but by the strict limits of the natural end, or the superinduced end of religion in positive restraints.

35. According to this discourse we may best understand, that even the severest precepts of the christian law are very consonant to nature and the first laws of mankind. Such is the precept of self-denial, which is nothing else but a confining the appetites within the limits of nature: for there they are permitted, (except when some greater purpose is to be served, than the present answering the particular desire,) and whatsoever is beyond it is not in the natural order to felicity; it is no better than an itch, which must be scratched and satisfied, but it is unnatural. But, for martyrdom itself, quitting our goods, losing lands, or any temporal interest, they are now become as reasonable in the present constitution of the world, as taking unpleasant potions, and suffering a member to be cauterized, in sickness or disease. And we see, that death is naturally a less evil than a continual torment, and by some not so resented as a great disgrace; and some persons have chosen it for sanctuary and remedy: and therefore, much rather shall it be accounted prudent and reasonable, and agreeable to the most perfect desires of nature, to exchange a house for a hundred, a friend for a patron, a short affliction for a lasting joy, and a temporal death for an eternal life. For so the question is stated to us by Him, that understands it best. True it is, that the suffering of losses, afflictions, and death, is naturally an evil, and therefore no part of a natural precept, or prime injunction. But when, God having commanded instances of religion, man will not suffer us to obey God, or will not suffer us to live, then the question is, Which is most agreeable to the most perfect and reasonable desires of nature, to obey God, or to obey man; to fear God, or to fear man; to preserve our bodies, or to preserve our souls; to secure a few years of uncertain and troublesome duration, or an eternity of a very glorious condition? Some men, reasonably enough, choose to die for considerations lower than that of a happy eternity; therefore death is not such an evil, but that it may, in some cases, be desired and reasonably chosen, and, in some, be recompensed at the highest rate of a natural value: and if by accident we happen into an estate, in which of necessity one evil or another must be suffered, certainly nothing is more naturally reasonable and eligible than to choose the least evil; and when there are two good things propounded to our choice, both which cannot be possessed, nothing is more certainly the object of a prudent choice than the greater good. And therefore, when once we understand the question of suffering, and self-denial, and martyrdom to this sense, as all christians do, and all wise men do, and all sects of men do in their several persuasions, it is but remembering, that to live happily after this life is more intended to us by God, and is more perfective of human nature, than to live here with all the prosperity which this state affords; and it will evidently follow, that when violent men will not let us enter into that condition by the ways of nature and prime intendment, that is, of natural religion, justice, and sobriety, it is made, in that case, and upon that supposition, certainly, naturally, and infallibly reasonable, to secure the perfective and principal design of our felicity, though it be by such instruments, which are as unpleasant to our senses, as are the instruments of our restitution to health; since both one and the other, in the present conjunction and state of affairs, are most proportionable to reason, because they are so to the present necessity; not primarily intended to us by God, but superinduced by evil accidents and the violence of men. And we not only find that Socrates suffered death in attestation of a God, though he flattered and discoursed himself into the belief of an immortal reward, "de industria consultæ æquanimitatis, non de fiducia compertæ veritatis," as Tertullian says of him; but we also find, that all men, that believed the immortality of the soul firmly and unmovably, made no scruple of exchanging their life for the preservation of virtue, with the interest of their great hope, for honour sometimes, and oftentimes for their country.

36. Thus the holy Jesus perfected and restored the natural law, and drew it into a system of propositions, and made them to become of the family of religion. For God is so zealous to have man attain to the end to which he first designed him, that those things, which he hath put in the natural order to attain that end, he hath bound fast upon us, not only by the order of things, by which it was, that he that prevaricated did naturally fall short of felicity, but also by bands of religion; he hath now made himself a party and an enemy to those, that will not be happy. Of old, religion was but one of the natural laws, and the instances of religion were distinct from the discourses of philosophy. Now, all the law of nature is adopted into religion, and by our love and duty to God we are tied to do all that is reason; and the parts of our religion are but pursuances of the natural relation between God and us: and beyond all this, our natural condition is, in all senses, improved by the consequents and adherences of this religion. For although nature and

grace are opposite, that is, nature depraved by evil habits, by ignorance, and ungodly customs, is contrary to grace, that is, to nature restored by the gospel, engaged to regular living by new revelations, and assisted by the Spirit; yet it is observable, that the law of nature and the law of grace are never opposed. "There is a law of our members," [t] saith St. Paul; that is, an evil necessity introduced into our appetites, by perpetual evil customs, examples, and traditions of vanity; and there is a law of sin, that answers to this: and they differ only as inclination and habit, vicious desires and vicious practices. But then contrary to these are, first, "a law of my mind," [u] which is the law of nature and right reason, and then the law of grace, that is, of Jesus Christ, who perfected and restored the first law, and by assistances reduced it into a law of holy living: and these two differ as the other; the one is in order to the other, as imperfection and growing degrees and capacities are to perfection and consummation. The law of the mind had been so rased and obliterate, and we, by some means or other, so disabled from observing it exactly, that until it was turned into the law of grace, (which is a law of pardoning infirmities, and assisting us in our choices and elections,) we were in a state of deficiency from the perfective state of man, to which God intended us.

37. Now, although God always designed man to the same state, which he hath now revealed by Jesus Christ, yet he told him not of it; and his permissions and licenses were then greater, and the law itself lay closer folded up in the compact body of necessary propositions, in order to so much of his end, as was known, or could be supposed. But now, according to the extension of the revelation, the law itself is made wider, that is, more explicit; and natural reason is thrust forward into discourses of charity and benefit, and we tied to do very much good to others, and tied to co-operate to each other's felicity.

38. That the law of charity is a law of nature, needs no other argument but the consideration of the first constitution of man. The first instances of justice or intercourse of man with a second or third person, were to such persons, towards whom he had the greatest endearments of affection in the world, a wife and children; and justice and charity, at first, was the same thing. And it hath obtained in ages far removed from the first, that charity is called righteousness: [x] "He hath dispersed and given to the poor; his righteousness remaineth for ever." [y] And it is certain, Adam could not in any instance be unjust, but he must in the same also be uncharitable: the band of his first justice being the ties of love, and all having commenced in love. And our blessed Lord, restoring all to the intention of the first perfection, expresses it to the same sense, as I formerly observed; justice to our neighbour, is loving him as ourselves. For, since justice obliges us to do as we would be done to, as the irascible faculty restrains us from doing evil for fear of receiving evil, so the concupiscible obliges us to charity, that ourselves may receive good.

39. I shall say nothing concerning the reasonableness of this precept, but that it concurs rarely with the first reasonable appetite of man, of being like God. "Deus est mortali juvare mortalem, atque hæc est ad æternitatem via," said Pliny; and, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," said our blessed Saviour: and therefore the commandment of charity, in all its parts, is a design not only to reconcile the most miserable person to some participation and sense of felicity, but to make the charitable man happy; and whether this be not very agreeable to the desires of an intelligent nature, needs no further inquiry. And Aristotle, asking the question, Whether a man had more need of friends in prosperity or adversity? makes the case equal: Ὅτε γὰρ ἀτυχοῦντες δέονται ἐπίκουριας· οἱ δὲ ἐυτυχοῦντες συμβίων, οὓς ἐυποιήσωσιν. "When they are in want, they need assistance; when they are prosperous, they need partners of their felicity, that, by communicating their joy to them, it may reflect and double upon their spirits." And certain it is, there is no greater felicity in the world, than in the content that results from the emanations of charity. And this is that which St. John [z] calls "the old commandment," and "the new commandment." It was of old, for it was from the beginning,[a] even in nature, and to the offices of which our very bodies had an organ and a seat; for therefore nature gave to a man bowels and the passion of yearning; but it grew up into religion by parts, and was made perfect, and, in that degree, appropriate to the law of Jesus Christ. For so the holy Jesus became our lawgiver, and added many new precepts over and above what were in the law of Moses, but not more than was in the law of nature. The reason of both is, what I have all this while discoursed of: Christ made a more perfect restitution of the law of nature, than Moses did, and so it became the second Adam to consummate that, which began to be less perfect, from the prevarication of the first Adam.

40. A particular of the precept of charity is forgiving injuries; and besides that it hath many superinduced benefits, by way of blessing and reward, it relies also upon this natural reason, that a pure and a simple revenge does no way restore man towards the felicity, which the injury did interrupt. For revenge is a doing a simple evil, and does not, in its formality, imply reparation; for the mere repeating of our own right is permitted to them,

[t] Rom. vii. 23. [u] Ibid.
[x] Ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐνεργετικὸς πέφυκε.—M. Anton. l. ix.
[y] Psalm cxii. 9.
[z] 1 John ii. 7, 8.
[a] ——"Ανδρα δ' ὠφελεῖν, ἀφ' ὧν
Ἔχοι τε καὶ δύναιτο, κάλλιστος πόνων.
Sophocl. Œdip. Tyr.

—— Hoc reges habent
Magnificum et ingens, nulla quod rapiat dies;
Prodesse miseris, supplices fido lare
Protegere—— Senec. Med. 222.
—— Mollissima corda
Humano generi dare se natura fatetur,
Quæ lacrymas dedit: hæc nostri pars optima sensûs.
Juven. Sat. 15. 131.

that will do it by charitable instruments; and to secure myself or the public against the future, by positive inflictions upon the injurious, (if I be not judge myself,) is also within the moderation of an unblamable defence, (unless some accidents or circumstances vary the case); but forgiving injuries is a separating the malice from the wrong, the transient act from the permanent effect; and it is certain, the act which is passed cannot be rescinded; the effect may; and if it cannot, it does no way alleviate the evil of the accident, that I draw him, that caused it, into as great a misery; since every evil, happening in the world, is the proper object of pity, which is in some sense afflictive; and therefore, unless we become unnatural and without bowels, it is most unreasonable, that we should increase our own afflictions by introducing a new misery, and making a new object of pity. All the ends of human felicity are secured without revenge, for, without it, we are permitted to restore ourselves; and therefore it is against natural reason to do an evil, that no way co-operates towards the proper and perfective end of human nature. And he is a miserable person, whose good is the evil of his neighbour;[b] and he that revenges, in many cases, does worse than he that did the injury; in all cases, as bad. For if the first injury was an injustice to serve an end of an advantage and real benefit; then my revenge, which is abstracted, and of a consideration separate and distinct from the reparation, is worse; for I do him evil, without doing myself any real good; which he did not, for he received advantage by it. But if the first injury was matter of mere malice without advantage, yet it is no worse than revenge, for that is just so; and there is as much fantastic pleasure in doing a spite, as in doing revenge: they are both but like the pleasures of eating coals, and toads, and vipers. And certain it is, if a man, upon his private stock, could be permitted to revenge, the evil would be immortal. And it is rarely well discoursed by Tyndarus in Euripides: "If the angry wife shall kill her husband, the son shall revenge his father's death, and kill his mother, and then the brother shall kill his mother's murderer, and he also will meet with an avenger for killing his brother."

Πέρας δή ποῖ κακῶν προβήσεται;[c]

"What end shall there be to such" inhuman and "sad accidents?" If in this there be injustice, it is against natural reason: and, if it be evil, and disorders the felicity and security of society, it is also against natural reason: but if it be just, it is a strange justice, that is made up of so many inhumanities.

41. And now, if any man pretends specially to reason, to the ordinate desires and perfections of nature, and the sober discourses of philosophy, here is in christianity, and no where else, enough to satisfy and inform his reason, to perfect his nature, and to reduce to act all the propositions of an intelligent and wise spirit. And the Holy Ghost is promised and given in our religion, to be an eternal band to keep our reason from returning to the darknesses of the old creation, and to promote the ends of our natural and proper felicity. For it is not a vain thing, that St. Paul reckons helps, and governments, and healings, to be fruits of the Spirit. For since the two greatest blessings of the world, personal and political, consist, that in health, this in government;[d] and the ends of human felicity are served in nothing greater for the present interval, than in these two; Christ did not only enjoin rare prescriptions of health, such as are fasting, temperance, chastity, and sobriety, and all the great endearments of government; (and, unless they be sacredly observed, man is infinitely miserable;) but also hath given his Spirit, that is, extraordinary aids to the promoting these two, and facilitating the work of nature; that (as St. Paul says at the end of a discourse to this very purpose) "the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."[e]

42. I shall add nothing but this single consideration: God said to the children of Israel, "Ye are a royal priesthood,"[f] a kingdom of priests: which was therefore true, because God reigned by the priests, and the priests' lips did then preserve knowledge, and the people were to receive the law from their mouths; for God having, by laws of his own, established religion and the republic, did govern by the rule of the law, and the ministry of the priests. The priests said, "Thus saith the Lord;" and the people obeyed. And these very words are spoken to the christian church: "Ye are a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of Him, that hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." That is, God reigns over all christendom, just as he did over the Jews. He hath now so given to them and restored respectively all those reasonable laws, which are in order to all good ends, personal, economical, and political, that if men will suffer christian religion to do its last intention, if men will live according to it, there needs no other coercion of laws or power of the sword. The laws of God, revealed by Christ, are sufficient to make all societies of men happy; and over all good men God reigns by his ministers, by the preaching of the word. And this was most evident in the three first ages of the church, in which all christian societies were, for all their proper intercourses, perfectly guided, not by the authority and compulsion,

[b] Ὁ τιμωρῶν τοῦ προϋπάρξαντος ἀδικώτερος.— Maxim. Tyrius in Dissert. an referenda sit Injuria, p. 26.

Ἅπαντα τὰ ζῷ' ἐστι μακαριώτερα,
Καὶ νοῦν ἔχοντα μᾶλλον ἀνθρώπου πολύ.
Τὸν ὄνον ὁρᾷν ἔξεστι πρώτα τουτονί.
Τούτῳ κακὸν δι' αὐτὸν οὐδὲν γίγνεται.
Ἡμεῖς δὲ, χωρὶς τῶν ἀναγκαίων κακῶν,
Αὐτοὶ παρ' αὐτῶν ἕτερα προσπορίζομεν.
Λυπούμεθ', ἂν πτάρῃ τις· ἂν εἴπῃ κακῶς,
Ὀργιζόμεθ'· ἂν ἴδῃ τις ἐνύπνιον, σφόδρα
Φοβούμεθ'· ἂν γλαὺξ ἀνακράγῃ, δεδοίκαμεν.
Menand. p. 244.

[c] Eurip. Orest. 504. Pors.

[d] Nihil est illi principi Deo, qui omnem hunc mundum regit, quod quidem in terris fiat, acceptiùs, quàm concilia cœtusque hominum jure sociati, quæ civitates appellantur.— Cicer. Somn. Scipion. sec. 3.

[e] 2 Cor. iv. 7.

[f] 1 Pet. ii. 9.

but by the sermons, of their spiritual guides; insomuch that St. Paul sharply reprehends the Corinthians, that "brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers;" as if he had said, "Ye will not suffer Christ to be your Judge, and his law to be your rule:" which indeed was a great fault among them, not only because they had so excellent a law, so clearly described, (or, where they might doubt, they had infallible interpreters,) so reasonable and profitable, so evidently concurring to their mutual felicity; but also because God did design Jesus to be their King, to reign over them by spiritual regiment, as himself did over the Jews, till they chose a king. And when the emperors became christian, the case was no otherwise altered, but that the princes themselves, submitting to Christ's yoke, were, (as all other christians are,) for their proportion, to be governed by the royal priesthood, that is, by the word preached by apostolical persons, the political interest remaining as before, save that, by being submitted to the laws of Christ, it received this advantage, that all justice was turned to be religion, and became necessary, and bound upon the conscience by Divinity. And when it happens, that a kingdom is converted to christianity, the commonwealth is made a church, and gentile priests are christian bishops, and the subjects of the kingdom are servants of Christ, the religion of the nation is turned christian, and the law of the nation made a part of the religion; there is no change of government, but that Christ is made King, and the temporal power is his substitute, and is to promote the interest of obedience to him, as before he did to Christ's enemy; Christ having left his ministers as lieger ambassadors, to signify and publish the laws of Jesus, to pray all in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God; so that, over the obedient, Christ wholly reigns by his ministers publishing his laws; over the disobedient, by the prince also putting those laws in execution. And in this sense it is, that St. Paul says, "Bonis lex non est posita;" "To such (who live after the Spirit) there is no law;" that is, there needs no coercion. But now, if we reject God from the reigning over us, and say, like the people in the gospel, "Nolumus hunc regnare," "We will not have him to reign over us," by the ministry of his word, by the empire of the royal priesthood, then we return to the condition of heathens, and persons sitting in darkness; then God hath armed the temporal power with a sword to cut us off. If we obey not God, speaking by his ministers, that is, if we live not according to the excellent laws of christianity, that is, holily, soberly, and justly in all our relations, he hath placed three swords against us; the sword of the Spirit, against the unholy and irreligious; the sword of natural and supervening infelicities, upon the intemperate and unsober; and the sword of kings, against the unjust; to remonstrate the excellency of christianity, and how certainly it leads to all the felicity of man; because every transgression of this law, according to its proportion, makes men unhappy and unfortunate.

43. What effect this discourse may have, I know not; I intended it to do honour to christianity, and to represent it to be the best religion in the world, and the conjugation of all excellent things, that were in any religion, or in any philosophy, or in any discourses. For "whatsoever was honest, whatsoever was noble, whatsoever was wise, whatsoever was of good report, if there be any praise, if there be any virtue,"[g] it is in christianity; for even to follow all these instances of excellency, is a precept of christianity. And methinks, they, that pretend to reason, cannot more reasonably endear themselves to the reputation of reason, than by endearing their reason to christianity; the conclusions and belief of which is the most reasonable and perfect, the most excellent design, and complying with the noblest and most proper ends of man. And if this gate may suffice to invite such persons into the recesses of the religion, then I shall tell them, that I have dressed it in the ensuing books with some variety: and as the nature of the religion is, some parts whereof are apt to satisfy our discourse, some to move our affections, and yet all of this to relate to practice; so is the design of the following pages. For some men are wholly made up of passion, and their very religion is but passion, put into the family and society of holy purposes; and, for those, I have prepared considerations upon the special parts of the life of the holy Jesus: and yet there also are some things, mingled in the least severe and most affectionate parts, which may help to answer a question, and appease a scruple, and may give rule for determination of many cases of conscience. For I have so ordered the considerations, that they spend not themselves in mere affections and ineffective passions, but they are made doctrinal, and little repositories of duty. But because of the variety of men's spirits and of men's necessities, it was necessary I should interpose some practical discourses more severe: for it is but a sad thought to consider, that piety and books of devotion are counted but entertainment for little understandings and softer spirits; and although there is much fault in such imperious minds, that they will not distinguish the weakness of the writers from the reasonableness and wisdom of the religion; yet I cannot but think, the books themselves are, in a large degree, the occasion of so great indevotion; because they are (some few excepted) represented naked in the conclusions of spiritual life, without or art or learning, and made apt for persons, who can do nothing but believe and love; not for them, that can consider and love. And it is not well, that, since nothing is more reasonable and excellent in all perfections spiritual than the doctrines of the Spirit, or holy life; yet nothing is offered to us so unlearnedly as this is, so miserable and empty of all its own intellectual perfections. If I could, I would have had it otherwise in the present books; for, since the understanding is not an idle faculty in a spiritual life, but hugely operative to all excellent and reasonable choices, it were very fit, that this faculty were also entertained by such discourses, which God intended as instruments of hallowing it,

[g] Phil. iv. 8.

as he intended it towards the sanctification of the whole man. For want of it, busy and active men entertain themselves with notions infinitely unsatisfying and unprofitable: but in the mean time, they are not so wise; for, concerning those, that study unprofitable notions, and neglect not only that which is wisest, but that also which is of most real advantage, I cannot but think, as Aristotle did of Thales and Anaxagoras, that "They may be learned, but they are not wise; or wise, but not prudent, when they are ignorant of such things, as are profitable to them: for, suppose they know the wonders of nature, and the subtilties of metaphysics, and operations mathematical; yet they cannot be prudent, who spend themselves wholly upon unprofitable and ineffective contemplations."[h] He is truly wise, that knows best to promote the best end, that which he is bound to desire; and is happy if he obtains, and miserable if he misses; and that is the end of a happy eternity, which is obtained by the only means of living according to the purposes of God, and the prime intentions of nature; natural and prime reason being now all one with the christian religion. But then I shall only observe, that this part of wisdom, and the excellency of its secret and deep reason, is not to be discerned but by experience; the propositions of this philosophy being (as in many other) empirical, and best found out by observation of real and material events. So that I may say of spiritual learning, as Quinctilian said of some of Plato's books: "Nam Plato, cùm in aliis quibusdam, tum præcipuè in Timæo, ne intelligi quidem, nisi ab iis qui hanc quoque partem disciplinæ [musicæ] diligenter perceperint, potest." The secrets of the kingdom of heaven are not understood truly and thoroughly but by the sons of the kingdom; and by them too, in several degrees, and to various purposes: but to evil persons the whole system of this wisdom is insipid and flat, dull as the foot of a rock, and unlearned as the elements of our mother tongue. But so are mathematics to a Scythian boor, and music to a camel.

44. But I consider, that the wisest persons, and those who know how to value and entertain the more noble faculties of their soul, and their precious hours, take more pleasure in reading the productions of those old wise spirits, who preserved natural reason and religion in the midst of heathen darkness: (such as are Homer, Euripides, Orpheus, Pindar, and Anacreon, Æschylus and Menander, and all the Greek poets; Plutarch and Polybius, Xenophon, and all those other excellent persons of both faculties, (whose choicest dictates are collected by Stobæus,) Plato and his scholars, Aristotle, and after him Porphyry, and all his other disciples, Pythagoras and his, especially Hierocles; all the old academics and stoics within the Roman schools:) more pleasure, I say, in reading these, than the triflings of many of the latter schoolmen, who promoted a petty interest of a family, or an unlearned opinion, with great earnestness; but added nothing to christianity but trouble, scruple, and vexation. And from hence I hope, that they may the rather be invited to love and consider the rare documents of christianity, which certainly is the great treasure-house of those excellent, moral, and perfective discourses, which with much pains and greater pleasure we find respersed and thinly scattered in all the Greek and Roman poets, historians, and philosophers.

But because I have observed, that there are some principles entertained into the persuasions of men, which are the seeds of evil life, such as are—the doctrine of late repentance, the mistakes of the definition of the sins of infirmity, the evil understanding the consequents and nature of original sin, the sufficiency of contrition in order to pardon, the efficacy of the rites of christianity without the necessity of moral adherencies, the nature of faith, and many other; I was diligent to remark such doctrines, and to pare off the mistakes so far, that they hinder not piety, and yet, as near as I could, without engaging in any question, in which the very life of christianity is not concerned.

> Hæc sum profatus——haud ambagibus
> Implicita, sed quæ, regulis æqui et boni
> Suffulta, rudibus pariter et doctis patent.[i]

My great purpose, is to advance the necessity, and to declare the manner and parts, of a good life;[k] and to invite some persons to the consideration of all the parts of it, by intermixing something of pleasure with the use; others, by such parts which will better entertain their spirits, than a romance. I have followed the design of scripture, and have given milk for babes, and for stronger men stronger meat; and in all I have despised my own reputation, by so striving to make it useful, that I was less careful to make it strict in retired senses, and embossed with unnecessary, but graceful, ornaments. I pray God, this may go forth into a blessing to all that shall use it, and reflect blessings upon me all the way, that my spark may grow greater by kindling my brother's taper, and God may be glorified in us both. If the reader shall receive no benefit, yet I intended him one, and I have laboured in order to it; and I shall receive a great recompence for that intention, if he shall please to say this prayer for me,—"That while I have preached to others, I may not become a cast-away."

[h] Διὸ Ἀναξαγόραν, καὶ Θαλῆν, καὶ τοὺς τοιούτους, σοφοὺς μὲν, φρονίμους δ' οὔ φασιν εἶναι, ὅταν ἴδωσιν ἀγνοοῦντας τὰ συμφέρονθ' αὑτοῖς· καὶ περιττὰ μὲν, καὶ θαυμαστὰ, καὶ χαλεπὰ, καὶ δαιμόνια εἰδέναι αὐτοὺς φασιν· ἄχρηστα δ', ὅτι οὐ τὰ ἀνθρώπινα ἀναθὰ ζητοῦσιν.—Arist. l. vi. Eth. cap. 7. p. 244.

[i] Polynic. apud Eurip. Phoen. 504. Pors.

[k] Ἡ παροῦσα πραγματεία οὐ θεωρίας ἕνεκά ἐστιν, ὥσπερ αἱ ἄλλαι· οὐ γὰρ ἵν' εἰδῶμεν τί ἐστιν ἡ ἀρετὴ, σκεπτόμεθα, ἀλλ' ἵν' ἀγαθοὶ γενώμεθα.—Arist. Ethic. l. ii. c. 2.

AN EXHORTATION

TO THE IMITATION OF

THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

However the person of Jesus Christ was depressed with a load of humble accidents, and shadowed with the darknesses of poverty and sad contingencies, so that the Jews, and the contemporary ages of the gentiles, and the apostles themselves, could not at first discern the brightest essence of divinity; yet as a beauty, artificially covered with a thin cloud of Cyprus, transmits its excellency to the eye, made more greedy and apprehensive by that imperfect and weak restraint; so was the sanctity and holiness of the life of Jesus glorious in its darknesses, and found confessors and admirers even in the midst of those despites which were done him upon the contrariant designs of malice and contradictory ambition. Thus the wife of Pilate called him "that just person;" Pilate pronounced him "guiltless;" Judas said he was "innocent;" the devil himself called him "the Holy One of God." For however it might concern any man's mistaken ends, to mislike the purpose of his preaching and spiritual kingdom, and those doctrines, which were destructive of their complacencies and carnal securities; yet they could not deny but that he was a man of God, of exemplar sanctity, of an angelical chastity, of a life sweet, affable, and complying with human conversation, and as obedient to government as the most humble children of the kingdom. And yet he was Lord of all the world.

2. And certainly, very much of this was with a design, that he might shine to all the generations and ages of the world, and become a guiding star and a pillar of fire to us in our journey. For we, who believe that Jesus was perfect God and perfect man, do also believe, that one minute of his intolerable passion, and every action of his, might have been satisfactory, and enough for the expiation and reconcilement of ten thousand worlds; and God might, upon a less effusion of blood, and a shorter life of merit, if he had pleased, have accepted human nature to pardon and favour: but, that the holy Jesus hath added so many excellent instances of holiness, and so many degrees of passion, and so many kinds of virtues, is, that he might become an example to us, and reconcile our wills to him, as well as our persons to his heavenly Father.

3. And indeed it will prove but a sad consideration, that one drop of blood might be enough to obtain our pardon, and the treasures of his blood running out till the fountain itself was dry, shall not be enough to procure our conformity to him; that the smallest minute of his expense shall be enough to justify us, and the whole magazine shall not procure our sanctification; that at a smaller expense God might pardon us, and at a greater we will not imitate him: for therefore "Christ hath suffered for us," saith the apostle, "leaving an example to us, that we might follow his steps."[a] The least of our wills cost Christ as much as the greatest of our sins. And therefore he calls himself "the Way, the Truth, and the Life:" that as he redeems our souls from death to life, by becoming life to our persons; so he is the truth to our understandings, and the way to our will and affections, enlightening that, and leading these in the paths of a happy eternity.

4. When the king of Moab was pressed hard by the sons of Isaac,[b] the Israelites and Edomites, he took the king of Edom's eldest son, or, as some think, his own son, the heir of his kingdom, and offered him as a holocaust upon the wall; and the Edomites presently raised the siege at Kir-haraseth, and went to their own country. The same, and much more, was God's design, who took not his enemy's, but his own Son, his only begotten Son, and God himself, and offered him up in sacrifice, to make us leave our perpetual fightings against Heaven; and if we still persist, we are hardened beyond the wildnesses of the Arabs and Edomites, and neither are receptive of the impresses of pity nor humanity, who neither have compassion to the suffer-

[a] 1 Pet. ii. 21.

[b] 2 Kings iii. 27.

ing of Jesus, nor compliance with the designs of God, nor conformity to the holiness and obedience of our Guide. In a dark night, if an ignis fatuus do but precede us, the glaring of its lesser flames does so amuse our eyes, that we follow it into rivers and precipices, as if the ray of that false light were designed on purpose to be our path to tread in: and therefore not to follow the glories of the Sun of righteousness, who indeed leads us over rocks and difficult places, but secures us against the danger, and guides us into safety, is both the greatest indecency and unthankfulness in the world.

5. In the great council of eternity, when God set down the laws, and knit fast the eternal bands, of predestination, he made it one of his great purposes to make his Son like us,[c] that we also might be like his holy Son; he, by taking our nature; we, by imitating his holiness: "God hath predestinated us to be conformable to the image of his Son,"[d] saith the apostle. For the first in every kind is in nature propounded as the pattern of the rest; and as the sun, the prince of all the bodies of light, and the fire of all warm substances, is the principal, the rule and the copy, which they in their proportions imitate and transcribe; so is the Word incarnate the great example of all the predestinate; for "he is the first-born among many brethren."[e] And therefore it was a precept of the apostle, and by his doctrine we understand its meaning, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ."[f] The similitude declares the duty. As a garment is composed and made of the same fashion with the body, and is applied to each part in its true figure and commensuration; so should we put on Christ, and imitate the whole body of his sanctity, conforming to every integral part, and express him in our lives, that God, seeing our impresses, may know whose image and superscription we bear, and we may be acknowledged for sons, when we have the air, and features, and resemblances of our elder brother.[g]

6. In the practice of this duty we may be helped by certain considerations, which are like the proportion of so many rewards. For this, according to the nature of all holy exercises, stays not for pay, till its work be quite finished; but, like music in churches, is pleasure, and piety, and salary besides. So is every work of grace; full of pleasure in the execution, and is abundantly rewarded, besides the stipend of a glorious eternity.

7. First: I consider that nothing is more honourable than to be like God; and the heathens, worshippers of false deities, grew vicious upon that stock;[h] and we who have fondnesses of imitation, counting a deformity full of honour, if by it we may be like our prince,[i] (for pleasures were in their height in Capreæ, because Tiberius there wallowed in them, and a wry neck in Nero's court was the mode of gallantry,) might do well to make our imitations prudent and glorious; and, by propounding excellent examples, heighten our faculties to the capacities of an evenness with the best of precedents. He that strives to imitate another, admires him, and confesses his own imperfections; and therefore, that our admirations be not flattering, nor our confessions fantastic and impertinent, it were but reasonable to admire Him, from whom really all perfections do derive, and before whose glories all our imperfections must confess their shame, and needs of reformation. God, by a voice from heaven, and by sixteen generations of miracles and grace, hath attested the holy Jesus to be the Fountain of sanctity, and the "wonderful Counsellor," and "the Captain of our sufferings," and the Guide of our manners, by being his beloved Son, in whom he took pleasure and complacency to the height of satisfaction: and if any thing in the world be motive of our affections, or satisfactory to our understandings, what is there in heaven or earth we can desire or imagine beyond a likeness to God, and participation of the Divine nature and perfections? And therefore, as, when the sun arises, every man goes to his work, and warms himself with his heat, and is refreshed with his influences, and measures his labour with his course; so should we frame all the actions of our life by His light, who hath shined by an excellent righteousness, that we no more walk in darkness, or sleep in lethargies, or run a gazing after the lesser and imperfect beauties of the night. It is the weakness of the organ, that makes us hold our hand between the sun and us, and yet stand staring upon a meteor or an inflamed jelly. And our judgments are as mistaken, and our appetites are as sottish, if we propound to ourselves, in the courses and designs of perfections, any copy but of Him, or something like Him, who is the most perfect. And lest we think his glories too great to behold,

8. Secondly, I consider, that the imitation of the life of Jesus is a duty of that excellency and perfection, that we are helped in it, not only by the assistance of a good and a great example, which possibly might be too great, and scare our endeavours and attempts; but also by its easiness, compliance, and proportion to us.[k] For Jesus, in his whole life, conversed with men with a modest

[c] Διὰ Θεομιμησίαν εἰς θεοπτίαν ἀξιώτερος.—S. Dionys.
[d] Rom. viii. 29. [e] Ibid.
[f] Rom xiii. 14.
[g] Ἡ δὲ σύμφωνος τῷ νόμῳ τιμὴ, ἥτις οὐσίας ἐστι τῶν τιμωμένων γνῶσις, καὶ ἡ πρὸς αὐτὴν κατὰ δύναμιν ἐξομοίωσις· ὅ γὰρ ἀγαπᾷ τις, καὶ μιμεῖται ὅσον οἷόν τε· ὡς γὰρ φασιν οἱ Πυθαγόρειοι, Τιμήσεις τὸν Θεὸν ἄριστα, ἐὰν τῷ Θεῷ τὴν διάνοιαν ὁμοιώσῃς.—Hierocles.
[h] Adulterio delectatur quis? Jovem respicit, et inde cupiditatis suæ fomenta conquirit: probat, imitatur, et laudat, quòd Deus suus in cycno fallit, in tauro rapit, ludit in Satyro. Cœnum de Cœlo facitis, et errantes animos per abrupta præcipitia crudeli calamitate ducitis, cùm hominibus peccare volentibus facinorum viam deorum monstratis exemplis.—Julius Firmic. de Error. prof. Relig.
[i] Facere rectè cives suos princeps optimus faciendo docet: cùmque sit imperio magnus, exemplo magis est.—Vellei. Paterc. ii. 126. 5.—Krause.

————νουθετητέος δέ μοι
Φοῖβος, τί πάσχει παρθένους βίᾳ γαμῶν,
Προδίδωσι παῖδας ἐκτεκνούμενος λάθρα
Θνήσκοντας, ἀμέλει μὴ σύ γ'· ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ κρατεῖς,
Ἀρετὰς δίωκε. Eurip. Ion. 436.

[k] Admonetur omnis ætas fieri posse, quod aliquando factum est. Exempla fiunt, quæ jam esse facinora destiterunt.—S. Cyprian.

virtue, which, like a well-kindled fire fitted with just materials, casts a constant heat; not like an inflamed heap of stubble, glaring with great emissions, and suddenly stooping into the thickness of smoke. His piety was even, constant, unblamable, complying with civil society, without affrightment of precedent, or prodigious instances of actions greater than the imitation of men. For if we observe our blessed Saviour in the whole story of his life, although he was without sin, yet the instances of his piety were the actions of a very holy, but of an ordinary life; and we may observe this difference in the story of Jesus from ecclesiastical writings of certain beatified persons, whose life is told rather to amaze us, and to create scruples, than to lead us in the evenness and serenity of a holy conscience. Such are the prodigious penances of Simeon Stylites, the abstinence of the religious retired into the mountain Nitria, but especially the stories of later saints, in the midst of a declining piety and aged christendom, where persons are represented holy by way of idea and fancy, if not to promote the interests of a family and institution. But our blessed Saviour, though his eternal union and adherencies of love and obedience to his heavenly Father were next to infinite, yet in his external actions, in which only, with the correspondence of the Spirit in those actions, he propounds himself imitable, he did so converse with men, that men, after that example, might for ever converse with him. We find that some saints have had excrescencies and eruptions of holiness in the instances of uncommanded duties, which in the same particulars we find not in the story of the life of Jesus. John Baptist was a greater mortifier than his Lord was; and some princes have given more money than all Christ's family did, whilst he was alive: but the difference, which is observable, is, that although some men did some acts of counsel in order to attain that perfection, which in Jesus was essential and unalterable, and was not acquired by degrees, and means of danger and difficulty; yet no man ever did his whole duty, save only the holy Jesus. The best of men did sometimes actions not precisely and strictly requisite, and such as were besides the precept; but yet, in the greatest flames of their shining piety, they prevaricated something of the commandment. They that have done the most things beyond, have also done some things short of, their duty; but Jesus, who intended himself the example of piety, did in manners as in the rule of faith, which, because it was propounded to all men, was fitted to every understanding; it was true, necessary, short, easy, and intelligible. So was his rule and his copy fitted, not only with excellencies worthy, but with compliances possible, to be imitated: of glories so great, that the most early and constant industry must confess its own imperfections; and yet so sweet and humane, that the greatest infirmity, if pious, shall find comfort and encouragement. Thus God gave his children manna from heaven; and though it was excellent, like the food of angels, yet it conformed to every palate, according to that appetite which their several fancies and constitutions did produce.

9. But now, when the example of Jesus is so excellent, that it allures and tempts with its facility and sweetness, and that we are not commanded to imitate a life, whose story tells of ecstasies in prayer,[1] and abstractions of senses, and immaterial transportations, and fastings to the exinanition of spirits, and disabling all animal operations; but a life of justice and temperance, of chastity and piety, of charity and devotion; such a life, without which human society cannot be conversed, and by which, as our irregularities are made regular, so our weaknesses are not upbraided, nor our miseries made a mockery. We find so much reason to address ourselves to a heavenly imitation of so blessed a pattern, that the reasonableness of the thing will be a great argument to chide every degree and minute of neglect. It was a strange and a confident encouragement, which Phocion used to a timorous Greek, who was condemned to die with him:—"Is it not enough to thee, that thou must die with Phocion?" I am sure, he that is most incurious of the issues of his life, is yet willing enough to reign with Jesus, when he looks upon the glories represented without the duty; but it is a very great stupidity and unreasonableness, not to live with him in the imitation of so holy and so prompt a piety. It is glorious to do what he did, and a shame to decline his sufferings, when there was a God to hallow and sanctify the actions, and a man clothed with infirmity to undergo the sharpness of the passion; so that the glory of the person added excellency to the first, and the tenderness of the person excused not from suffering the latter.

10. Thirdly: Every action of the life of Jesus, as it is imitable by us, is of so excellent merit, that, by making up the treasure of grace, it becomes full of assistances to us, and obtains of God grace to enable us to its imitation, by way of influence and impetration. For, as in the acquisition of habits, the very exercise of the action does produce a facility to the action, and in some proportion becomes the cause of itself; so does every exercise of the life of Christ kindle its own fires, inspires breath into itself, and makes an univocal production of itself in a differing subject. And Jesus becomes the fountain of spiritual life to us, as the prophet Elisha to the dead child: when he stretched his hands upon the child's hands, laid his mouth to his mouth, and formed his posture to the boy, and breathed into him, the spirit returned again into the child, at the prayer of Elisha; so when our lives are formed into the imitation of the life of the holiest Jesus, the Spirit of God returns into us, not only by the efficacy of the imitation, but by the merit and impetration of the actions of Jesus. It is reported in the Bohemian story,[m] that St. Wenceslaus, their king, one winter night going to his devotions, in a remote church, barefooted in the snow and sharp-

[1] Ὡς εὐχόμενος τοῖς θεοῖς μετεωρίζῃ μὲν ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς πλέον ἢ δέκα πήχεις εἱκάζεσθαι, dixit Eunapius de Iamblicho.

[m] Histor. Bohem. lib. iv.

ness of unequal and pointed ice, his servant Podavivus, who waited upon his master's piety, and endeavoured to imitate his affections, began to faint through the violence of the snow and cold, till the king commanded him to follow him, and set his feet in the same footsteps, which his feet should mark for him: the servant did so, and either fancied a cure, or found one; for he followed his prince, helped forward with shame and zeal to his imitation, and by the forming footsteps for him in the snow. In the same manner does the blessed Jesus; for, since our way is troublesome, obscure, full of objection and danger, apt to be mistaken and to affright our industry, he commands us to mark his footsteps, to tread where his feet have stood, and not only invites us forward by the argument of his example, but he hath trodden down much of the difficulty, and made the way easier, and fit for our feet. For he knows our infirmities, and himself hath felt their experience in all things but in the neighbourhoods of sin; and therefore he hath proportioned a way and a path to our strengths and capacities, and, like Jacob, hath marched softly and in evenness with the children and the cattle, to entertain us by the comforts of his company, and the influences of a perpetual guide.

11. Fourthly: But we must know, that not every thing which Christ did is imitable by us; neither did he, in the work of our redemption, in all things imitate his heavenly Father. For there are some things which are issues of an absolute power, some are expresses of supreme dominion, some are actions of a judge. And therefore Jesus prayed for his enemies, and wept over Jerusalem, when at the same instant his eternal Father laughed them to scorn; for he knew that their day was coming, and himself had decreed their ruin. But it became the holy Jesus to imitate his Father's mercies; for himself was the great instrument of the eternal compassion, and was the instance of mercy; and therefore, in the operation of his Father's design, every action of his was univocal, and he showed the power of his divinity in nothing but in miracles of mercy, and illustrations of faith, by creating arguments of credibility. In the same proportion we follow Jesus, as himself followed his Father: for what he abated by the order to his intendment and design, we abate by the proportions of our nature; for some excellent acts of his were demonstrations of divinity, and an excellent grace poured forth upon him without measure was their instrument; to which proportions if we should extend our infirmities, we should crack our sinews, and dissolve the silver cords, before we could entertain the instances, and support the burden. Jesus fasted forty days and forty nights; but the manner of our fastings hath been in all ages limited to the term of an artificial day; and in the primitive observations and the Jewish rites, men did eat their meal, as soon as the stars shone in the firmament. We never read that Jesus laughed, and but once, that he rejoiced in spirit; but the declensions of our natures cannot bear the weight of a perpetual grave deportment, without the intervals of refreshment and free alacrity. Our ever blessed Saviour suffered the devotion of Mary Magdalene to transport her to an expensive expression of her religion, and twice to anoint his feet with costly nard; and yet if persons, whose conditions were of no greater lustre or resplendency of fortune, than was conspicuous in his family and retinue, should suffer the same profusion upon the dressing and perfuming their bodies, possibly it might be truly said, "It might better be sold, and distributed to the poor." This Jesus received, as he was the Christ and anointed of the Lord; and by this he suffered himself to be designed to burial, and he received the oblation as eucharistical for the ejection of seven devils; for "therefore she loved much."

12. The instances are not many. For however Jesus had some extraordinary transvolations, and acts of emigration beyond the lines of his even and ordinary conversation, yet it was but seldom; for his being exemplary was of so great consideration, that he chose to have fewer instances of wonder, that he might transmit the more of an imitable virtue. And therefore we may establish this for a rule and limit of our imitations; because Christ, our Lawgiver, hath described all his Father's will in sanctions and signature of laws; whatsoever he commanded, and whatsoever he did, of precise morality, or in pursuance of the laws of nature, in that we are to trace his footsteps: and in these his laws and his practice differ but as a map and a guide, a law and a judge, a rule and a precedent. But in the special instances of action, we are to abate the circumstances, and to separate the obedience from the effect: whatsoever was moral in a ceremonial performance, that is highly imitable; and the obedience of sacrificing, and the subordination to laws actually in being, even now they are abrogated, teach us our duty, in a differing subject, upon the like reason. Jesus's going up to Jerusalem to the feasts, and his observation of the sabbaths, teach us our duty in celebration of festivals constituted by a competent and just authority. For that which gave excellency to the observation of Mosaical rites, was an evangelical duty; and the piety of obedience did not only consecrate the observations of Levi, but taught us our duty in the constitutions of christianity.

13. Fifthly: As the holy Jesus did some things, which we are not to imitate; so we also are to do some things, which we cannot learn from his example. For there are some of our duties, which presuppose a state of sin, and some suppose a violent temptation and promptness to it; and the duties of prevention, and the instruments of restitution, are proper to us, but conveyed only by precept, and not by precedent. Such are all the parts and actions of repentance, the duties of mortification and self-denial. For whatsoever the holy Jesus did, in the matter of austerity, looked directly upon the work of our redemption, and looked back only on us by a reflex act, as Christ did on Peter, when he looked him into repentance. Some states of life also there are, which Jesus never led; such are those of temporal governors, kings, and judges, merchants, lawyers,

and the state of marriage: in the course of which lives many cases do occur, which need a precedent and the vivacity of an excellent example, especially since all the rules, which they have, have not prevented the subtilty of the many inventions which men have found out, nor made provision for all contingencies. Such persons, in all their special needs, are to govern their actions by the rules of proportion, by analogy to the holiness of the person of Jesus, and the sanctity of his institution; considering what might become a person professing the discipline of so holy a Master, and what he would have done in the like case; taking our heights by the excellence of his innocency and charity. Only remember this, that, in such cases, we must always judge on the strictest side of piety and charity, if it be a matter concerning the interest of a second person; and that, in all things, we do those actions which are farthest removed from scandal, and such as towards ourselves are severe; towards others, full of gentleness and sweetness: for so would the righteous and merciful Jesus have done. These are the best analogies and proportions. And in such cases, when the wells are dry, let us take water from a cistern, and propound to ourselves some exemplar saint, the necessities of whose life have determined his piety to the like occurrences.

14. But now, from these particulars we shall best account to what the duty of the imitation of Jesus does amount: for it signifies, that we "should walk as he walked," tread in his steps, with our hand upon the guide, and our eye upon his rule; that we should do glory to him, as he did to his Father; and that whatsoever we do, we should be careful that it do him honour, and no reproach to his institution; and then account these to be the integral parts of our duty, which are imitations of his actions or his spirit, of his rule or of his life; there being no better imitation of him, than in such actions as do him pleasure, however he hath expressed or intimated the precedent.

15. He that gives alms to the poor, takes Jesus by the hand; he that patiently endures injuries and affronts, helps him to bear his cross; he that comforts his brother in affliction, gives an amiable kiss of peace to Jesus; he that bathes his own and his neighbour's sins in tears of penance and compassion, washes his Master's feet: we lead Jesus into the recesses of our heart by holy meditations; and we enter into his heart, when we express him in our actions; for so the apostle says, "He that is in Christ, walks as he also walked."[n] But thus the actions of our life relate to him by way of worship and religion; but the use is admirable and effectual, when our actions refer to him as to our copy, and we transcribe the original to the life. He that considers, with what affections and lancinations of spirit, with what effusions of love, Jesus prayed; what fervours and assiduity, what innocency of wish, what modesty of posture, what subordination to his Father, and conformity to the Divine pleasure, were in all his devotions; is taught and excited to holy and religious prayer: the rare sweetness of his deportment in all temptations and violences of his passion, his charity to his enemies, his sharp reprehensions to the scribes and Pharisees, his ingenuity toward all men, are living and effectual sermons to teach us patience, and humility, and zeal, and candid simplicity, and justice in all our actions. I add no more instances, because all the following discourses will be prosecutions of this intendment. And the life of Jesus is not described to be like a picture in a chamber of pleasure, only for beauty, and entertainment of the eye; but like the Egyptian hieroglyphics, whose every feature is a precept, and the images converse with men by sense, and signification of excellent discourses.

16. It was not without great reason advised,[o] that every man should propound the example of a wise and virtuous personage, as Cato, or Socrates, or Brutus; and, by a fiction of imagination, to suppose him present as a witness, and really to take his life as the direction of all our actions. The best and most excellent of the old lawgivers and philosophers among the Greeks had an allay of viciousness, and could not be exemplary all over: some were noted for flatterers, as Plato and Aristippus; some for incontinency, as Aristotle, Epicurus, Zeno, Theognis, Plato, and Aristippus again; and Socrates, whom their oracle affirmed to be the wisest and most perfect man, yet was by Porphyry noted for extreme intemperance of anger, both in words and actions: and those Romans who were offered to them for examples, although they were great in reputation, yet they had also great vices; Brutus dipped his hand in the blood of Cæsar, his prince, and his father by love, endearments, and adoption; and Cato was but a wise man all day, at night he was used to drink wine too liberally; and both he and Socrates did give their wives unto their friends;[p] the philosopher and the censor were procurers of their wives' unchastity: and yet these were the best among the gentiles. But how happy and richly furnished are christians with precedents of saints, whose faith and revelations have been productive of more spiritual graces, and greater degrees of moral perfections! And this I call the privilege of a very great assistance, that I might advance the reputation and account of the life of the glorious Jesus, which is not abated by the imperfections of human nature, as they were, but receives great heightenings and perfection from the divinity of his person, of which they were never capable.

17. Let us therefore press after Jesus, as Elisha did after his master, with an inseparable prosecution, even whithersoever he goes; that, according

[n] 1 John ii. 6.

[o] Seneca, Ep. 11.

[p] Athenagoras, lib. iii. et xiii. et Theognis de sc. Idem testantur Laertius et Lactantius. Hoc notat S. Cyrillus, lib. vi. contra Julian.

Narratur et prisci Catonis
Sæpe mero caluisse virtus.—Horat. 3. 21. 11.

Majorum et sapientissimorum disciplina, Græci Socratis et Romani Catonis, qui uxores suas amicis communicaverunt, quas in matrimonium duxerant liberorum causâ, et alibi creandorum, nescio quidem an invitas: quid nam de castitate curarent, quam mariti tam facilè donaverant? O sapientiæ Atticæ, O Romanæ gravitatis exemplum! Leno est philosophus et censor.—Tertul. Apolog. c. 39.

to the reasonableness and proportion expressed in St. Paul's advice, " As we have borne the image of the earthy, we may also bear the image of the heavenly."[q] For, " In vain are we called christians, if we live not according to the example and discipline of Christ, the Father of the institution."[r] When St. Laurence was in the midst of the torments of the gridiron, he made this to be the matter of his joy and eucharist, that he was admitted to the gates through which Jesus had entered; and therefore thrice happy are they who walk in his courts all their days. And it is yet a nearer union and vicinity, to imprint his life in our souls, and express it in our exterior converse; and this is done by him only, who (as St. Prosper[s] describes the duty) despises all those gilded vanities which he despised, that fears none of those sadnesses which he suffered, that practises or also teaches those doctrines which he taught, and hopes for the accomplishment of all his promises. And this is truest religion, and the most solemn adoration.[t]

THE PRAYER.

O eternal, holy, and most glorious Jesu, who hast united two natures of distance infinite, descending to the lownesses of human nature, that thou mightest exalt human nature to a participation of the Divinity; we, thy people, that sat in darkness and in the shadows of death, have seen great light, to entertain our understandings and enlighten our souls with its excellent influences; for the excellency of thy sanctity, shining gloriously in every part of thy life, is like thy angel, the pillar of fire, which called thy children from the darknesses of Egypt. Lord, open mine eyes, and give me power to behold thy righteous glories; and let my soul be so entertained with affections and holy ardours, that I may never look back upon the flames of Sodom, but may follow thy light, which recreates and enlightens, and guides us to the mountains of safety, and sanctuaries of holiness. Holy Jesu, since thy image is imprinted on our nature by creation, let me also express thy image by all the parts of a holy life, conforming my will and affections to thy holy precepts; submitting my understanding to thy dictates and lessons of perfection; imitating thy sweetnesses and excellencies of society, thy devotion in prayer, thy conformity to God, thy zeal tempered with meekness, thy patience heightened with charity; that heart, and hands, and eyes, and all my faculties, may grow up with the increase of God, till I come to the full measure of the stature of Christ, even to be a perfect man in Christ Jesus; that at last in thy light I may see light, and reap the fruits of glory from the seeds of sanctity, in the imitation of thy holy life, O blessed and holy Saviour Jesu! Amen.

[q] 1 Cor. xv. 49.
[r] Dictum Malachiæ Abbat. apud S. Bernardum, in Vitâ S. Mal.
[s] Lib. ii. de Vita Contemplat. c. 21.
[t] Religiosissimus Cultus imitari.—LACTANT.

THE LIFE

OF

OUR BLESSED LORD AND SAVIOUR

JESUS CHRIST.

PART I.

BEGINNING AT THE ANNUNCIATION TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, UNTIL HIS BAPTISM AND TEMPTATION, INCLUSIVELY.

SECTION I.

The History of the Conception of Jesus.

1. When the fulness of time was come, after the frequent repetition of promises, the expectation of the Jewish nation, the longings and tedious waitings of all holy persons, the departure of the "sceptre from Judah, and the lawgiver from between his feet;" when the number of Daniel's years was accomplished, and the Egyptian and Syrian kingdoms had their period; God, having great compassion towards mankind, remembering his promises, and our great necessities, sent his Son into the world, to take upon him our nature, and all that guilt of sin, which stuck close to our nature, and all that punishment, which was consequent to our sin: which came to pass after this manner.

2. In the days of Herod the king, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a holy maid, called Mary, espoused to Joseph, and found her in a capacity and excellent disposition to receive the greatest honour that ever was done to the daughters of men. Her employment was holy and pious, her person young, her years florid and springing, her body chaste, her mind humble, and a rare repository of divine graces. She was full of grace and excellencies; and God poured upon her a full measure of honour, in making her the mother of the Messias: for the "angel came to her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women."

3. We cannot but imagine the great mixture of innocent disturbances and holy passions, that, in the first address of the angel, did rather discompose her settledness, and interrupt the silence of her spirits, than dispossess her dominion, which she ever kept over those subjects, which never had been taught to rebel beyond the mere possibilities of natural imperfection. But if the angel appeared in the shape of a man, it was an unusual arrest to the blessed Virgin, who was accustomed to retirements and solitariness, and had not known an experience of admitting a comely person, but a stranger, to her closet and privacies. But if the heavenly messenger did retain a diviner form, more symbolical to angelical nature, and more proportionable to his glorious message, although her daily employment was a conversation with angels, who, in their daily ministering to the saints, did behold her chaste conversation, coupled with fear, yet they used not any affrighting glories in the offices of their daily attendances, but were seen only by spiritual discernings. However, so it happened, that "when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind, what manner of salutation this should be."

4. But the angel, who came with designs of honour and comfort to her, not willing that the inequality and glory of the messenger should, like too glorious a light to a weaker eye, rather confound the faculty than enlighten the organ, did, before her thoughts could find a tongue, invite her to a more familiar confidence than possibly a tender virgin (though of the greatest serenity and composure) could have put on, in the presence of such a beauty and such a holiness. And "the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favour with God. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus."

5. The holy Virgin knew herself a person very

unlikely to be a mother; for, although the desires of becoming a mother to the Messias were great in every of the daughters of Jacob, and about that time the expectation of his revelation was high and pregnant, and therefore she was espoused to an honest and just person of her kindred and family, and so might not despair to become a mother; yet she was a person of a rare sanctity, and so mortified a spirit, that for all this desponsation of her, according to the desire of her parents, and the custom of the nation, she had not set one step toward the consummation of her marriage, so much as in thought; and possibly had set herself back from it by a vow of chastity and holy celibate: for "Mary said unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?"

6. But the angel, who was a person of that nature which knows no conjunctions but those of love and duty, knew that the piety of her soul, and the religion of her chaste purposes, was a great imitator of angelical purity, and therefore perceived where the philosophy of her question did consist; and, being taught of God, declared that the manner should be as miraculous, as the message itself was glorious. For the angel told her, that this should not be done by any way, which our sin and the shame of Adam had unhallowed, by turning nature into a blush, and forcing her to a retirement from a public attesting the means of her own preservation; but the whole matter was from God, and so should the manner be: for "the angel said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing, which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God."

7. When the blessed Virgin was so ascertained, that she should be a mother[a] and a maid, and that two glories, like the two luminaries of heaven, should meet in her, that she might in such a way become the mother of her Lord, that she might with better advantages be his servant; then all her hopes and all her desires received such satisfaction, and filled all the corners of her heart so much, as indeed it was fain to make room for its reception. But she to whom the greatest things of religion, and the transportations of devotion, were made familiar, by the assiduity and piety of her daily practices, however she was full of joy, yet she was carried like a full vessel, without the violent tossings of a tempestuous passion, or the wrecks of a stormy imagination: and, as the power of the Holy Ghost did descend upon her like rain into a fleece of wool, without any obstreperous noises or violences to nature, but only the extraordinariness of an exaltation; so her spirit received it with the gentleness and tranquillity fitted for the entertainment of the spirit of love, and a quietness symbolical to the holy guest of her spotless womb, the Lamb of God; for she meekly replied, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her," having done his message. And at the same time the Holy Spirit of God did make her to conceive in her womb the immaculate Son of God, the Saviour of the world.

[a] ——— quæ ventre beato
Gaudia matris habens cum virginitatis honore,
Nec primam similem visa es, nec habere sequentem;
Sola sine exemplo placuisti fœmina Christo.—Sedul.

Ad SECTION I.

Considerations upon the Annunciation of the Blessed Mary, and the Conception of the Holy Jesus.

1. That which shines brightest, presents itself first to the eye; and the devout soul, in the chain of excellent and precious things which are represented in the counsel, design, and first beginnings of the work of our redemption, hath not leisure to attend the twinkling of the lesser stars, till it hath stood and admired the glory and eminencies of the Divine love, manifested in the incarnation of the Word eternal. God had no necessity, in order to the conservation or the heightening his own felicity, but out of mere and perfect charity, and the bowels of compassion, sent[a] into the world his only Son, for remedy to human miseries, to ennoble our nature by an union with Divinity, to sanctify it with his justice, to enrich it with his grace, to instruct it with his doctrine, to fortify it with his example, to rescue it from servitude, to assert it into the liberty of the sons of God, and at last to make it partaker of a beatifical resurrection.

2. God, who, in the infinite treasures of his wisdom and providence, could have found out many other ways for our redemption than the incarnation of his eternal Son, was pleased to choose this, not only that the remedy by man might have proportion to the causes of our ruin, whose introduction and intromission was by the prevarication of man; but also that we might with freer dispensation receive the influences of a Saviour, with whom we communicate in nature. Although Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, were of greater name and current, yet they were not so salutary as the waters of Jordan to cure Naaman's leprosy. And if God had made the remedy of human nature to have come all the way clothed in prodigy, and every instant of its execution had been as terrible, affrighting, and as full of majesty, as the apparitions upon mount Sinai; yet it had not been so useful and complying to human necessities, as was the descent of God to the susception of human nature, whereby (as in all medicaments) the cure is best wrought by those instruments which have the fewest dissonances to our temper, and are the nearest to our constitution. For thus the Saviour of the world became human, alluring, full of invitation, and the sweetnesses of love, exemplary, humble, and medicinal.

3. And, if we consider the reasonableness of the thing, what can be given more excellent for the redemption of man, than the blood of the Son of God? And what can more ennoble our nature, than that

[b] Cùm inter nos et Deum discordiam peccando fecimus, tamen ad nos Deus legatum suum prior misit, ut nos ipsi, qui peccavimus, ad pacem Dei rogati veniamus.—St. Greg

by the means of his holy humanity it was taken up into the cabinet of the mysterious Trinity?[b] What better advocate could we have for us, than he that is appointed to be our Judge? And what greater hopes of reconciliation can be imagined, than that God, in whose power it is to give an absolute pardon, hath taken a new nature, entertained an office, and undergone a life of poverty, with a purpose to procure our pardon? For now, though, as the righteous Judge, he will judge the nations righteously; yet, by the susception of our nature, and its appendant crimes, he is become a party; and, having obliged himself as man, as he is God he will satisfy, by putting the value of an infinite merit to the actions and sufferings of his humanity. And if he had not been God, he could not have given us remedy; if he had not been man, we should have wanted the excellency of example.

4. And till now, human nature was less than that of angels; but, by the incarnation of the Word, was to be exalted above the cherubims: yet the archangel Gabriel,[c] being despatched in embassy to represent the joy and exaltation of his inferior, instantly trims his wings with love and obedience, and hastens with this narrative to the holy Virgin. And if we should reduce our prayers to action, and do God's will on earth, as the angels in heaven do it, we should promptly execute every part of the Divine will, though it were to be instrumental to the exaltation of a brother above ourselves; knowing no end but conformity to the Divine will, and making simplicity of intention to be the fringes and exterior borders of our garments.

5. When the eternal God meant to stoop so low as to be fixed to our centre, he chose for his mother a holy person and a maid, but yet affianced to a just man, that he might not only be secure in the innocency, but also provided for in the reputation of his holy mother: teaching us, that we must not only satisfy ourselves in the purity of our purposes and hearty innocence, but that we must provide also things honest in the sight of all men, being free from the suspicion and semblances of evil; so making provision for private innocence and public honesty: it being necessary, in order to charity, and edification of our brethren, that we hold forth no impure flames or smoking firebrands, but pure and trimmed lamps, in the eyes of all the world.

6. And yet her marriage was more mysterious; for as, besides the miracle, it was an eternal honour and advancement to the glory of virginity, that he chose a virgin for his mother, so it was in that manner attempered, that the Virgin was betrothed, lest honourable marriage might be disreputed, and seem inglorious, by a positive rejection from any participation of the honour. Divers of the old doctors, from the authority of Ignatius,[d] add another reason, saying, that the blessed Jesus was therefore born of a woman betrothed, and under the pretence of marriage, that the devil, who knew the Messias was to be born of a virgin, might not expect him there, but so be ignorant of the person, till God had served many ends of providence upon him.

7. The angel, in his address, needed not to go in inquisition after a wandering fire, but knew she was a star fixed in her own orb: he found her at home; and, lest that also might be too large a circuit, she was yet confined to a more intimate retirement; she was in her oratory, private and devout. There are some curiosities so bold and determinate, as to tell the very matter of her prayer,[e] and that she was praying for the salvation of all the world, and the revelation of the Messias, desiring she might be so happy as to kiss the feet of her, who should have the glory to be his mother. We have no security of the particular; but there is no piety so diffident as to require a sign to create a belief that her employment at the instant was holy and religious; but in that disposition she received a grace, which the greatest queens would have purchased with the quitting of their diadems, and hath consigned an excellent document to all women, that they accustom themselves often to those retirements, where none but God and his angels can have admittance. For the holy Jesus can come to them too, and dwell with them, hallowing their souls, and consigning their bodies to a participation of all his glories. But recollecting of all our scattered thoughts and exterior extravagances, and a receding from the inconveniences of a too free conversation, is the best circumstance to dispose us to a heavenly visitation.

8. The holy Virgin, when she saw an angel, and heard a testimony from heaven of her grace and piety, was troubled within herself at the salutation, and the manner of it: for she had learned, that the affluence of divine comforts and prosperous successes should not exempt us from fear, but make it the more prudent and wary, lest it entangle us in a vanity of spirit; God having ordered that our spirits should be affected with dispositions in some degrees contrary to exterior events, that we be fearful in the affluence of prosperous things, and joyful in adversity; as knowing that this may produce benefit and advantage; and the changes that are consequent to the other, are sometimes full of mischiefs, but always of danger. But her silence and fear were her guardians; that, to prevent excrescences of joy; this, of vainer complacency.

9. And it is not altogether inconsiderable to observe, that the holy Virgin came to a great perfection and state of piety by a few, and those modest and even, exercises and external actions. St. Paul travelled over the world, preached to the gentiles, disputed against the Jews, confounded heretics, writ excellently learned letters, suffered dangers, injuries, affronts, and persecutions to the height of wonder, and by these violences of life, action, and patience, obtained the crown of an excellent religion

[b] Quod sperare nullus audebat: quod si fortè in mentem alicujus incidîsset, poterat æstimare se in blasphemiam incurrîsse.—ST. PRIMASIUS.

[c] Ἀγαθῷ δ' οὐδεὶς περὶ οὐδένος οὐδέποτε ἐγγίνεται φθόνος. —HIER. in Pythag.

[d] Origen. Homil. vi. in Levit. Hier. Comment. in l Matth. St. Basilius, et alii.

[e] St. Bernard.

and devotion. But the holy Virgin, although she was engaged sometimes in an active life, and in the exercise of an ordinary and small economy and government, or ministries of a family, yet she arrived to her perfections by the means of a quiet and silent piety, the internal actions of love, devotion, and contemplation; and instructs us, that not only those who have opportunity and powers of a magnificent religion, or a pompous charity, or miraculous conversion of souls, or assiduous and effectual preachings, or exterior demonstrations of corporal mercy, shall have the greatest crowns, and the addition of degrees and accidental rewards; but the silent affections, the splendours of an internal devotion, the unions of love, humility, and obedience, the daily offices of prayer and praises sung to God, the acts of faith and fear, of patience and meekness, of hope and reverence, repentance and charity, and those graces which walk in a veil and silence, make great ascents to God, and as sure progress to favour and a crown, as the more ostentous and laborious exercises of a more solemn religion. No man needs to complain of want of power or opportunities for religious perfections: a devout woman in her closet, praying with much zeal and affections for the conversion of souls, is in the same order to a "shining like the stars in glory," as he who, by excellent discourses, puts it into a more forward disposition to be actually performed. And possibly her prayers obtained energy and force to my sermon, and made the ground fruitful, and the seed spring up to life eternal. Many times God is present in the still voice and private retirements of a quiet religion, and the constant spiritualities of an ordinary life; when the loud and impetuous winds, and the shining fires of more laborious and expensive actions, are profitable to others only, like a tree of balsam, distilling precious liquor for others, not for its own use.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal and almighty God, who didst send thy holy angel in embassy to the blessed Virgin mother of our Lord, to manifest the actuating thine eternal purpose of the redemption of mankind by the incarnation of thine eternal Son; put me, by the assistances of thy divine grace, into such holy dispositions, that I may never impede the event and effect of those mercies which, in the counsels of thy predestination, thou didst design for me. Give me a promptness to obey thee to the degree and semblance of angelical alacrity; give me holy purity and piety, prudence and modesty, like those excellencies which thou didst create in the ever-blessed Virgin, the mother of God: grant that my employment be always holy, unmixed with worldly affections, and, as much as my condition of life will bear, retired from secular interests and disturbances; that I may converse with angels, entertain the holy Jesus, conceive him in my soul, nourish him with the expresses of most innocent and holy affections, and bring him forth and publish him in a life of piety and obedience, that he may dwell in me for ever, and I may for ever dwell with him, in the house of eternal pleasures and glories, world without end. Amen.

SECTION II.

The Bearing of Jesus in the Womb of the Blessed Virgin.

1. ALTHOUGH the blessed Virgin had a faith as prompt and ready, as her body was chaste, and her soul pure; yet God, who uses to give full measure, shaken together, and running over, did, by way of confirmation, and fixing the confidence of her assent, give an instance of his omnipotency in the very particular of an extraordinary conception. For the angel said, "Behold, thy cousin Elizabeth hath also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month with her that was called barren: for with God nothing shall be impossible." A less argument would have satisfied the necessity of a faith which had no scruple; and a greater would not have done it in the incredulity of an ungentle and pertinacious spirit. But the holy maid had complacency enough in the message, and holy desires about her, to carry her understanding as far as her affections, even to the fruition of the angel's message; which is such a sublimity of faith, that it is its utmost consummation, and shall be its crown, when our faith is turned into vision, our hopes into actual possessions, and our grace into glory.

2. And she, who was now full of God, bearing God in her virgin womb, and the Holy Spirit in her heart, who had also overshadowed her, enabling her to a supernatural and miraculous conception, arose with haste and gladness, to communicate that joy which was designed for all the world; and she found no breast to pour forth the first emanations of her overjoyed heart so fit as her cousin Elizabeth's, who had received testimony from God to have been "righteous, walking in all the commandments of the Lord blameless," who also had a special portion in this great honour: for she was designed to be the mother of the Baptist, who was sent as a forerunner, "to prepare the ways of the Lord, and to make his paths straight. And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Judah."

3. Her haste was in proportion to her joy and desires, but yet went no greater pace than her religion: for as in her journey she came near to Jerusalem, she turned in, that she might visit his temple, whose temple she herself was now; and there, not only to remember the pleasures of religion, which she had felt in continual descents and showers falling on her pious heart, for the space of eleven years' attendance there in her childhood, but also to pay the first fruits of her thanks and joy, and to lay all her glory at his feet, whose humble handmaid she was, in the greatest honour of being his blessed mother. Having worshipped, she went on her journey, "and entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elizabeth."

4. It is not easy to imagine what a collision of joys was at this blessed meeting: two mothers of two great princes, the one the greatest that was born of woman, and the other was his Lord, and these made mothers by two miracles, met together with joy and mysteriousness; where the mother of our Lord went to visit the mother of his servant, and the Holy Ghost made the meeting festival, and descended upon Elizabeth, and she prophesied. Never, but in heaven, was there more joy and ecstasy. The persons, who were women whose fancies and affections were not only hallowed, but made pregnant and big with religion, meeting together to compare and unite their joys, and their eucharist, and then made prophetical and inspired, must needs have discoursed like seraphims and the most ecstasied order of intelligences; for all the faculties of nature were turned into grace, and expressed in their way the excellent solemnity. "For it came to pass when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost."

5. After they had both prophesied, and sung their hymns, and re-saluted each other with the religion of saints and the joys of angels, "Mary abode with her cousin Elizabeth about three months, and then returned to her own house." Where when she appeared with her holy burden to her husband Joseph, and that he perceived her to be with child, and knew that he had never unsealed that holy fountain of virginal purity, he was troubled. For, although her deportment had been pious and chaste to a miracle, her carriage reserved, and so grave, that she drave away temptations, and impure visits, and all unclean purposes from the neighbourhood of her holy person; yet when he saw she was with child, and had not yet been taught a lesson higher than the principles of nature, "he was minded to put her away," for he knew she was with child; but yet "privily," because he was a good man, and knew her piety to have been such, that it had almost done violence to his sense, and made him disbelieve what was visible and notorious, and therefore he would do it privately. "But while he thought on these things, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife."

Ad SECTION II.

Considerations concerning the Circumstances of the Interval between the Conception and Nativity.

1. WHEN the blessed Virgin was ascertained of the manner of her becoming a mother, and that her tremblings were over, upon the security she should preserve her virgin purity as a clean oblation to the honour of God, then she expressed her consent to the angelical message, and instantly she conceived the holy Jesus in her womb, by the supernatural and divine influence of the Holy Ghost. For she was highly zealous to reconcile her being mother to the Messias, with those purities and holy celibate which she had designed to keep as advantages to the interests of religion, and his honour who chose her from all the daughters of Adam, to be instrumental in the restitution of grace and innocence to all her father's family. And we shall receive benefit from so excellent example, if we be not so desirous of a privilege as of a virtue, of honour as of piety: and as we submit to the weight and pressure of sadnesses and infelicities, that God's will may be accomplished; so we must be also ready to renounce an exterior grace or favour, rather than it should not be consistent with exemplar and rare piety.

2. When the Son of God was incarnate in the womb of his virgin mother, the holy maid arose; and though she was super-exalted by an honour greater than the world yet ever saw, she still dwelt upon the foundation of humility: and to make that virtue more signal and eminent, she arose and went hastily to visit her cousin Elizabeth, who also had conceived a son in her old age: for so we all should be curious and watchful against vanities and transportations, when we are advanced to the gaieties of prosperous accidents, and in the greatest privileges descend to the lowest, to exercise a greater measure of virtue against the danger of those temptations, which are planted against our heart, to ruin our hopes and glories.

3. But the joys that the virgin mother had, were such as concerned all the world; and that part of them which was her peculiar, she would not conceal from persons apt to their entertainment, but go to publish God's mercy toward her to another holy person, that they might join in the praises of God; as knowing, that though it may be convenient to represent our personal necessities in private, yet God's gracious returns and the blessings he makes to descend on us, are more fit, when there is no personal danger collaterally appendant, to be published in the communion of saints; that the hopes of others may receive increase, that their faith may have confirmation, that their charity and eucharist may grow up to become excellent and great, and the praises of God may be sung aloud, till the sound strike at heaven, and join with the hallelujahs, which the morning stars in their orbs pay to their great Creator.

4. When the holy Virgin had begun her journey, she made haste over the mountains, that she might not only satisfy the desires of her joy by a speedy gratulation, but lest she should be too long abroad under the dispersion and discomposing of her retirements; and therefore she hastens to an enclosure, to her cousin's house, as knowing that all virtuous women, like tortoises, carry their house on their heads, and their chapel in their heart, and their danger in their eye, and their souls in their hands, and God in all their actions. And indeed her very little burden, which she bare, hindered her not but she might make haste enough: and as her

spirit was full of cheerfulness and alacrity, so even her body was made airy and vegete: for there was no sin in her burden, to fill it with natural inconveniences: and there is this excellency in all spiritual things, that they do no disadvantage to our persons, nor retard our just temporal interests. And the religion, by which we carry Christ within us, is neither so peevish as to disturb our health, nor so sad as to discompose our just and modest cheerfulness, nor so prodigal as to force us to needs and ignoble trades; but recreates our body by the medicine of holy fastings and temperance, fills us full of serenities and complacencies, by the sweetnesses of a holy conscience and joys spiritual, promotes our temporal interests, by the gains and increases of the rewards of charity, and by securing God's providence over us, while we are in the pursuit of the heavenly kingdom. And as in these dispositions she climbed the mountains with much facility, so there is nothing in our whole life of difficulty so great, but it may be managed by those assistances we receive from the holiest Jesus, when we carry him about us; as the valleys are exalted, so the mountains are made plain before us.

5. When her cousin Elizabeth saw the mother of her Lord come to visit her, as the Lord himself descended to visit all the world in great humility, she was pleased and transported to the height of wonder and prophecy, and "the babe sprang in her womb," and was sanctified, first doing his homage and adoration to his Lord that was in presence. And we, also, although we can do nothing unless the Lord first prevent us with his gracious visitation, yet if he first come unto us, and we accept and entertain him with the expresses and correspondencies of our duty, we shall receive the grace and honour of sanctification. But if St. Elizabeth, who received testimony from God that she "walked in all the commandments of the Lord blameless," was carried into ecstasy, wondering at the dignation and favour done to her by the mother of her Lord; with what preparations and holy solemnities ought we to entertain his addresses to us by his holy sacrament, by the immissions of his Spirit, by the assistances of his graces, and all other his vouchsafings and descents into our hearts?

6. The blessed Virgin hearing her cousin full of spirit and prophecy, calling her blessed, and praising her faith, and confirming her joy, instantly sang her hymn to God, returning those praises, which she received, to him to whom they did appertain. For so we should worship God with all our praises, being willing upon no other condition to extend one hand to receive our own honour, but that with the other we might transmit it to God; that as God is honoured in all his creatures, so he may be honoured in us too; looking upon the graces which God hath given us, but as greater instruments and abilities to serve him, being none of ours, but talents which are intrusted into our banks to be improved. But as a precious pearl is orient and medicinal, because God hath placed those excellencies in it for ends of his own, but itself is dead to all apprehensions of it, and knows no reflections upon its own value, only God is magnified in his work; so is every pious person precious and holy, but mortified to all vainer complacencies in those singularities and eminencies, which God placed there, because he was so pleased, saying, there he would have a temple built, because from thence he would take delight to receive glory and adoration.

7. After all these holy and festival joys, which the two glad mothers feasted themselves withal, a sad cloud did intervene and passed before the face of the blessed Virgin. The just and righteous Joseph, her espoused husband, perceiving her to be with child, "was minded to put her away," as not knowing the divinity of the fountain which watered the Virgin's sealed and hallowed womb, and made it fruitful; but he purposed to do it "privily," that he might preserve the reputation of his spouse, whose piety he knew was great, and was sorrowful it should now set in a sad night, and be extinct. But it was an exemplar charity, and reads to us a rule for our deportment towards erring and lapsed persons, that we entreat them with meekness, and pity, and fear: not hastening their shame, nor provoking their spirit, nor making their remedy desperate by using of them rudely, till there be no worse thing for them to fear, if they should be dissolved into all licentiousness. For an open shame is commonly protested unto, when it is remediless, and the person either despairs and sinks under the burden, or else grows impudent,[a] and tramples upon it. But the gentleness of a modest and charitable remedy preserves that which is virtue's girdle, fear and blushing; and the beginning of a punishment chides them into the horror of remembrance and guilt, but preserves their meekness and modesty, because they, not feeling the worst of evils, dare not venture upon the worst of sins.

8. But it seems the blessed Virgin, having received this greatest honour, had not made it known to her husband Joseph; and when she went to her cousin Elizabeth, the Virgin was told of it by her cousin, before she spake of it herself, for her cousin had it by revelation and the spirit of prophecy. And it is in some circumstances and from some persons more secure to conceal visions and those heavenly gifts, which create estimations among men, than to publish them, which may possibly minister to vanity; and those exterior graces may do God's work, though no observer note them, but the person for whose sake they are sent: like rain falling in uninhabited valleys, where no eye observes showers: yet the valleys laugh and sing to God in their refreshment without a witness. However, it is better to hear the report of our good things from the mouths of others, than from ourselves: and better yet, if the beauty of the tabernacle be covered with skins, that none of our beauties be seen but by worshippers, that is, when the glory of God and the interests of religion or charity are concerned in their publication. For so it happened to be in the case of the blessed Virgin, as she related to her cousin Elizabeth; and so it hap-

[a] Frontemque à crimine sumit.

pened not to be, as she referred to her husband Joseph.

9. The holy Virgin could not but know that Joseph would be troubled with sorrow and insecure apprehensions concerning her being with child; but such was her innocence and her confidence in God, that she held her peace, expecting which way God would provide a remedy to the inconvenience: for if we "commit ourselves to God in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator," preserving the tranquillity of our spirits and the evenness of our temper in the assault of infamy and disreputation, God, who loves our innocence, will be its patron, and will assert it from the scandal, if it be expedient for us: if it be not, it is not fit we should desire it. But if the holy Jesus did suffer his mother to fall into misinterpretation and suspect, which could not but be a great affliction to her excellent spirit, rarely tempered as an eye, highly sensible of every ruder touch, we must not think it strange, if we be tried and pressed with a calamity and unhandsome accidents: only remember, that God will find a remedy to the trouble, and will sanctify the affliction, and secure the person, if we be innocent, as was the holy Virgin.

10. But Joseph was not hasty in the execution of his purposes, nor in making his thoughts determinate, but stood long in deliberation, and longer before he acted it, because it was an invidious matter, and a rigour. He was, first, to have defamed and accused her publicly, and, being convicted, by the law she was to die, if he had gone the ordinary way; but he, who was a just man, that is, according to the style of Scripture and other wise writers,[b] "a good, a charitable man," found that it was more agreeable to justice to treat an offending person with the easiest sentence, than to put things to extremity, and render the person desperate, and without remedy, and provoked by the suffering of the worst of what she could fear. No obligation to justice does force a man to be cruel, or to use the sharpest sentence.[c] A just man does justice to every man, and to every thing; and then, if he be also wise, he knows there is a debt of mercy and compassion due to the infirmities of man's nature, and that debt is to be paid: and he that is cruel and ungentle to a sinning person, and does the worst thing to him, dies in his debt, and is unjust. Pity, and forbearance, and long-suffering, and fair interpretation, and excusing our brother, and taking things in the best sense, and passing the gentlest sentence, are as certainly our duty, and owing to every person that does offend, and can repent, as calling men to account can be owing to the law, and are first to be paid; and he that does not so, is an unjust person: which because Joseph was not, he did not call furiously for justice, or pretend that God required it at his hands presently, to undo a suspected person, but waved the killing letter of the law, and secured his own interest and his justice too, by intending to dismiss her privately. But, before the thing was irremediable, God ended his question by a heavenly demonstration, and sent an angel to reveal to him the innocence of his spouse, and the divinity of her Son; and that he was an immediate derivative from heaven, and the Heir of all the world. And in all our doubts we shall have a resolution from heaven, or some of its ministers, if we have recourse thither for a guide, and be not hasty in our discourses, or inconsiderate in our purposes, or rash in judgment. For God loves to give assistances to us, when we most fairly and prudently endeavour that grace be not put to do all our work, but to facilitate our labour; not creating new faculties, but improving those of nature. If we consider warily, God will guide us in the determination; but a hasty person outruns his guide, prevaricates his rule, and very often engages upon error.

THE PRAYER.

O holy Jesu, Son of the eternal God, thy glory is far above all heavens, and yet thou didst descend to earth, that thy descent might be the more gracious, by how much thy glories were admirable, and natural, and inseparable: I adore thy holy humanity with humble veneration, and the thankful addresses of religious joy, because thou hast personally united human nature to the eternal Word, carrying it above the seats of the highest cherubim. This great and glorious mystery is the honour and glory of man. It was the expectation of our fathers, who saw the mysteriousness of thy incarnation at great and obscure distances. And blessed be thy name, that thou hast caused me to be born after the fulfilling of thy prophecies, and the consummation and exhibition of so great a love, so great mysteriousness. Holy Jesu, though I admire and adore the immensity of thy love and condescension, who wert pleased to undergo our burdens and infirmities for us; yet I abhor myself, and detest my own impurities, which were so great, and contradictory to the excellency of God, that, to destroy sin, and save us, it became necessary that thou shouldst be sent into the world, to die our death for us, and to give us of thy life.

II.

Dearest Jesu, thou didst not breathe one sigh, nor shed one drop of blood, nor weep one tear, nor suffer one stripe, nor preach one sermon for the salvation of the devils: and what sadness and shame is it then, that I should cause so many insufferable loads of sorrows to fall upon thy sacred head! Thou art wholly given for me, wholly spent upon my uses, and wholly for every one of the elect. Thou, in the beginning of the work of our redemption, didst suffer nine months' imprisonment in the pure womb of thy holy mother, to redeem me from the eternal servitude

[b] 1 John i. 9. Psalm cxi. 3. Δικαιοσύνη, χρηστότης, ἀγαθότης, φιλανθρωπία.—PHILOSTR. de Vita Apollon. l. iii. c. 7.

[c] Non solùm ab ultionis atrocitate, sed etiam ab accusationis severitate, aliena justi persona est.—AMBROS.

of sin, and its miserable consequents. Holy Jesu, let me be born anew, receive a new birth and a new life, imitating thy graces and excellencies, by which thou art beloved of thy Father, and hast obtained for us a favour and atonement. Let thy holy will be done by me, let all thy will be wrought in me, let thy will be wrought concerning me; that I may do thy pleasure, and submit to the dispensation of thy providence, and conform to thy holy will, and may for ever serve thee in the communion of saints, in the society of thy redeemed ones, now, and in the glories of eternity. Amen.

SECTION III.

The Nativity of our Blessed Saviour Jesus.

1. The holy maid longed to be a glad mother; and she who carried a burden, whose proper commensuration is the days of eternity, counted the tedious minutes, expecting when the Sun of righteousness should break forth from his bed, where nine months he hid himself as behind a fruitful cloud. About the same time, God, who in his infinite wisdom does concentre and tie together in one end things of disparity and disproportionate natures, making things improbable to co-operate to what wonder or to what truth he pleases, brought the holy Virgin to Bethlehem, the city of David, "to be taxed," with her husband Joseph, according to a decree upon all the world, issuing from Augustus Cæsar.[a] But this happened in this conjunction of time, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet Micah:—"And thou, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah; for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel." This rare act of Providence was highly remarkable, because this taxing seems wholly to have been ordered by God, to serve and minister to the circumstances of this birth;[b] for this taxing was not in order to tribute. Herod was now king, and received all the revenues of the Fiscus, and paid to Augustus an appointed tribute, after the manner of other kings, friends and relatives of the Roman empire: neither doth it appear, that the Romans laid a new tribute on the Jews, before the confiscation of the goods of Archelaus. Augustus, therefore, sending special delegates to tax every city, made only an inquest[c] after the strength of the Roman empire in men and monies; and did himself no other advantage, but was directed by Him, who rules and turns the hearts of princes, that he might, by verifying a prophecy, signify and publish the divinity of the mission and the birth of Jesus.

2. She, that had conceived by the operation of that Spirit, who dwells within the element of love, was no ways impeded in her journey by the greatness of her burden; but arrived at Bethlehem in the throng of strangers, who had so filled up the places of hospitality and public entertainment, that "there was no room" for Joseph and Mary "in the inn." But yet she felt, that it was necessary to retire, where she might softly lay her burden, who began now to call at the gates of his prison, and nature was ready to let him forth. But she, that was mother to the King of all the creatures, could find no other but a stable, a cave of a rock,[d] whither she retired; where, when it began to be with her after the manner of women, she humbly bowed her knees, in the posture and guise of worshippers, and in the midst of glorious thoughts and highest speculations, "brought forth her first-born into the world."

3. As there was no sin in the conception, so neither had she pains in the production, as the church, from the days of Gregory Nazianzen until now, hath piously believed;[e] though, before his days, there were some opinions to the contrary, but certainly neither so pious, nor so reasonable. For to her alone the punishment of Eve did not extend, that "in sorrow she should bring forth:" for where nothing of sin was an ingredient, there misery cannot cohabit. For though amongst the daughters of men many conceptions are innocent and holy, being sanctified by the word of God and prayer, hallowed by marriage, designed by prudence, seasoned by temperance, conducted by religion towards a just, a hallowed, and a holy end, and yet their productions are in sorrow; yet this of the blessed Virgin might be otherwise, because here sin was no relative, and neither was in the principle nor the derivative, in the act nor in the habit, in the root nor in the branch: there was nothing in this but the sanctification of the Virgin's womb, and that could not be the parent of sorrow, especially that gate not having been opened, by which the curse always entered. And as to conceive by the Holy Ghost was glorious, so to bring forth any of "the fruits of the Spirit" is joyful, and full of felicities. And he that came from his grave fast tied with a stone and signature, and into the college of apostles, "the doors being shut," and into the glories of his Father through the solid orbs of all the firmament, came also (as the church piously believes) into the world so, without doing violence to the virginal and pure body of his mother; that he did also leave her virginity entire, to be as a seal, that none might open the gate of that sanctuary, that it might be fulfilled which was

[a] Ἦν δὲ ὃν τοῦτο δεύτερον καὶ τεσσαρακοστὸν ἔτος τοῦ Αὐγούστου βασιλείας, Αἰγύπτου δ' ὑποταγῆς καὶ τῆς τελευτῆς Ἀντωνίου καὶ Κλεοπάτρας ὄγδοον ἔτος καὶ εἰκοστόν.—Euseb. lib. i. c. 6. Histor. Eccles. Anno. scil. tertio Olympiad. 194. Cæsare Augusto et Plautio Silano Coss.

[b] Ὁ Αὔγουστος ὑπηρετεῖται τῷ ἐν Βηθλεὲμ τόκῳ διὰ τοῦ προστάγματος τῆς ἀπογραφῆς.—S. Chrysost. Hom. 8. in Matt.

[c] Vide Suidam in verbo ἀπογραφή. Dio. lib. lvi. ἔπεμψεν ἄλλους ἄλλη τά τε τῶν ἰδιωτῶν καὶ τὰ τῶν πόλεων ἀπογραψομένους.

[d] Juxta propheticum illud, Isa. xxxiii. 16. οὗτος οἰκήσει ἐν ὑψηλῷ σπελαίῳ πέτρας ἰσχυρᾶς· ἄρτος δοθήσεται αὐτῷ, apud LXX. Sed hanc periodum Judæi eraserunt ex Hebræo textu. Sic et Symmachus, ἄρτος δοθήσεται, mysticè Bethlehem, sive Domus panis, indigitatur.

[e] Vide Waddingum, p. 270.

spoken of the Lord by the prophet, "This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it; because the Lord God of Israel hath entered by it, therefore it shall be shut." [f]

4. Although all the world were concerned in the birth of this great Prince, yet I find no story of any one that ministered at it, save only angels, who knew their duty to their Lord, and the great interests of that person; whom, as soon as he was born, they presented to his mother, who could not but receive him with a joy next to the rejoicings of glory and beatific vision, seeing him to be born her son, who was the Son of God, of greater beauty than the sun, purer than angels, more loving than the seraphim, as dear as the eye and heart of God, where he was from eternity engraven, his beloved and his only-begotten.

5. When the virgin mother now felt the first tenderness and yearnings of a mother's bowels, and saw the Saviour of the world born, poor as her fortunes could represent him, naked as the innocence of Adam, she took him, and "wrapt him in swaddling-clothes;" and after she had a while cradled him in her arms, she "laid him in a manger;" for so was the design of his humility; that as the last scene of his life was represented among thieves, so the first was amongst beasts, the sheep and the oxen; according to that mysterious hymn of the prophet Habakkuk, "His brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand: and there was the hiding of his power." [g]

6. But this place, which was one of the great instances of his humility, grew to be as venerable as became an instrument; [h] and it was consecrated into a church, the crib into an altar, where first lay that "Lamb of God," which afterwards was sacrificed for the sins of all the world. And when Adrian, the emperor, who intended a great despite to it, built a temple to Venus and Adonis in that place, where the holy virgin mother, and her more holy Son, were humbly laid; even so he could not obtain, but that, even amongst the gentile inhabitants of the neighbouring countries, it was held in an account far above scandal and contempt. For God can ennoble even the meanest of creatures, especially if it be but a relative and instrumental to religion, higher than the injuries of scoffers and malicious persons. But it was then a temple full of religion, full of glory, when angels were the ministers, the holy Virgin was the worshipper, and Christ the Deity.

Ad SECTION III.

Considerations upon the Birth of our Blessed Saviour Jesus.

1. ALTHOUGH the blessed Jesus desired, with the ardency of an inflamed love, to be born, and to finish the work of our redemption; yet he did not prevent the period of nature, nor break the laws of the womb, and antedate his own sanctions, which he had established for ever. He stayed nine months, and then brake forth "as a giant joyful to run his course." For premature and hasty actions, and such counsels, as know not how to expect the times appointed in God's decree, are like hasty fruit, or a young person snatched away in his florid age, sad and untimely. He that hastens to enjoy his wish before the time, raises his own expectation, and yet makes it unpleasant by impatience, and loseth the pleasure of the fruition when it comes, because he hath made his desires bigger than the thing can satisfy. He that must eat an hour before his time, gives probation of his intemperance or his weakness; and if we dare not trust God with the circumstance of the event, and stay his leisure, either we disrepute the infinity of his wisdom, or give clear demonstration of our own vanity.

2. When God descended to earth, he chose to be born in the suburbs and retirement of a small town, but he was pleased to die at Jerusalem, the metropolis of Judea; which chides our shame and pride, who are willing to publish our gaieties in piazzas, and the corners of the streets of most populous places; but our defects, and the instruments of our humiliation, we carry into deserts, and cover with the night, and hide them under ground, thinking no secrecy dark enough to hide our shame, nor any theatre large enough to behold our pompous vanities; for so we make provisions for pride, and take care to exclude humility.

3. When the holy Virgin now perceived, that the expectation of the nations was arrived at the very doors of revelation and entrance into the world, she brought forth the holy Jesus, who, like light through transparent glass, passed through, or a ripe pomegranate from a fruitful tree, fell to the earth, without doing violence to its nurse and parent. She had no ministers to attend but angels, and neither her poverty nor her piety would permit her to provide other nurses; but herself did the offices of a tender and pious parent. She kissed him, and worshipped him, and thanked him that he would be born of her; and she suckled him, and bound him in her arms and swaddling-bands; and when she had represented to God her first scene of joy and eucharist, she softly laid him in the manger, till her desires and his own necessities called her to take him, and to rock him softly in her arms: and from this deportment she read a lecture of piety and maternal care, which mothers should perform toward their children when they are born, not to neglect any of that duty which nature and maternal piety requires.

4. Jesus was pleased to be born of a poor mother, in a poor place, in a cold winter's night, far from home, amongst strangers, with all the circumstances of humility and poverty. And no man will have cause to complain of his coarse robe, if he remembers the swaddling-clothes of this holy Child; nor to be disquieted at his hard bed, when he considers Jesus laid in a manger; nor to be discontented at

[f] Ezek. xliv. 2.
[g] Hab. iii. 4. In medio animalium cognosceris.—Sic LXX.
[h] Ven. Beda de Locis Sanctis. c. 8. S. HIERON. epist. 48.

his thin table, when he calls to mind, the King of heaven and earth was fed with a little breast-milk. But since the eternal wisdom of the Father, who "knew to choose the good, and refuse the evil," did choose a life of poverty, it gives us demonstration, that riches and honours, those idols of the world's esteem, are so far from creating true felicities, that they are not of themselves eligible in the number of good things: however, no man is to be ashamed of innocent poverty, of which many wise men make vows, and of which the holy Jesus made election, and his apostles after him made public profession. And if any man will choose and delight in the affluence of temporal good things, suffering himself to be transported with caitive affections in the pleasures of every day, he may well make a question, whether he shall speed as well hereafter;[i] since God's usual method is, that they only who follow Christ here, shall be with him for ever.

5. The condition of the person who was born, is here of greatest consideration. For he that cried in the manger, that sucked the paps of a woman, that hath exposed himself to poverty and a world of inconveniences, is "the Son of the living God," of the same substance with his Father, begotten before all ages, before the morning stars; he is God eternal. He is also, by reason of the personal union of the Divinity with his human nature, "the Son of God;" not by adoption, as good men and beatified angels are, but by an extraordinary and miraculous generation. He is "the heir" of his Father's glories and possessions, not by succession, (for his Father cannot die,) but by an equality of communication. He is "the express image of his Father's person," according to both natures; the miracle and excess of his Godhead being, as upon wax, imprinted upon all the capacities of his humanity. And, after all this, he is our Saviour; that to our duties of wonder and adoration we may add the affections of love and union, as himself, besides his being admirable in himself, is become profitable to us. "Verè Verbum hoc est abbreviatum," saith the prophet; the eternal Word of the Father is shortened to the dimensions of an infant.

6. Here then are concentred the prodigies of greatness and goodness, of wisdom and charity, of meekness and humility, and march all the way in mystery and incomprehensible mixtures; if we consider him in the bosom of his Father, where he is seated by the postures of love and essential felicity; and in the manger, where love also placed him, and an infinite desire to communicate his felicities to us. As he is God, his throne is in the heaven, and he fills all things by his immensity: as he is a man, he is circumscribed by an uneasy cradle, and cries in a stable. As he is God, he is seated upon a super-exalted throne; as man, exposed to the lowest estate of uneasiness and need. As God, clothed in a robe of glory, at the same instant when you may behold and wonder at his humanity, wrapped in cheap and unworthy cradle-bands. As God, he is encircled with millions of angels; as man, in the company of beasts. As God, he is the eternal Word of the Father, eternal, sustained by himself, all-sufficient, and without need; and yet he submitted himself to a condition, imperfect, inglorious, indigent, and necessitous. And this consideration is apt and natural to produce great affections of love, duty, and obedience, desires of union and conformity to his sacred person, life, actions, and laws; that we resolve all our thoughts, and finally determine all our reason and our passions and capacities, upon that saying of St. Paul,—"He that loves not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed."[k]

7. Upon the consideration of these glories, if a pious soul shall, upon the supports of faith and love, enter into the stable where this great King was born, and with affections behold every member of the holy body, and thence pass into the soul of Jesus, we may see a scheme of holy meditations, enough to entertain all the degrees of our love and of our understanding, and make the mystery of the nativity as fruitful of holy thoughts, as it was of blessings to us. And it may serve instead of a description of the person of Jesus, conveyed to us in imperfect and apocryphal schemes. If we could behold his sacred feet with those affections which the holy Virgin did, we have transmitted to us those mysteries in story, which she had first in part by spiritual and divine infused light, and afterwards by observation. Those holy feet, tender, and unable to support his sacred body, should bear him over all the province of his cure, with great zeal for the gaining of souls, to the belief and obedience of his holy laws; those are the feet, that should walk upon seas and hills of water, as upon firm pavement; at which the lepers and diseased persons should stoop, and gather health up; which Mary Magdalen should wash with tears, and wipe with her hair, and anoint with costly nard, as expressions of love and adoration, and there find absolution and remedy for her sins; and which, finally, should be rent by the nails of the cross, and afterwards ascend above the heavens, making the earth to be his footstool. From hence take patterns of imitation, that our piety be symbolical, that our affections be passionate and eucharistical, full of love, and wonder, and adoration; that our feet tread in the same steps, and that we transfer the symbol into mystery, and the mystery to devotion, praying the holy Jesus to actuate the same mercies in us, which were finished at his holy feet, forgiving our sins, healing our sicknesses; and then place ourselves irremovably, becoming his disciples, and strictly observing the rules of his holy institution, "sitting at the feet" of this our great Master.

8. In the same manner a pious person may (with the blessed Virgin) pass to the consideration of his holy hands, which were so often lifted up to God in prayer; whose touch was miraculous and medicinal, cleansing lepers, restoring perishing limbs, opening

[i] Οἶει σὺ τοὺς θανόντας, ὦ Νικήρατε,
Τρυφῆς ἁπάσης μεταλαβόντας ἐν βίῳ,
Πεφυκέναι τὸ θεῖον;
Diphilus.

[k] 1 Cor. xvi. 22.

blind eyes, raising dead persons to life; those hands which fed many thousands, by two miracles of multiplication; that purged the temple from profaneness; that, in a sacramental manner, bare his own body, and gave it to be the food and refreshment of elect souls, and after were cloven and rent upon the cross, till the wounds became (after the resurrection) so many transparencies and glorious instruments of solemn, spiritual, and efficacious benediction. Transmit this meditation into affections and practices, "lifting up pure hands" in prayer, that our devotions be united to the merits of his glorious intercession; and putting ourselves into his hands and holy providence, let us beg those effects upon our souls and spiritual cures, which his precious hands did operate upon their bodies, transferring those similitudes to our ghostly and personal advantages.

9. We may also behold his holy breast, and consider, that there lay that sacred heart, like the dove within the ark, speaking peace to us, being the regiment of love and sorrows, the fountain of both the sacraments, running out in the two holy streams of blood and water, when the rock was smitten, when his holy side was pierced: and there, with St. John, let us lay our head, and place our heart, and thence draw a treasure of holy revelations and affections, that we may rest in him only, and upon him lay our burdens, filling every corner of our heart with thoughts of the most amiable and beloved Jesus.

10. In like manner we may unite the day of his nativity with the day of his passion, and consider all the parts of his body, as it was instrumental in all the work of our redemption; and so imitate, and in some proportion partake of, that great variety of sweetnesses, and amorous reflexes, and gracious intercourses, which passed between the blessed Virgin and the holy Child, according to his present capacities, and the clarity of that light, which was communicated to her by Divine infusion. And all the members of this blessed Child, his eyes, his face, his head, all the organs of his senses, afford variety of entertainment and motion to our affections, according as they served, in their several employments and co-operations, in the mysteries of our restitution.

11. But his body was but his soul's upper garment, and the considerations of this are as immaterial and spiritual as the soul itself, and more immediate to the mystery of the nativity. This soul is of the same nature and substance with ours; in this inferior to the angels, that of itself it is incomplete, and discursive in a lower order of ratiocination; but in this superior: 1. That it is personally united to the Divinity, full of the Holy Ghost, overrunning with grace, which was dispensed to it without measure. (And by the mediation of this union, as itself is exalted far above all orders of intelligences, so we also have contracted alliances with God, teaching us not to unravel our excellencies by infamous deportments.) 2. Here also we may meditate, that his memory is indeterminable and unalterable, ever remembering to do us good, and to present our needs to God by the means of his holy intercession. 3. That his understanding is without ignorance, knowing the secrets of our hearts, full of mysterious secrets of his Father's kingdom, in which "all the treasures of the wisdom and knowledge of God are hidden."[1] 4. That his will is impeccable, entertained with an uninterrupted act of love to God, greater than all angels and beatified spirits present to God in the midst of the transportations and ravishments of paradise: that this will is full of love to us, of humility in itself, of conformity to God, wholly resigned by acts of adoration and obedience. It was moved by six wings; zeal of the honour of God, and compunction for our sins, pity to our miseries, and hatred of our impieties; desires of satisfying the wrath of God, and great joy at the consideration of all the fruits of his nativity; the appeasing of his Father, the redemption of his brethren. And upon these wings he mounted up into the throne of glory, carrying our nature with him above the seats of angels. These second considerations present themselves to all, that with piety and devotion behold the holy Babe lying in the obscure and humble place of his nativity.

[1] Col. ii. 3.

THE PRAYER.

Holy and immortal Jesus, I adore and worship thee, with the lowest prostrations and humility of soul and body, and give thee all thanks for that great love to us, whereof thy nativity hath made demonstrations; for that humility of thine, expressed in the poor and ignoble circumstances, which thou didst voluntarily choose in the manner of thy birth. And I present to thy holy humanity, enchased in the adorable Divinity, my body and soul; humbly desiring, that, as thou didst clothe thyself with a human body, thou mayest invest me with the robes of righteousness, covering my sins, enabling my weaknesses, and sustaining my mortality, till I shall finally, in conformity to thy beauties and perfections, be clothed with the stole of glory. Amen.

II.

Vouchsafe to come to me by a more intimate and spiritual approximation, that so thou mayest lead me to thy Father; for of myself I cannot move one step toward thee. Take me by the hand, place me in thy heart, that there I may live, and there I may die: that as thou hast united our nature to thy eternal being, thou mightest also unite my person to thine by the interior adunations of love, and obedience, and conformity. Let thy ears be open to my prayers, thy merciful eyes look upon my miseries, thy holy hands be stretched out to my relief and succour: let some of those precious distilling tears, which nature, and thy compassion, and thy sufferings, did cause to distil and drop from those sacred fontinels, water my stony heart, and make it soft, apt for the impressions of a melting, obedient, and corresponding love; and moisten mine eyes, that I may, upon thy

stock of pity and weeping, mourn for my sins; that so my tears and sorrows, being drops of water coming from that holy Rock, may indeed be united unto thine, and made precious by such holy mixtures. Amen.

III.

Blessed Jesus, now that thou hast sanctified and exalted human nature, and made even my body precious by a personal uniting it to the Divinity, teach me so reverently to account of it, that I may not dare to profane it with impure lusts or caitive affections, and unhallow that ground, where thy holy feet have trodden. Give to me ardent desires, and efficacious prosecutions of these holy effects, which thou didst design for us in thy nativity, and other parts of our redemption: give me great confidence in thee, which thou hast encouraged by the exhibition of so glorious favours; great sorrow and confusion of face at the sight of mine own imperfections, and estrangements, and great distances from thee, and the perfections of thy soul; and bring me to thee by the strictnesses of a zealous and affectionate imitation of those sanctities, which, next to the hypostatical union, added lustre and excellency to thy humanity; that I may live here with thee in the expresses of a holy life, and die with thee by mortification and an unwearied patience; and reign with thee in immortal glories, world without end. Amen.

DISCOURSE I.

Of nursing Children, in imitation of the blessed Virgin-Mother.

1. THESE later ages of the world have declined into a softness above the effeminacy of Asian princes, and have contracted customs, which those innocent and healthful days of our ancestors knew not; whose piety was natural, whose charity was operative, whose policy was just and valiant, and whose economy was sincere, and proportionable to the dispositions and requisites of nature. And in this particular, the good women of old gave one of their instances.[a] The greatest personages nursed their own children, did the work of mothers, and thought it was unlikely women should become virtuous by ornaments and superadditions of morality, who did decline the laws and prescriptions of nature, whose principles supply us with the first and most common rules of manners and more perfect actions. In imitation of whom, and especially of the Virgin Mary, who was mother and nurse to the holy Jesus, I shall endeavour to correct those softnesses and unnatural rejections of children, which are popular up to a custom and fashion, even where no necessities of nature or just reason can make excuse.

2. And I cannot think the question despicable, and the duty of meanest consideration: although it be specified in an office of small esteem, and suggested to us by the principles of reason, and not by express sanctions of Divinity. For although other actions are more perfect and spiritual, yet this is more natural and humane; other things, being superadded to a full duty, rise higher, but this builds stronger, and is like a part of the foundation, having no lustre, but much strength; and however the others are full of ornament, yet this hath in it some degrees of necessity, and possibly is with more danger and irregularity omitted, than actions, which spread their leaves fairer, and look more gloriously.

3. First: Here I consider, that there are many sins in the scene of the body and the matter of sobriety, which are highly criminal, and yet the laws of God, expressed in Scripture, name them not; but men are taught to distinguish them by that reason, which is given us by nature, and is imprinted in our understanding, in order to the conservation of human kind. For since every creature hath something in it sufficient to propagate the kind, and to conserve the individuals from perishing in confusions and general disorders, which in beasts we call instinct, that is, an habitual or prime disposition to do certain things, which are proportionable to the end whither it is designed; man, also, if he be not more imperfect, must have the like: and because he knows and makes reflections upon his own acts, and understands the reason of it, that which in them is instinct, in him is natural reason, which is, a desire to preserve himself and his own kind; and differs from instinct, because he understands his instinct and the reasonableness of it, and they do not. But man, being a higher thing, even in the order of creation, and designed to a more noble end in his animal capacity, his argumentative instinct is larger than the natural instinct of beasts: for he hath instincts in him, in order to the conservation of society,[b] and therefore hath principles, that is, he hath natural desires to it for his own good; and because he understands them, they are called principles, and laws of nature, but are no other than what I have now declared; for beasts do the same things we do, and have many the same inclinations, which in us are the laws of nature, even all which we have in order to our common end. But that, which in beasts is nature and an impulsive force, in us must be duty and an inviting power: we must do the same things with an actual or habitual designation of that end, to which God designs beasts, (supplying by his wisdom their want of understanding,) and then, what is mere nature in them, in us is natural reason. And therefore marriage in men is made

[a] Quòd si pudica mulier in partem juvet
Domum atque dulces liberos:
(Sabina qualis, aut perusta solibus
Pernicis uxor Appuli.)
Non me Lucrina juverint conchylia
Magis, &c. HOR. Epod. ii.

[b] Naturale jus partim, τὸ δίκαιον, πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις ὁμοίως λυσιτελέστατον· partim, τὸ πρὸς καλοκἀγαθίαν κοινὸν ἅπασι, καὶ μόνον ἱκανὸν διασώζειν τὸν τῶν ἀνθρώπων βίον. —JOSEPH. ORIG. xvi. 10.

sacred, when the mixtures of other creatures are so merely natural, that they are not capable of being virtuous; because men are bound to intend that end which God made. And this, with the superaddition of other ends, of which marriage is representative in part, and in part effective, does consecrate marriage, and makes it holy and mysterious. But then there are in marriage many duties, which we are taught by instinct; that is, by that reason whereby we understand, what are the best means to promote the end which we have assigned us. And by these laws all unnatural mixtures are made unlawful, and the decencies which are to be observed in marriage are prescribed us by this.

4. Secondly: Upon the supposition of this discourse, I consider again, that, although to observe this instinct, or these laws of nature, (in which I now have instanced,) be no great virtue in any eminency of degree; (as no man is much commended for not killing himself, or for not degenerating into beastly lusts;) yet, to prevaricate some of these laws, may become almost the greatest sin in the world. And therefore, although to live according to nature be a testimony fit to be given to a sober and a temperate man, and rises no higher; yet, to do an action against nature is the greatest dishonour and impiety in the world, (I mean of actions whose scene lies in the body,) and disentitles us to all relations to God, and vicinity to virtue.

5. Thirdly: Now, amongst actions which we are taught by nature, some concern the being and the necessities of nature, some appertain to her convenience and advantage: and the transgressions of these respectively have their heightenings or depressions; and, therefore, to kill a man is worse than some preternatural pollutions, because more destructive of the end and designation of nature, and the purpose of instinct.

6. Fourthly: Every part of this instinct is then, in some sense, a law, when it is in a direct order to a necessary end, and by that is made reasonable. I say, in some sense it is a law; that is, it is in a near disposition to become a law. It is a rule, without obligation to a particular punishment, beyond the effect of the natural inordination and obliquity of the act; it is not the measure of a moral good or evil, but of the natural; that is, of comely and uncomely. For if, in the individuals, it should fail, or that there pass some greater obligation upon the person in order to a higher end, not consistent with those means designed in order to the lesser end, in that particular it is no fault, but sometimes a virtue. And, therefore, although it be an instinct, or reasonable towards many purposes, that every one should beget a man in his own image, in order to the preservation of nature; yet, if there be a superaddition of another and higher end, and contrary means persuaded in order to it, (such as is holy celibate, or virginity, in order to a spiritual life, in some persons,) there the instinct of nature is very far from passing obligation upon the conscience, and in that instance ceases to be reasonable. And, therefore, the Romans, who invited men to marriage with privileges, and punished morose and ungentle natures that refused it, yet had they their chaste and unmarried vestals: the first, in order to the commonwealth; these, in a nearer order to religion.

7. Fifthly: These instincts or reasonable inducements become laws, obliging us, in conscience and in the way of religion; and the breach of them is directly criminal, when the instance violates any end of justice, or charity, or sobriety, either designed in nature's first intention, or superinduced by God or man. For every thing that is unreasonable to some certain purpose, is not presently criminal, much less is it against the law of nature; (unless every man, that goes out of his way, sins against the law of nature;) and every contradicting of a natural desire or inclination is not a sin against a law of nature. For the restraining sometimes of a lawful and a permitted desire is an act of great virtue, and pursues a greater reason; as in the former instance. But those things only, against which such a reason as mixes with charity or justice, or something that is now in order to a farther end of a commanded instance of piety, may be without error brought, those things are only criminal. And God, having first our instincts reasonable, hath now made our reason and instincts to be spiritual; and having sometimes restrained our instincts, and always made them regular, he hath, by the intermixture of other principles, made a separation of instinct from instinct, leaving one in the form of natural inclination, and they rise no higher than a permission or a decency, it is lawful, or it is comely so to do: (for no man can affirm it to be a duty to kill him that assaults my life, or to maintain my children for ever without their own industry, when they are able, what degrees of natural fondness soever I have towards them; nor that I sin, if I do not marry, when I can contain:) and yet every one of these may proceed from the affections and first inclinations of nature. But until they mingle with justice, or charity, or some instance of religion and obedience, they are no laws; the other that are so mingled, being raised to duty and religion. Nature inclines us, and reason judges it apt and requisite in order to certain ends; but then every particular of it is made to be an act of religion from some other principle: as yet, it is but fit and reasonable, not religion and particular duty, till God or man hath interposed. But whatsoever particular in nature was fit to be made a law of religion, is made such by the superaddition of another principle; and this is derived to us by tradition from Adam to Noah, or else transmitted to us by the consent of all the world upon a natural and prompt reason, or else by some other instrument derived to us from God, but especially by the christian religion, which hath adopted all those things which we call "things honest, things comely, and things of good report," into a law and a duty: as appears, Phil. iv. 8.

8. Upon these propositions I shall infer, by way of instance, that it is a duty, that women should nurse their own children. For, first, it is taught to women by that instinct which nature hath im-

planted in them. For, as Phavorinus[c] the philosopher discoursed, it is but to be half a mother to bring forth children, and not to nourish them; and it is some kind of abortion, or an exposing of the infant, which, in the reputation of all wise nations, is infamous and uncharitable. And if the name of mother be an appellative of affections and endearments, why should the mother be willing to divide it with a stranger? The earth is the mother of us all, not only because we were made of her red clay, but chiefly that she daily gives us food from her bowels and breasts; and plants and beasts give nourishment to their offsprings, after their production, with greater tenderness than they bare them in their wombs: and yet women give nourishment to the embryo, which, whether it be deformed or perfect, they know not, and cannot love what they never saw; and yet when they do see it, when they have rejoiced that a child is born, and forgotten the sorrows of production, they, who then can first begin to love it, if they begin to divorce the infant from the mother, the object from the affection, cut off the opportunities and occasions of their charity or piety.

9. For why hath nature given to women two exuberant fontinels, which, "like two roes that are twins, feed among the lilies,"[d] and drop milk like dew from Hermon, and hath invited that nourishment from the secret recesses, where the infant dwelt at first, up to the breast where naturally now the child is cradled in the entertainments of love and maternal embraces;[e] but that nature, having removed the babe, and carried its meat after it, intends that it should be preserved[f] by the matter and ingredients of its constitution, and have the same diet prepared with a more mature and proportionable digestion? If nature intended them not for nourishment, I am sure it less intended them for pride and wantonness; they are needless excrescences and vices of nature, unless employed in nature's work and proper intendment. And if it be a matter of consideration, of what blood children are derived, we may also consider that the derivation continues after the birth; and therefore, abating the sensuality, the nurse is as much the mother as she that brought it forth; and so much the more, as there is a longer communication of constituent nourishment (for so are the first emanations) in this, than in the other. So that here is first the instinct, or prime intendment, of nature.

10. Secondly: And that this instinct may also become humane and reasonable, we see it by experience in many places, that foster-children are dearer to the nurse than to the mother, as receiving and ministering respectively perpetual prettinesses of love, and fondness, and trouble, and need, and invitations, and all the instruments of endearment; besides a vicinity of dispositions and relative tempers by the communication of blood and spirits from the nurse to the suckling, which makes use the more natural, and nature more accustomed. And, therefore, the affections, which these exposed or derelict children bear to their mothers, have no grounds of nature or assiduity, but civility and opinion;[g] and that little of love, which is abated from the foster-parents, upon public report that they are not natural, that little is transferred to mothers upon the same opinion, and no more. Hence come those unnatural aversions, those unrelenting dispositions, those carelessnesses and incurious deportments towards their children, which are such ill-sown seeds, from whence may arise up a bitterness of disposition and mutual provocation. The affection which children bear to their nurses, was highly remarked in the instance of Scipio Asiaticus, who rejected the importunity of his brother Africanus in behalf of the ten captains, who were condemned for offering violence to the vestals, but pardoned them at the request of his foster-sister: and being asked why he did more for his nurse's daughter than he did for his own mother's son, gave this answer; "I esteem her rather to be my mother, that brought me up, than her that bare me and forsook me." And I have read the observation, that many tyrants have killed their mothers, but never any did violence to his nurse; as if they were desirous to suck the blood of their mother raw, which she refused to give to them digested into milk. And the bastard-brother of the Gracchi, returning from his victories in Asia to Rome, presented his mother with a jewel of silver, and his nurse with a girdle of gold, upon the same account. Sometimes children are exchanged, and artificial bastardies introduced into a family, and the right heir supplanted. It happened so to Artabanus, king of Epirus. His child was changed at nurse, and the son of a mean knight succeeded in the kingdom; the event of which was this: The nurse too late discovered the treason; a bloody war was commenced; both the pretenders slain in battle; and the kingdom itself was usurped by Alexander, the brother to Olympias, the wife of Philip the Macedonian. At the best, though there happen no such extravagant and rare accidents, yet it is not likely a stranger should love the child better than the mother; and if the mother's care could suffer it to be exposed, a stranger's care may suffer it to be neglected. For how shall a hireling endure the inconveniences, the tediousnesses, and unhandsomenesses of a nursery, when she, whose natural affection might have made it pleasant, out of wantonness or softness hath declined the burden? But the sad accidents which, by too frequent observation, are daily seen happening to nurse-children, give great probation, that this intendment of nature, designing mothers to be the nurses, that their affection might secure and increase their care, and the

[c] Apud A. Gellium, l. xii. c. 1.

[d] Cant. iv. 5.

[e] Ilicet exundans claustris, erumpere gestit
Humor———
Si prohibes, furit in mammis, turbasque dolorum
Miscet, et ingratâ pœnas à matre reposcit.
SAMMARTH. Pædotroph.

[f] Sponte fluunt alimenta suis accommoda rebus,
Cognatumque bibunt membra haud invita liquorem.
IDEM.

[g] Obliteratis et abolitis nativæ pietatis elementis, quicquid ita educati liberi amare patrem atque matrem videntur, magnam partem non naturalis ille amor est, sed civilis et opinabilis.—PHAVOR. apud A. Gellium.

care best provide for their babes, is most reasonable and proportionable to the discourses of humanity.

II. But as this instinct was made reasonable, so in this also the reason is in order to grace and spiritual effects; and therefore, is among those things which God hath separated from the common instincts of nature, and made properly to be laws, by the mixtures of justice and charity. For it is part of that education which mothers, as a duty, owe to their children, that they do, in all circumstances, and with all their powers, which God to that purpose gave them, promote their capacities and improve their faculties.[h] Now, in this also, as the temper of the body is considerable in order to the inclinations of the soul, so is the nurse in order to the temper of the body; and a lamb sucking a goat, or a kid sucking an ewe, change their fleece and hair respectively, say naturalists. For if the soul of man were put into the body of a mole, it could not see nor speak, because it is not fitted with an instrument apt and organical to the faculty; and when the soul hath its proper instruments, its music is pleasant or harsh, according to the sweetness or the unevenness of the string it touches: for David himself could not have charmed Saul's melancholic spirit with the strings of his bow, or the wood of his spear. And just so are the actions or dispositions of the soul, angry or pleasant, lustful or cold, querulous or passionate, according as the body is disposed by the various intermixes of natural qualities. And as the carelessness of nurses hath sometimes returned children to their parents crooked, consumptive, half starved, and unclean, from the impurities of nature; so their society and their nourishment together have disposed them to peevishness, to lust, to drunkenness, to pride, to low and base demeanours, to stubbornness. And as a man would have been unwilling to have had a child by Harpaste, Seneca's wife's fool; so he would, in all reason, be as unwilling to have had her to be the nurse: for very often mothers by the birth do not transmit their imperfections, yet it seldom happens but the nurse does: which is the more considerable, because nurses are commonly persons of no great rank, certainly lower than the mother, and, by consequence, liker to return their children with the lower and more servile conditions; and commonly those vainer people teach them to be peevish and proud, to lie, or at least seldom give them any first principles contrariant to the nurse's vice. And, therefore, it concerns the parent's care, in order to a virtuous life of the child, to secure its first seasonings; because, whatever it sucks in first, it swallows and believes infinitely, and practises easily, and continues longest. And this is more proper for a mother's care;[i] while the nurse thinks, that giving the child suck, and keeping its body clean, is all her duty. But the mother cannot think herself so easily discharged. And this consideration is material in all cases, be the choice of the nurse never so prudent and curious; and it is not easily apprehended to be the portion of her care to give it spiritual milk, and therefore it intrenches very much upon impiety and positive relinquishing the education of their children, when mothers expose the spirit of the child either to its own weaker inclinations, or the wicked principles of an ungodly nurse, or the carelessness of any less-obliged person.

12. And then let me add, that a child sucks the nurse's milk, and digests her conditions, if they be never so bad,[k] but seldom gets any good. For virtue being superaddition to nature, and perfections not radical in the body, but contradictions to, and meliorations of, natural indispositions, does not easily convey itself by ministrations of food, as vice does; which, in most instances, is nothing but mere nature grown to custom, and not mended by grace: so that it is probable enough, such natural distemperatures may pass in the rivulets of milk, like evil spirits in a white garment, when virtues are of harder purchase, and dwell so low in the heart that they but rarely pass through the fountains of generation. And, therefore, let no mother venture her child upon a stranger, whose heart she less knows than her own. And because few of those nicer women think better of others than themselves, (since, out of self-love, they neglect their own bowels,) it is but an act of improvidence to let my child derive imperfections from one, of whom I have not so good an opinion as of myself.

13. And if those many blessings and holy prayers, which the child needs, or his askings or sicknesses, or the mother's fears or joys, respectively, do occasion, should not be cast into this account; yet those principles, which, in all cases wherein the neglect is vicious, are the causes of the exposing the child, are extremely against the piety and charity of christian religion, which prescribes severity and austere deportment, and the labours of love, and exemplar tenderness of affections, and piety to children, which are the most natural and nearest relations the parents have. That religion, which commands us to visit and to tend sick strangers, and to wash the feet of the poor, and dress their ulcers, and sends us upon charitable embassies into unclean prisons, and bids us lay down our lives for one another, is not pleased with a niceness and sensual curiosity, (that I may not name the wantonnesses of lusts,) which denies suck to our own children. What is more humane and affectionate than christianity? and what is less natural and charitable than to deny the expresses of a mother's affection? which certainly to good women is the greatest trouble in the world, and the greatest violence to their desires, if they should not express and minister.

14. And it would be considered, whether those

[h] Nam Gracchorum eloquentiæ multum contulisse accepimus Corneliam Matrem.—QUINT. l. i. c. l. Protinùs ut erit parens factus, acrem quàm maximè curam impendat, ante omnia ne sit vitiosus sermo nutricibus, quas, si fieri posset, sapientes Chrysippus optavit.—QUINT. lib. i. cap. l. Γάλα ἀλλότριον βλαβερὸν, γάλα ἴδιον ὠφέλιμον.—HIPPOC. l. de Alimento. Καθάπερ αἱ τίτθαι γε, σιτίζεις κακῶς.—ARISTOPH.

[i] Ἄλλοτε μητρυιὴ πέλει ἠμέρη, ἄλλοτε μήτηρ.—Fictum Proverb.

[k] Hyrcanæque admôrunt ubera tigres.—VIRGIL. Λεαίνας μασθὸν ἐθήλαζε.

mothers, who have neglected their first duties of piety and charity, can expect so prompt and easy returns of duty and piety from their children, whose best foundation is love; and that love strongest, which is most natural; and that most natural, which is conveyed by the first ministries and impresses of nourishment and education. And if love descends more strongly than it ascends, and commonly falls from the parents upon the children in cataracts, and returns back again up to the parents but in gentle dews; if the child's affection keep the same proportions towards such unkind mothers, it will be as little as atoms in the sun, and never express itself but when the mother needs it not; that is, in the sunshine of a clear fortune.

15. This, then, is amongst those instincts, which are natural, heightened first by reason, and then exalted by grace into the obligation of a law; and, being amongst the sanctions of nature, its prevarication is a crime very near those sins, which divines, in detestation of their malignity, call sins against nature, and is never to be excused but in cases of necessity[1] or greater charity; as when the mother cannot be a nurse by reason of natural disability, or is afflicted with a disease, which might be transmitted in the milk; or, in case of the public necessities of a kingdom, for the securing of succession in the royal family. And yet, concerning this last, Lycurgus made a law, that the noblest amongst the Spartan women, though their kings' wives, should at least nurse their eldest son, and the plebeians should nurse all theirs; and Plutarch reports, that the second son of king Themistes inherited the kingdom in Sparta, only because he was nursed with his mother's milk, and the eldest was therefore rejected, because a stranger was his nurse. And that queens have suckled and nursed their own children, is no very unusual kindness in the simplicity and hearty affections of elder ages, as is to be seen in Herodotus and other historians. I shall only remark one instance, out of the Spanish chronicles, which Henry Stephens, in his apology for Herodotus, reports to have heard from thence related by a noble personage, Monsieur Marillac: That a Spanish lady, married into France, nursed her child with so great a tenderness and jealousy, that, having understood the little prince once to have sucked a stranger, she was unquiet, till she had forced him to vomit it up again. In other cases, the crime lies at their door, who enforce neglect upon the other, and is heightened in proportion to the motive of the omission; as, if wantonness or pride be the parent of the crime, the issue, besides its natural deformity, hath the excrescences of pride or lust to make it more ugly.

16. To such mothers I propound the example of the holy Virgin, who had the honour to be visited by an angel; yet after the example of the saints in the Old Testament, she gave to the holy Jesus drink from those bottles, which himself had filled for his own drinking; and her paps were as surely blessed for giving him suck, as her womb for bearing him: and reads a lecture of piety and charity, which if we deny to our children, there is then in the world left no argument or relation great enough to kindle it from a cinder to a flame. God gives dry breasts, for a curse to some, for an affliction to others; but those that invite it to them by voluntary arts, "love not blessing, therefore shall it be far from them." And I remember, that it was said concerning Annius Minutius the censor, that he thought it a prodigy, and extremely ominous to Rome, that a Roman lady refused to nurse her child, and yet gave suck to a puppy, that her milk might, with more safety, be dried up with artificial applications. Let none therefore divide the interests of their own children; for she that appeared before Solomon, and would have the child divided, was not the true mother, and was the more culpable of the two.

[1] Necessitas, magnum imbecillitatis humanæ patrocinium, quicquid cogit excusat.—SENEC.

THE PRAYER.

O holy and eternal God, Father of the creatures, and King of all the world, who hast imprinted in all the sons of thy creation principles and abilities to serve the end of their own preservation, and to men hast superadded reason, making those first propensities of nature to be reasonable in order to society, and a conversation in communities and bodies politic, and hast, by several laws and revelations, directed our reasons to nearer applications to thee, and performance of thy great end, the glory of our Lord and Father; teach me strictly to observe the order of creation, and the designs of the creatures, that in my order I may do that service, which every creature does in its proper capacity. Lord, let me be as constant in the ways of religion, as the sun in his course; as ready to follow the intimations of thy Spirit, as little birds are to obey the directions of thy providence, and the conduct of thy hand. And let me never, by evil customs, or vain company, or false persuasions, extinguish those principles of morality and right reason, which thou hast imprinted in my understanding, in my creation and education, and which thou hast ennobled by the superadditions of christian institution; that I may live according to the rules of nature in such things which she teaches, modestly, temperately, and affectionately, in all the parts of my natural and political relations; and that I, proceeding from nature to grace, may henceforth go on from grace to glory, the crown of all obedience, prudent and holy walking, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

SECTION IV.

Of the great and glorious Accidents, happening about the Birth of Jesus.

1. ALTHOUGH the birth of Christ was destitute of the usual excrescences and less necessary pomps,

which used to signify and illustrate the birth of princes; yet his first humility was made glorious with presages, miracles, and significations from heaven, which did not only, like the furniture of a princely bed-chamber, speak the riches of the parent, or greatness of the son within its own walls, but did declare to all the world, that their prince was born, publishing it with figures and representments almost as great as its empire.

2. For, when all the world did expect, that in Judea should be born their prince, and that the incredulous world had, in their observation, slipped by their true prince, because he came not in pompous and secular illustrations; upon that very stock Vespasian[a] was nursed up in hope of the Roman empire, and that hope made him great in designs: and they being prosperous, made his fortunes correspond to his hopes, and he was endeared and engaged upon that fortune by the prophecy, which was never intended him by the prophet. But the fortune of the Roman monarchy was not great enough for this prince designed by the old prophets. And, therefore, it was not without the influence of a Divinity, that his decessor Augustus, about the time of Christ's nativity, refused to be called Lord;[b] possibly it was, to entertain the people with some hopes of restitution of their liberties, till he had griped the monarchy with a stricter and faster hold. But the christians were apt to believe, that it was upon the prophecy of a sibyl foretelling the birth of a greater prince, to whom all the world should pay adoration; and that the prince was about that time born in Judea,[c] the oracle, which was dumb to Augustus's question, told him unasked, the devil having no tongue permitted him but one to proclaim that "an Hebrew child was his Lord and enemy."

3. At the birth of which child, there was an universal peace through all the world. For then it was, that Augustus Cæsar,[d] having composed all the wars of the world, did, the third time, cause the gates of Janus's temple to be shut; and this peace continued for twelve years, even till the extreme old age of the prince, until rust had sealed the temple doors, which opened not till the sedition of the Athenians, and the rebellion of the Dacians, caused Augustus to arm. For he that was born was the Prince of peace, and came to reconcile God with man, and man with his brother; and to make, by the sweetness of his example, and the influence of a holy doctrine, such happy atonements between disagreeing natures, such confederations and societies between enemies, that "the wolf and the lamb should lie down together, and a little child," boldly, and without danger, "put his finger in the nest and cavern of an asp."[e] And it could be no less than miraculous, that so great a body as the Roman empire, consisting of so many parts, whose constitutions were differing, their humours contrary, their interests contradicting each other's greatness, and all these violently oppressed by an usurping power, should have no limb out of joint, not so much as an aching tooth, or a rebelling humour, in that huge collection of parts; but so it seemed good in the eye of Heaven, by so great and good a symbol, to declare not only the greatness, but the goodness, of the Prince, that was then born in Judea, the Lord of all the world.

4. But because the heavens, as well as the earth, are his creatures, and do serve him, at his birth he received a sign in heaven above, as well as in the earth beneath, as an homage paid to their common Lord. For as certain shepherds were "keeping watch over their flocks by night," near that part where Jacob did use to feed his cattle, when he was in the land of Canaan, "the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them." Needs must the shepherds be afraid, when an angel came arrayed in glory, and clothed their persons in a robe of light, great enough to confound their senses and scatter their understandings. But "the angel said unto them, Fear not; for I bring unto you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." The shepherds needed not be invited to go see this glorious sight; but, lest their fancy should rise up to an expectation of a prince as externally glorious as might be hoped for upon the consequence of so glorious an apparition, the angel, to prevent the mistake, told them of a sign, which, indeed, was no other than the thing signified; but yet was therefore a sign, because it was so remote from the common probability and expectation of such a birth, that, by being a miracle, so great a prince should be born so poorly, it became an instrument to signify itself, and all the other parts of mysterious consequence. For the angel said, "This shall be a sign unto you, Ye shall find the babe wrapt in swaddling-clothes, lying in a manger."

5. But as light, when it first begins to gild the east, scatters indeed the darknesses from the earth, but ceases not to increase its flame, till it hath made perfect day; so it happened now, in this apparition of the angel of light: he appeared and told his message, and did shine, but the light arose higher and higher, till midnight was as bright as mid-day. For "suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host;" and after the angel had told his message in plain song, the whole chorus joined in descant, and sang an hymn to the tune and sense of heaven, where glory is paid to God in eternal and never-ceasing offices, and whence good will descends upon men in perpetual and never-stopping torrents. Their song was, "Glory be to God on high, on earth peace, good will towards men:" by this song not only referring to the strange peace,[f] which at that time put all the world in ease; but to the great peace, which this

[a] Sueton. in Vita Vesp. Vide etiam Ciceron. de Divin.
[b] Orosius, l. vi. c. 22. [c] Suidas in Histor. Verb. Augustus.
[d] Orosius. [e] Isa. xi. 6, 8.
[f] Igitur eo tempore, *i. e.* eo anno, quo firmissimam verissimamque pacem ordinatione Dei Cæsar composuit, natus est Christus; cujus adventui pax ista famulata est: in cujus ortu audientibus hominibus exsultantes angeli cecinerunt, "Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terra pax," &c.—P. OROSIUS.

new-born Prince should make between his Father and all mankind.

6. As soon as these blessed choristers had sung their Christmas carol, and taught the church a hymn to put into her offices for ever in the anniversary of this festivity, "the angels returned into heaven," and "the shepherds went to Bethlehem, to see this thing, which the Lord had made known unto them. And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger." Just as the angel had prepared their expectation, they found the narrative verified, and saw the glory and the mystery of it by that representment, which was made by the heavenly ministers, seeing God through the veil of a child's flesh, the heir of heaven wrapt in swaddling-clothes, and a person, to whom the angels did minister, laid in a manger; and they beheld, and wondered, and worshipped.

7. But as precious liquor warmed and heightened by a flame, first crowns the vessel, and then dances over its brim into the fire, increasing the cause of its own motion and extravagancy; so it happened to the shepherds, whose hearts being filled with the oil of gladness up unto the brim, the joy ran over, as being too big to be confined in their own breasts, and did communicate itself, growing greater by such dissemination. For "when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying, which was told them concerning this child. And," as well they might, "all that heard it, wondered." But Mary, having first changed her joy into wonder, turned her wonder into entertainments of the mystery, and the mystery into fruition and cohabitation with it: for "Mary kept all these sayings, and pondered them in her heart." And the shepherds having seen what the angels did upon the publication of the news, which less concerned them than us, had learnt their duty, to sing an honour to God for the nativity of Christ: for "the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them."

8. But the angels had told the shepherds, that the nativity was "glad tidings of great joy unto all people;" and, that "the heavens might declare the glory of God, and the firmament show his handy work," this also was told abroad, even to the gentiles, by a sign from heaven, by the message of a star. For there was a prophecy of Balaam, famous in all the eastern country, and recorded by Moses,[g] "There shall come a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall arise out of Israel: out of Jacob shall come he, that shall have dominion." Which although in its first sense it signified David, who was the conqueror of the Moabites; yet, in its more mysterious and chiefly intended sense, it related to the Son of David. And, in expectation of the event of this prophecy,[h] the Arabians, the sons of Abraham by Keturah, whose portion given by their patriarch was gold, frankincense, and myrrh, who were great lovers of astronomy, did with diligence expect the revelation of a mighty prince in Judea at such time, when a miraculous and extraordinary star should appear. And therefore, "when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the king, there came wise men," inspired by God, taught by art, and persuaded by prophecy, "from the East to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the East, and are come to worship him." The Greeks suppose this, which was called a star, to have been, indeed, an angel in a pillar of fire, and the semblance of a star; and it is made the more likely, by coming and standing directly over the humble roof of his nativity, which is not discernible in the station of a star, though it be supposed to be lower than the orb of the moon. To which, if we add, that they only saw it, (so far as we know,) and that it appeared, as it were, by voluntary periods, it will not be very improbable but that it might be like the angel, that went before the sons of Israel in a pillar of fire by night; or rather, like the little shining stars sitting upon the bodies of Probus, Tharacus, and Andronius, martyrs, when their bodies were searched for in the days of Dioclesian, and pointed at by those bright angels.

9. This star did not trouble Herod, till the Levantine princes expounded the mysteriousness of it, and said it declared a "king to be born in Jewry," and that the star was his, not applicable to any signification but of a king's birth. And therefore, although it was no prodigy nor comet,[i] foretelling diseases, plagues, war, and death, but only the happy birth of a most excellent prince; yet it brought affrightment to Herod and all Jerusalem: for "when Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him." And thinking that the question of the kingdom was now in dispute, and an heir sent from heaven to lay challenge to it, who brought a star and the learning of the East with him, for evidence and probation of his title, Herod thought there was no security to his usurped possession, unless he could rescind the decrees of Heaven, and reverse the results and eternal counsels of predestination. And he was resolved to venture it, first by craft, and then by violence.

10. And first, "he calls the chief priests and scribes of the people together, and demanded of them, where Christ should be born;" and found, by their joint determination, that Bethlehem of Judea was the place, designed by ancient prophecy and God's decree. Next, he inquired of the wise men concerning the star, but privily, what time it appeared. For the star had not motion certain and regular,[k] by the laws of nature; but it so guided the wise men in their journey, that it stood when they stood, moved not when they rested, and went forward when they were able, making no more haste than they did, who carried much of the business

[g] Num. xxiv. 17.
[h] Epiphan. in Expos Fid. Cath. c. 8.

[i] Et terris mutantem regna cometem.—CHALCIDIUS in Timæum Platonis.
[k] Leo Serm. 4. de Epiphan.

and employment of the star along with them. But when Herod was satisfied in his questions, "he sent them to Bethlehem," with instructions "to search diligently for the young child, and to bring him word," pretending that he would "come and worship him also."

11. The wise men prosecuted the business of their journey, and "having heard the king, they departed; and the star" (which, as it seems, attended their motion) "went before them, until it came and stood over where the young child was;" where "when they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy." Such a joy as is usual to wearied travellers, when they are entering into their inn; such a joy as when our hopes and greatest longings are laying hold upon the proper objects of their desires, a joy of certainty immediately before the possession: for that is the greatest joy which possesses before it is satisfied, and rejoices with a joy not abated by the surfeits of possession, but heightened with all the apprehensions and fancies of hope, and the neighbourhood of fruition; a joy of nature, of wonder, and of religion. And now their hearts laboured with a throng of spirits and passions, and ran into the house, to the embracement of Jesus, even before their feet: but "when they were come into the house, they saw the young child, with Mary his mother." And possibly their expectation was something lessened, and their wonder heightened, when they saw their hope empty of pomp and gaiety, the great King's throne to be a manger, a stable to his chamber of presence, a thin court, and no ministers, and the King himself a pretty babe; and, but that he had a star over his head, nothing to distinguish him from the common condition of children, or to excuse him from the miseries of a poor and empty fortune.

12. This did not scandalize those wise persons; but, being convinced by that testimony from Heaven, and the union of all circumstances, "they fell down and worshipped him," after the manner of the Easterlings, when they do veneration to their kings; not with an empty Ave, and gay blessing of fine words, but "they bring presents, and come into his courts:" for, "when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts, gold, frankincense, and myrrh." And if these gifts were mysterious, beyond the acknowledgment of him to be the King of the Jews, and Christ, that should come into the world; frankincense might signify him to be acknowledged a God, myrrh to be a man, and gold to be a king: unless we choose by gold to signify the acts of mercy; by myrrh, the chastity of minds, and purity of our bodies, to the incorruption of which myrrh is especially instrumental; and by incense we intend our prayers,[m] as the most apt presents and oblations to the honour and service of this young King. But however the fancies of religion may represent variety of ideas, the act of adoration was direct and religious, and the myrrh was medicinal to his tender body; the incense possibly no more than was necessary in a stable, the first throne of his humility; and the gold was a good antidote against the present indigencies of his poverty: presents such as were used in all the Levant, (especially in Arabia and Saba, to which the growth of myrrh and frankincense were proper,) in their addresses to their God and to their King; and were instruments with which, under the veil of flesh, they worshipped the eternal Word; the wisdom of God, under infant innocency; the almighty power, in so great weakness; and under the lowness of human nature, the altitude of majesty and the infinity of Divine glory. And so was verified the prediction of the prophet Esay,[n] under the type of the son of the prophetess, "Before a child shall have knowledge to cry, My father and my mother, he shall take the spoil of Damascus and Samaria from before the king of Assyria."

13. When they had paid the tribute of their offerings and adoration, "being warned in their sleep by an angel, not to return to Herod, they returned into their own country another way;" where, having been satisfied with the pleasures of religion, and taught by that rare demonstration which was made by Christ, how man's happiness did nothing at all consist in the affluence of worldly possessions, or the tumours of honour; having seen the eternal Son of God poor and weak, and unclothed of all exterior ornaments; they renounced the world, and retired empty into the recesses of religion, and the delights of philosophy.

Ad SECTION IV.

Considerations upon the Apparition of the Angels to the Shepherds.

1. WHEN the angels saw that come to pass, which Gabriel, the great ambassador of God, had declared; that which had been prayed for and expected four thousand years; and that, by the merits of this newborn Prince, their younger brethren and inferiors in the order of intelligent creatures were now to be redeemed, that men should partake the glories of their secret habitations, and should fill up those void places, which the fall of Lucifer and the third part of the stars had made, their joy was as great as their understanding; and these mountains did leap with joy, because the valleys were filled with benediction, and a fruitful shower from heaven. And if, at the conversion of one sinner, there is jubilation, and a festival kept among the angels, how great shall we imagine this rejoicing to be, when salvation and redemption was sent to all the world! But we also, to whom the joy did more personally relate, (for they rejoiced for our sakes,) should learn to estimate the grace done us, and believe there is something very extraordinary in the piety and salvation of a man, when the angels, who in respect of us are unconcerned in the communica-

[l] S. Ambros. in ii. Lu. 6. Leo, Ser. de Epiph. Theophil. in Matt. ii. S. Bernard. in Serm. 2. de Epiph.

[m] Phil. iv. 18. Ps. cxli. 2. Rev. v. 8.

[n] Isa. viii. 4. Justin. M. Dial. cum Tryphon. Tertul. lib. iii. contra Marcion. c. 13.

tions, rejoice with the joy of conquerors, or persons suddenly ransomed from tortures and death.

2. But the angels also had other motions: for besides the pleasures of that joy, which they had in beholding human nature so highly exalted, and that God was man, and man was God; they were transported with admiration at the ineffable counsel of God's predestination, prostrating themselves with adoration and modesty, seeing God so humbled, and man so changed, and so full of charity, that God stooped to the condition of man, and man was inflamed beyond the love of seraphim, and was made more knowing than cherubim, more established than thrones, more happy than all the orders of angels. The issue of this consideration teaches us to learn their charity, and to exterminate all the intimations and beginnings of envy, that we may as much rejoice at the good of others as of ourselves: for then we love good for God's sake, when we love good wherever God hath placed it; and that joy is charitable, which overflows our neighbours' fields, when ourselves are unconcerned in the personal accruments; for so we are "made partakers of all that fear God," when charity unites their joy to ours, as it makes us partakers of their common sufferings.

3. And now the angels, who had adored the holy Jesus in heaven, come also to pay their homage to him upon earth; and laying aside their flaming swords, they take into their hands instruments of music, and sing, "Glory be to God on high." First, signifying to us, that the incarnation of the holy Jesus was a very great instrument of the glorification of God; and those divine perfections in which he is chiefly pleased to communicate himself to us, were in nothing manifested so much as in the mysteriousness of this work. Secondly: And in vain doth man satisfy himself with complacencies and ambitious designs upon earth, when he sees before him God in the form of a servant, humble, and poor, and crying, and an infant full of need and weakness.

4. But God hath pleased to reconcile his glory with our eternal benefit; and that also was part of the angels' song, "In earth peace to men of good will." For now we need not, with Adam, to fly from the presence of the Lord, saying, "I heard thy voice, and I was afraid, and hid myself;" for he, from whom our sins made us once to fly, now weeps, and is an infant in his mother's arms, seeking strange means to be reconciled to us; hath forgotten all his anger, and is swallowed up with love, and encircled with irradiations of amorous affections and good will: and the effects of this good will are not referred only to persons of heroical and eminent graces and operations, of vast and expensive charities, of prodigious abstinencies, of eremitical retirements, of ascetical diet, of perfect religion, and canonized persons; but to all "men of good will," whose souls are hallowed with holy purposes and pious desires, though the beauties of the religion and holy thoughts were not spent in exterior acts, nor called out by the opportunities of a rich and expressive fortune.

5. But here we know where the seat and regiment of peace is placed, and all of it must pass by us and descend upon us, as duty and reward. It proceeds from the Word incarnate, from the Son of God, undertaking to reconcile us to his Father; and it is ministered and consigned unto us by every event and act of Providence, whether it be deciphered in characters of paternal indulgence, or of correction, or absolution. For that is not peace from above, to have all things according to our human and natural wishes; but to be in favour with God, that is peace; always remembering, that to be chastised by him is not a certain testimony of his mere wrath, but to all his servants a character of love and of paternal provision, since "he chastises every son whom he receives." Whosoever seeks to avoid all this world's adversity, can never find peace; but he only who hath resolved all his affections, and placed them in the heart of God; he who denies his own will, and hath killed self-love, and all those enemies within, that make afflictions to become miseries indeed, and full of bitterness; he only enjoys this peace: and in proportion to every man's mortification and self-denial, so are the degrees of his peace. And this is the peace which the angel proclaimed at the enunciation of that birth, which taught humility, and contempt of things below, and all their vainer glories, by the greatest argument in the world, even the poverty of God incarnate. And if God sent his own, natural, only-begotten, and beloved Son, in all the dresses of poverty and contempt; that person is vain, who thinks God will love him better than he loved his own Son, or that he will express his love any other or gentler way, than to make him partaker of the fortune of his eldest Son. There is one other postern to the dwellings of peace, and that is, "good will to men;" for so much charity as we have to others, such a measure of peace also we may enjoy at home: for peace was proclaimed only to "men of good will," to them that are at peace with God and all the world.

6. But the angel brought the message to shepherds, to persons simple, and mean, and humble; persons likely to be more apprehensive of the mystery, and less of the scandal, of the poverty of the Messias: for they whose custom or affections dwell in secular pomps, who are not used by charity or humility to stoop to an evenness and consideration of their brethren of equal natures, though of unequal fortunes, are persons, of all the world, most indisposed and removed from the understanding of spiritual excellencies, especially when they do not come clothed with advantages of the world, and of such beauties which they admire. God himself in poverty, comes in a prejudice to them that love riches, and simplicity is folly to crafty persons;[a] a

[a] At nos virtutes ipsas invertimus, atque
Sincerum cupimus vas incrustare. Probus quis
Nobiscum vivit? multùm est demissus homo. Illi
Tardo, cognomen pingui damus———

Simplicior si quis———ut fortè legentem
Aut tacitum impellat quovis sermone? molestus!
Communi sensu planè caret, inquimus.
HORAT. Serm. l. i. Sat. 3.

mean birth is an ignoble stain, beggary is a scandal, and the cross an unanswerable objection. But the angel's moral in the circumstance of his address, and inviting the poor shepherds to Bethlehem, is, that none are fit to come to Christ but those, who are poor in spirit, despisers of the world, simple in their hearts, without craft and secular designs; and therefore neither did the angel tell the story to Herod, nor to the scribes and Pharisees, whose ambition had ends contradictory to the simplicity and poverty of the birth of Jesus.

7. These shepherds when they conversed with angels, were "watching over their flocks by night;" no revellers, but in a painful and dangerous employment, the work of an honest calling, securing their folds against incursions of wild beasts, which in those countries are not seldom or unfrequent. And Christ being the great Shepherd, (and possibly, for the analogy's sake, the sooner manifested to shepherds,) hath made his ministers overseers of their flocks, distinguished in their particular folds, and conveys the mysteriousness of his kingdom, first to the pastors, and by their ministry, to the flocks. But although all of them be admitted to the ministry, yet those only to the interior recesses and nearer imitations of Jesus, who are watchful over their flocks, assiduous in their labours, painful in their sufferings, present in the dangers of the sheep, ready to interpose their persons and sacrifice their lives; these are shepherds, who first converse with angels, and finally shall enter into the presence of the Lord. But, besides this symbol, we are taught in the significations of the letter, that he that is diligent in the business of an honest calling, is then doing service to God; and a work so pleasing to him, who hath appointed the sons of men to labour, that to these shepherds he made a return and recompence, by the conversation of an angel; and hath advanced the reputation of an honest and a mean employment to such a testimony of acceptance, that no honest person, though busied in meaner offices, may ever hereafter, in the estimation of Christ's disciples, become contemptible.

8. The signs, which the angel gave to discover the babe, were no marks of lustre and vanity; but they should find, 1. a babe, 2. swaddled, 3. lying in a manger: the first a testimony of his humility; the second, of his poverty; the third, of his incommodity and uneasiness; for Christ came to combat the whole body of sin, and to destroy every province of Satan's kingdom; for these are direct antinomies to "the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." Against the first, Christ opposed his hard and uneasy lodging; against the second, the poorness of his swaddling-bands and mantle; and the third is combated by the great dignation and descent of Christ, from a throne of majesty to the state of a sucking babe. And these are the first lessons he hath taught us for our imitation; which that we may the better do, as we must take him for our pattern, so also for our helper, and pray to the holy Child, and he will not only teach us, but also give us power and ability.

[a] Tit. ii. 11.

THE PRAYER.

O blessed and eternal Jesu, at whose birth the quires of angels sang praises to God, and proclaimed peace to men, sanctify my will and inferior affections; make me to be within the conditions of peace, that I be holy and mortified, a despiser of the world and exterior vanities, humble and charitable: that by thy eminent example I may be so fixed in the designs and prosecution of the ends of God and a blissful eternity, that I be unmoved with the terrors of the world, unaltered with its allurements and seductions, not ambitious of its honour, not desirous of its fulness and plenty; but make me diligent in the employment thou givest me, faithful in discharge of my trust, modest in my desires, content in the issues of thy providence; that in such dispositions I may receive and entertain visitations from heaven, and revelations of the mysteries and blisses evangelical; that by such directions I may be brought into thy presence, there to see thy beauties and admire thy graces, and imitate all thy imitable excellencies, and rest in thee for ever; in this world, by the perseverance of a holy and comfortable life, and in the world to come, in the participation of thy essential glories and felicities, O blessed and eternal Jesu!

Considerations of the Epiphany of the Blessed Jesus by a Star, and the Adoration of Jesus by the Eastern Magi.

1. God, who is the universal Father of all men, at the nativity of the Messias gave notice to it of all the world, as they were represented by the grand division of the Jews and gentiles; to the Jewish shepherds by an angel, to the Eastern magi by a star. For the gospel is of universal dissemination, not confined within the limits of a national prerogative, but catholic and diffused. As God's love was, so was the dispensation of it, "without respect of persons:" for all, being included under the curse of sin, were to him equal and indifferent, undistinguishable objects of mercy. And Jesus, descended of the Jews, was also "the expectation of the gentiles," and therefore communicated to all: the grace of God being like the air we breathe; and "it hath appeared to all men,"[a] saith St. Paul; but the conveyances and communications of it were different, in the degrees of clarity and illustration. The angel told the shepherds the story of the nativity plainly and literally; the star invited the wise men by its rareness and supernatural apparition; to which also, as by a footpath, they had been led by the prophecy of Balaam.

2. But here first the grace of God prevents us; without him we can do nothing; he lays the first stone in every spiritual building, and then expects, by that strength he first gave us, that we make the superstructures. But as a stone, thrown into a

river, first moves the water, and disturbs its surface into a circle, and then its own force wafts the neighbouring drops into a larger figure by its proper weight; so is the grace of God the first principle of our spiritual motion; and when it moves us into its own figure, and hath actuated and ennobled our natural powers by the influence of that first incentive, we continue the motion, and enlarge the progress. But as the circle on the face of the waters grows weaker, till it hath smoothed itself into a natural and even current, unless the force be renewed or continued; so does all our natural endeavour, when first set a-work by God's preventing grace, decline to the imperfection of its own kind, unless the same force be made energetical and operative, by the continuation and renewing of the same supernatural influence.

3. And therefore the Eastern magi, being first raised up into wonder and curiosity by the apparition of the star, were very far from finding Jesus by such general and indefinite significations; but then the goodness of God's grace increased its own influence; for an inspiration from the Spirit of God admonished them to observe the star, showed the star, that they might find it, taught them to acknowledge it,[b] instructed them to understand its purpose, and invited them to follow it, and never left them till they had found the holy Jesus. Thus also God deals with us. He gives us the first grace, and adds the second; he enlightens our understandings, and actuates our faculties, and sweetly allures us by the proposition of rewards, and wounds us with the arrows of his love, and inflames us with fire from heaven; ever giving us new assistances, or increasing the old, refreshing us with comforts, or arming us with patience; sometimes stirring our affections by the lights held out to our understanding, sometimes bringing confirmation to our understanding by the motion of our affections, till, by variety of means, we at last arrive at Bethlehem, in the service and entertainments of the holy Jesus; which we shall certainly do, if we follow the invitations of grace and exterior assistances, which are given us to instruct us, to help us, and to invite us, but not to force our endeavours and co-operations.

4. As it was an unsearchable wisdom, so it was an unmeasurable grace of providence and dispensation, which God did exhibit to the wise men; to them, as to all men, disposing the ministries of his grace sweetly, and by proportion to the capacities of the person suscipient. For God called the gentiles by such means, which their customs and learning had made prompt and easy. For these magi were great philosophers and astronomers, and therefore God sent a miraculous star, to invite and lead them to a new and more glorious light, the lights of grace and glory. And God so blessed them in following the star, to which their innocent curiosity and national customs were apt to lead them, that their custom was changed to grace, and their learning heightened with inspiration; and God crowned all with a spiritual and glorious event. It was not much unlike, which God did to the princes and diviners among the Philistines, who sent the ark back with five golden emrods and five golden mice; an act proportionable to the custom and sense of their nation and religion; yet God accepted their opinion and divination to the utmost end they designed it, and took the plagues of emrods and mice from them. For oftentimes the custom or the philosophy of the opinions of a nation are made instrumental, through God's acceptance, to ends higher than they can produce by their own energy and intendment. And thus the astrological divinations of the magi were turned into the order of a greater design than the whole art could promise, their employment being altered into grace, and nature into a miracle. But then, when the wise men were brought by this means, and had seen Jesus, then God takes ways more immediate and proportionable to the kingdom of grace; the next time, God speaks to them by an angel. For so is God's usual manner, to bring us to him; first, by ways agreeable to us; and then to increase, by ways agreeable to himself. And when he hath furnished us with new capacities, he gives new lights, in order to more perfect employments: and, "To him that hath, shall be given full measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over;" the eternal kindness of God being like the sea, which delights to run in its old channel, and to fill the hollownesses of the earth, which itself hath made, and hath once watered.

5. This star, which conducted the wise men to Bethlehem, (if, at least, it was properly a star, and not an angel,) was set in its place to be seen by all; but was not observed, or not understood, nor its message obeyed, by any but the three wise men. And indeed no man hath cause to complain of God, as if ever he would be deficient in assistances necessary to his service; but first the grace of God separates us from the common condition of incapacity and indisposition, and then we separate ourselves one from another by the use or neglect of this grace; and God doing his part to us, hath cause to complain of us, who neglect that which is our portion of the work. And, however even the issues and the kindnesses of God's predestination and antecedent mercy do very much toward the making the grace to be effective of its purpose, yet the manner of all those influences and operations being moral, persuasive, reasonable, and divisible, by concourse of various circumstances, the cause and the effect are brought nearer and nearer, in various suscipients; but not brought so close together, but that God expects us to do something towards it;[c] so that we may say, with St. Paul, "It is not I, but the grace of God that is with me." And at the same time, when, by reason of our co-operation, we actuate and improve God's grace, and become distinguished from other persons more negligent under the same opportunities, God is he who also does

[b] Dedit intellectum qui præstitit signum.—S. Leo, Ser. 1. de Epiph.

[c] ——'Αλλ' ὅταν
Σπεύδῃ τις, αὐτὸς χῲ θεὸς συνάπτεται.
'Ως τοῖς ϑανοῦσι χρήματ' οὐδὲν ὠφελεῖ.—Æschyl. Pers.

distinguish us by the proportions and circumstantiate applications of his grace to every singular capacity; that we may be careful not to neglect the grace, and yet to return the entire glory to God.[d]

6. Although God, to second the generous design of these wise personages in their inquiry after the new prince, made the star to guide them through the difficulties of their journey; yet when they came to Jerusalem, the star disappeared; God so resolving to try their faith, and the activity of their desires; to demonstrate to them that God is the Lord of all his creatures, and a voluntary dispenser of his own favours, and can as well take them away as indulge them; and to engage them upon the use of ordinary means and ministries, when they are to be had: for now the extraordinary and miraculous guide for a time did cease; that they, being at Jerusalem, might inquire of them, whose office and profession of sacred mysteries did oblige them to publish the Messias. For God is so great a lover of order,[e] so regular and certain an exactor of us to use those ordinary ministries of his own appointing, that he, having used the extraordinary but as architects do frames of wood, to support the arches till they be built, takes them away when the work is ready, and leaves us to those other of his designation; and hath given such efficacy to these, that they are as persuasive and operative as a miracle; and St. Paul's sermon would convert as many, as if Moses should rise from the grave. And now the doctrines of christianity have not only the same truth, but the same evidence and virtue also, they had in the midst of those prime demonstrations, extraordinary by miracle and prophecy, if men were equally disposed.

7. When they were come to the doctors of the Jews, they asked confidently, and with great openness, under the ear and eye of a tyrant prince, bloody and timorous, jealous and ambitious, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" and so gave evidence of their faith, of their magnanimity, and fearless confidence and profession of it, and of their love of the mystery and object, in pursuance of which they had taken so troublesome and vexatious journeys: and besides that, they upbraided the tepidity and infidel baseness of the Jewish nation, who stood unmoved and unconcerned by all the circumstances of wonder, and stirred not one step to make inquiry after, or to visit, the new-born King; they also teach us to be open and confident in our religion and faith, and not to consider our temporal, when they once come to contest against our religious, interests.

8. The doctors of the Jews told the wise men where Christ was to be born; the magi, they address themselves with haste to see him and to worship, and the doctors themselves stir not; God not only serving himself with truth, out of the mouths of impious persons, but magnifying the recesses of his counsel, and wisdom, and predestination; who uses the same doctrine to glorify himself and to confound his enemies, to save the scholars and to condemn the tutors, to instruct one and upbraid the other; making it an instrument of faith, and a conviction of infidelity: the sermons of the doctors, in such cases, being like the spoils of beavers, sheep, and silk-worms, designed to clothe others, and are made the occasions of their own nakedness, and the causes of their death. But as it is a demonstration of the Divine wisdom, so it is of human folly; there being no greater imprudence in the world, than to do others' advantage, and to neglect our own.[f] If thou doest well unto thyself, men will speak good of thee: but if thou be like a channel in a garden, through which the water runs to cool and moisten the herbs, but nothing for its own use; thou buildest a fortune to them upon the ruins of thine own house, while, "after thy preaching to others, thou thyself dost become a castaway."

9. When the wise men departed from Jerusalem, the star again appeared, and they rejoiced with exceeding great joy: and, indeed, to new converts, and persons in their first addresses to the worship of God, such spiritual and exterior comforts are often indulged; because then God judges them to be most necessary, as being invitations to duty by the entertainments of our affections with such sweetnesses, which represent the glory of the reward, by the antepasts and refreshments dispensed even in the ruggedness of the way, and incommodities of the journey. All other delights are the pleasures of beasts, or the sports of children; these are the antepasts, and preventions of the full feasts and overflowings of eternity.

10. When they came to Bethlehem, and the star pointed them to a stable, they entered in; and being enlightened with a divine ray, proceeding from the face of the holy Child, and seeing through the cloud, and passing through the scandal of his mean lodging and poor condition, they bowed themselves to the earth; first giving themselves an oblation to this great King, then they made offering of their gifts; for a man's person is first accepted, then his gift. God first regarded Abel, and then accepted his offering: which we are best taught to understand by the present instance; for it means no more, but that all our outward services and oblations are made acceptable by the prior presentation of an inward sacrifice. If we have first presented ourselves, then our gift is pleasant, as coming but to express the truth of the first sacrifice; but if our persons be not first made a holocaust to God, the lesser oblations of outward presents are like sacrifices without salt and fire, nothing to make them pleasant or religious. For all other senses of this proposition charge upon God the distinguishing and acceptation of persons, against which he solemnly protests: God regards no man's person, but according to the doing of his

[d] Θεοῦ δὲ δῶρόν ἐστιν εὐτυχεῖν βροτούς.—ÆSCHYL. ἑπτὰ ἐπὶ Θήβ.

[e] Τοῦτο γὰρ ἐστιν αὐτῇ καὶ τὸ εἶναι σοφίᾳ, τὸ ἐν τάξει καὶ τελειότητι προάγειν τὴν ποίησιν· ὥστε συνεισιέναι ἀλλήλαις σοφιαν, καὶ τάξιν, καὶ τελειότητα.—HIEROCL.

[f] Piaga mortale che si non può guarire,
Vivere in altrui, et in se stesso morire.

duty; but then God is said first to accept the person, and then the gift, when the person is first sanctified and given to God by the vows and habits of a holy life; and then all the actions of his religion are homogeneal to their principle, and accepted by the acceptation of the man.

11. These magi presented to the holy Babe gold, frankincense, and myrrh, protesting their faith of three articles by the symbolical oblation; by gold, that he was a king; by incense, that he was a God; by myrrh, that he was a man. And the presents also were representative of interior virtues: the myrrh signifying faith, mortification, chastity, compunction, and all the actions of the purgative way of spiritual life; the incense signifying hope, prayer, obedience, good intention, and all the actions and devotions of the illuminative; the giving the gold representing love to God and our neighbours, the contempt of riches, poverty of spirit, and all the eminences and spiritual riches of the unitive life. And these oblations if we present to the holy Jesus, both our persons and our gifts shall be accepted, our sins shall be purged, our understandings enlightened, and our wills united to this holy Child, and entitled to a communion of all his glories.

12. And thus, in one view and two instances, God hath drawn all the world to himself by his Son Jesus, in the instance of the shepherds and the Arabian magi, Jews and gentiles, learned and unlearned, rich and poor, noble and ignoble; that in him all nations, and all conditions, and all families, and all persons, might be blessed;[g] having called all by one star or other, by natural reason, or by the secrets of philosophy; by the revelations of the gospel, or by the ministry of angels; by the illuminations of the Spirit, or by the sermons and dictates of spiritual fathers: and hath consigned this lesson to us, that we must never appear before the Lord empty, offering gifts to him, by the expenses or by the affections of charity; either the worshipping or the oblations of religion, either the riches of the world or the love of the soul: for if we cannot bring gold with the rich Arabians, we may, with the poor shepherds, come and "kiss the Son, lest he be angry;" and in all cases come and "serve him with fear and reverence," and spiritual rejoicings.

THE PRAYER.

Most holy Jesu, thou art the glory of thy people Israel, and a light to the gentiles, and wert pleased to call the gentiles to the adoration and knowledge of thy sacred person and laws, communicating the inestimable riches of thy holy discipline to all, with an universal undistinguishing love; give unto us spirits docible, pious, prudent, and ductile, that no motion or invitation of grace be ineffectual, but may produce excellent effects upon us, and the secret whispers of thy Spirit may prevail upon our affections, in order to piety and obedience, as certainly as the loudest and most clamorous sermons of the gospel. Create in us such excellencies, as are fit to be presented to thy glorious Majesty; accept of the oblation of myself, and my entire services: but be thou pleased to verify my offering, and secure the possession to thyself, that the enemy may not pollute the sacrifice, or divide the gift, or question the title; but that I may be wholly thine, and for ever, clarify my understanding, sanctify my will, replenish my memory with arguments of piety; then shall I present to thee an oblation rich and precious, as the treble gift of the Levantine princes. Lord, I am thine, reject me not from thy favour, exclude me not from thy presence: then shall I serve thee all the days of my life, and partake of the glories of thy kingdom in which thou reignest gloriously and eternally. Amen.

[g] Nam simul terris animisque duri,
Et suâ Bessi nive duriores,
Nunc oves facti, duce te, gregantur
Pacis in aulam.
Nox ubi quondam fuerat ferarum,
Nunc ibi ritus viget angelorum,
Et latet Justus quibus ipse latro
Vixit in antris.
S. PAULINUS in Reditu Niceteæ.

SECTION V.

Of the Circumcision of Jesus, and his Presentation in the Temple.

1. AND now the blessed Saviour of the world began to do the work of his mission and our redemption: and because man had prevaricated all the Divine commandments, to which all human nature respectively to the persons of several capacities was obliged, and therefore the whole nature was obnoxious to the just rewards of its demerits; first, Christ was to put that nature he had assumed into a savable condition, by fulfilling his Father's preceptive will, and then to reconcile it actually, by suffering the just deservings of its prevarications. He therefore addresses himself to all the parts of an active obedience; "and when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the Child," he exposed his tender body to the sharpness of the circumcising stone, and shed his blood in drops, giving an earnest of those rivers, which he did afterwards pour out for the cleansing all human nature, and extinguishing the wrath of God.

2. He that had no sin, nor was conceived by natural generation, could have no adherences to his soul or body, which needed to be pared away by a rite, and cleansed by a mystery; neither, indeed, do we find it expressed, that circumcision[a] was ordained for the abolition or pardon of original sin, (it is indeed presumed so,) but it was instituted to be a seal of a covenant between God and Abraham, and

[a] Ὃς ποθ' ἑῆς πάτρης ἐξήγαγε δῖον Ἀβραάμ,
Αὐτὸς ἀπ' οὐρανόθεν κέλετ' ἀνέρα παντὶ σὺν οἴκῳ
Σάρκ' ἀποσυλῆσαι πόσθης ἄπο· καὶ ῥ' ἐτέλεσσεν
EUSEB. l. ix. c. 22. Præpar. Evangel.

Abraham's posterity, "a seal of the righteousness of faith," and therefore was not improper for him to suffer, who was the child of Abraham, and who was the Prince of the covenant, and "the Author and Finisher of that faith" which was consigned to Abraham in circumcision. But so mysterious were all the actions of Jesus, that this one served many ends. For, 1. It gave demonstration of the verity of human nature. 2. So he began to fulfil the law. 3. And took from himself the scandal of uncircumcision, which would eternally have prejudiced the Jews against his entertainment and communion. 4. And then he took upon him that name, which declared him to be the Saviour of the world; which, as it was consummate in the blood of the cross, so it was inaugurated in the blood of circumcision: for "when the eight days were accomplished for circumcising of the Child, his name was called Jesus."

3. But this holy family, who had laid up their joys in the eyes and heart of God, longed, till they might be permitted an address to the temple, that there they might present the holy Babe unto his Father; and indeed that he, who had no other, might be brought to his own house. For although, while he was a child, he did differ nothing from a servant, yet he was the Lord of the place: it was his Father's house, and he was "the Lord of all." And therefore, "when the days of the purification were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord," to whom he was holy, as being the first-born; the "first-born of his mother," the "only-begotten Son of his Father," and "the first-born of every creature." And they "did with him according to the law of Moses, offering a pair of turtle doves" for his redemption.

4. But there was no public act about this holy Child, but it was attended by something miraculous and extraordinary. And, at this instant, the Spirit of God directed a holy person into the temple, that he might feel the fulfilling of a prophecy made to himself, that he might, before his death, "behold the Lord's Christ," and embrace "the glory and consolation of Israel, and the light of the gentiles," in his arms: for old "Simeon came by the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God," and prophesied, and spake glorious things of that Child, and things sad and glorious concerning his mother; that the "Child was set for the rising and falling of many in Israel, for a sign that should be spoken against:" and the bitterness of that contradiction should pierce the heart of the holy virgin-mother like a sword, that her joy at the present accidents might be attempered with present revelation of her future trouble, and the excellent savour of being the mother of God might be crowned with the reward of martyrdom, and a mother's love be raised up to an excellency great enough to make her suffer the bitterness of being transfixed with his love and sorrow as with a sword.

5. But old Anna, the prophetess, came also in, full of years and joy, and found the reward of her long prayers and fasting in the temple: the long-looked-for redemption of Israel was now in the temple, and she saw with her eyes the Light of the World, the Heir of Heaven, the long-looked-for Messias, whom the nations had desired and expected, till their hearts were faint, and their eyes dim, with looking farther, and apprehending greater distances. She also prophesied, "and gave thanks unto the Lord. But Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him."

Ad SECTION V.

Considerations upon the Circumcision of the holy Child Jesus.

1. WHEN eight days were come, the holy Jesus was circumcised, and shed the first fruits of his blood; offering them to God, like the prelibation of a sacrifice, and earnest of the great seas of effusion designed for his passion, not for the expiation of any stain himself had contracted; for he was spotless as the face of the sun, and had contracted no wrinkle from the aged and polluted brow of Adam: but it was an act of obedience, and yet of choice and voluntary susception, to which no obligation had passed upon him in the condition of his own person. For, as he was included in the verge of Abraham's posterity, and had put on the common outside of his nation, his parents had intimation enough to pass upon him the sacrament of the national covenant, and it became an act of excellent obedience: but because he was a person extraordinary, and exempt from the reasons of circumcision, and himself in person was to give period to the rite, therefore it was an act of choice in him, and in both the capacities becomes a precedent of duty to us; in the first, of obedience; in the second, of humility.

2. But it is considerable, that the holy Jesus, who might have pleaded his exemption, especially in a matter of pain and dishonour, yet chose that way, which was more severe and regular; so teaching us to be strict in our duties, and sparing in the rights of privilege and dispensation. We pretend every indisposition of body to excuse us from penal duties, from fasting, from going to church; and instantly we satisfy ourselves with saying, "God will have mercy, and not sacrifice;" so making ourselves judges of our own privileges, in which commonly we are parties against God, and therefore likely to pass unequal sentence. It is not an easy argument, that will bring us to the severities and rigours of duty; but we snatch at occasions of dispensation, and therefore possibly may mistake the justice of the opportunities by the importunities of our desires. However, if this too much easiness be, in any case, excusable from sin, yet, in all cases, it is an argument of infirmity; and the regular observation of the commandment is the surer way to perfection. For not every inconvenience of body is fit to be pleaded against the inconvenience of losing spiritual advantages, but only such, which upon prudent account does intrench upon the laws of charity; or such, whose consequent is likely to be impediment

of a duty in a greater degree of loss, than the present omission. For the spirit being in many perfections more eminent than the body, all spiritual improvements have the same proportions; so that, if we were just estimators of things, it ought not to be less than a great incommodity to the body, which we mean to prevent by the loss of a spiritual benefit, or the omission of a duty: he were very improvident, who would lose a finger for the good husbandry of saving a ducat; and it would be an unhandsome excuse from the duties of repentance, to pretend care of the body. The proportions and degrees of this are so nice, and of so difficult determination, that men are more apt to untie the girdle of discipline with the loose hands of dispensation and excuse, than to strain her too hard by the strictures and bindings of severity; but the error were the surer on this side.

3. The blessed Jesus refused not the signature of this bloody covenant, though it were the character of a sinner; and did sacramentally rescind the impure reliques of Adam, and the contractions of evil customs; which was the greatest descent of humility that is imaginable, that he should put himself to pain to be reckoned amongst sinners, and to have their sacraments and their protestations, though his innocence was purer than the flames of cherubim. But we use arts to seem more righteous than we are, desiring rather to be accounted holy, than to be so; as thinking the vanity of reputation more useful to us, than the happiness of a remote and far distant eternity. But if (as it is said) circumcision was ordained, besides the signing of the covenant, to abolish the guilt of original sin, we are willing to confess that; it being no act of humiliation to confess a crime, that all the world is equally guilty of, that could not be avoided by our timeliest industry, and that serves us for so many ends in the excuse and minoration of our actual impieties: so that, as Diogenes trampled upon Plato's pride with a greater fastuousness and humorous ostentation; so we do with original sin, declaim against it bitterly, to save the others harmless, and are free in the publication of this, that we may be instructed how to conceal the actual. The blessed Jesus had in him no principle of sin, original nor actual; and therefore this designation of his, in submitting himself to the bloody covenant of circumcision, which was a just express and sacramental abscission of it, was an act of glorious humility; yet our charging of ourselves so promptly with Adam's fault, whatever truth it may have in the strictness of theology, hath (forsitan) but an ill end in morality; and so I now consider it, without any reflection upon the precise question.

4. For though the fall of Adam lost to him all those supernatural assistances, which God put into our nature by way of grace; yet it is by accident, that we are more prone to many sins than we are to virtue. Adam's sin did discompose his understanding and affections; and every sin we do, does still make us more unreasonable, more violent, more sensual, more apt still to the multiplication of the same or the like actions: the first rebellion of the inferior faculties against the will and understanding, and every victory the flesh gets over the spirit, makes the inferior insolent, strong, tumultuous, domineering, and triumphant, upon the proportionable ruins of the spirit, blinding our reason and binding our will; and all these violations of our powers are increased by the perpetual ill customs, and false principles, and ridiculous guises of the world; which make the later ages to be worse than the former,[a] unless some other accident do intervene, to stop the ruin and declension of virtue; such as are God's judgments, the sending of prophets, new imposition of laws, messages from heaven, diviner institutions, such as in particular was the great discipline of christianity. And even in this sense here is origination enough for sin, and impairing of the reasonable faculties of human souls, without charging our faults upon Adam.

5. But besides this, God, who hath propounded to man glorious conditions, and designed him to an excellent state of immortality, hath required of him such a duty, as shall put man to labour, and present to God a service of a free and difficult obedience. For therefore God hath given us laws, which come cross and are restraints to our natural inclinations, that we may part with something in the service of God which we value. For although this is nothing in respect of God, yet to man it is the greatest he can do. What thanks were it to man to obey God in such things, which he would do, though he were not commanded? But to leave all our own desires, and to take up objects of God's propounding, contrary to our own, and desires against our nature, this is that, which God designed as a sacrifice of ourselves to him. And, therefore, God hath made many of his laws to be prohibitions in the matter of natural pleasure, and restraints of our sensitive appetite. Now, this being become the matter of Divine laws, that we should, in many parts and degrees, abstain from what pleases our senses, by this supervening accident it happens, that we are very hardly weaned from sin, but most easily tempted to a vice. And then we think we have reason to lay the fault upon original sin, and natural aversation from goodness, when this inclination to vice is but accidental, and occasional upon the matter and sanction of the laws. Our nature is not contrary to virtue, for the laws of nature and right reason do not only oblige us, but incline us to it;[b] but the instances of some virtues are made to come cross to our nature, that is, to our natural appetites; by reason of which it comes to pass, that (as St. Paul says) "we are by nature the children of wrath;"[c] meaning, that, by our natural inclinations, we are disposed to contradict those laws which lay fetters upon them, we are

[a] Τοὺς παλαιοὺς καὶ ἐγγὺς θεῶν γεγονότας, βελτίστους τε ὄντας φύσει, καὶ τὸν ἄριστον ἐζηκότας βίον, ὡς χρυσοῦν γένος νομίζεσθαι.—Porphyr. lib. iv. de non Esu Animalium.

[b] Τοιοῦτος μὲν οὖν ὁ τοῖς λογικοῖς γένεσι ἐνοσιούμενος ὅρκος, μὴ παραβαίνειν ὑπ' αὐτῶν [Θεοῦ] διορισθέντας νόμους. —Hieroc.

[c] Ephes. ii 3.

apt to satisfy the lusts of the flesh; for in these he there instances.

6. But in things intellectual and spiritual, where neither the one nor the other satisfy the sensual part, we are indifferent to virtue or to vice; and, when we do amiss, it is, wholly, and in all degrees, inexcusably our own fault. In the old law, when it was a duty to swear by the God of Israel in solemn causes, men were apt enough to swear by him only; and that sometimes the Israelites did swear by the queen of heaven, it was by the ill example and desires to comply with the neighbour nations, whose daughters they sometimes married, or whose arms they feared, or whose friendship they desired, or with whom they did negociate. It is indifferent to us to love our fathers, and to love strangers, according as we are determined by custom or education. Nay, for so much of it as is natural and original, we are more inclined to love them than to disrepute them; and if we disobey them, it is when any injunction of theirs comes cross to our natural desires and purposes. But if, from our infancy, we be told concerning a stranger, that he is our father, we frame our affections to nature, and our nature to custom and education, and are as apt to love him who is not, and yet is said to be, as him who is said not to be, and yet indeed is, our natural father.

7. And in sensual things, if God had commanded polygamy or promiscuous concubinate, or unlimited eatings and drinkings, it is not to be supposed but that we should have been ready enough to have obeyed God in all such impositions: and the sons of Israel never murmured, when God bade them borrow jewels and ear-rings, and spoil the Egyptians. But because God restrained these desires, our duties are the harder, because they are fetters to our liberty, and contradictions to those natural inclinations, which also are made more active by evil custom and unhandsome educations. From which premises we shall observe, in order to practice, that sin creeps upon us in our education so tacitly and undiscernibly,[d] that we mistake the cause of it, and yet so prevalently and effectually, that we judge it to be our very nature, and charge it upon Adam, to lessen the imputation upon us, or to increase the license or the confidence, when every one of us is the Adam, the "man of sin," and the parent of our own impurities. For it is notorious, that our own iniquities do so discompose our naturals, and evil customs and examples do so encourage impiety, and the law of God enjoins such virtues, which do violence to nature, that our proclivity to sin is occasioned by the accident, and is caused by ourselves; whatever mischief Adam did to us, we do more to ourselves.[e] We are taught to be revengeful in our cradles, and are taught to strike our neighbour, as a means to still our frowardness, and to satisfy our wranglings. Our nurses teach us to know the greatness of our birth, or the riches of our inheritance; or they learn us to be proud, or to be impatient, before they learn us to know God, or to say our prayers. And then, because the use of reason comes at no definite time, but insensibly and divisibly, we are permitted such acts with impunity too long; deferring to repute them to be sins, till the habit is grown strong, natural, and masculine. And because from the infancy it began in inclinations, and tender overtures, and slighter actions, Adam is laid in the fault, and original sin did all: and this clearly we therefore confess,[f] that our faults may seem the less, and the misery be pretended natural, that it may be thought to be irremediable, and therefore we not engaged to endeavour a cure; so that the confession of our original sin is no imitation of Christ's humility in suffering circumcision, but too often an act of pride, carelessness, ignorance, and security.

8. At the circumcision, his parents imposed the holy name told to the Virgin by the angel, "his name was called Jesus;" a name above every name. For, in old times, God was known by names of power, of nature, of majesty. But his name of mercy was reserved till now, when God did purpose to pour out the whole treasure of his mercy by the mediation and ministry of his holy Son. And because God gave to the holy Babe the name, in which the treasures of mercy were deposited, and exalted "this name above all names," we are taught that the purpose of his counsel was, to exalt and magnify his mercy above all his other works; he being delighted with this excellent demonstration of it, in the mission, and manifestation, and crucifixion, of his Son; he hath changed the ineffable name into a name utterable by man, and desirable by all the world; the majesty is all arrayed in robes of mercy, the tetragrammaton,[g] or adorable mystery of the patriarchs, is made fit for pronunciation and expression, when it becometh the name of the Lord's Christ. And if Jehovah be full of majesty and terror, the name Jesus is full of sweetness and mercy. It is God clothed with circumstances of facility, and opportunities of approximation. The great and highest

[d] Non enim nos tarditatis natura damnavit, sed ultrà nobis quod oportebat indulsimus: ità non tam ingenio nos illi superârunt quàm proposito.—QUINCTIL.

Ξενοκράτης φησὶν, εὐδαίμονα εἶναι τὸν τὴν ψυχὴν ἔχοντα σπουδαίαν, ταύτην γὰρ ἑκάστῳ εἶναι δαίμονα.—ARIST. ii. Top. c. 3.

Ἡράκλειτος ἔφη, ὡς ἦθος ἀνθρώπῳ δαίμων.—STOB. Serm. 250.

[e] ——————— Denique teipsum
Concute, numque tibi vitiorum inseverit olim
Natura, aut etiam consuetudo mala: namque
Neglectis urenda filix innascitur agris.
HORAT.

Antè palatum eorum quàm os instituimus. Gaudemus, si quid licentiùs dixerint. Verba ne Alexandrinis quidem permittenda deliciis risu et osculo excipimus. Fit ex his consuetudo, deinde natura. Discunt hæc miseri, antequam sciunt vitia esse.—QUINCTIL. lib. i. c. 2.

Tanta est corruptela malæ consuetudinis, ut ab ea tanquam igniculi extinguantur à natura dati, exorianturque et confirmentur contraria vitia.—CICERO, 3. T. Q. 2.

[f] Εἰώθασι γὰρ οἱ πλεῖστοι τῶν ἀνθρώπων, οὐχ οὕτως ἐπαινεῖν καὶ τιμᾶν τοὺς ἐκ τῶν πατέρων τῶν εὐδοκιμούντων γεγονότας, ὡς τοὺς ἐκ τῶν δυσκόλων καὶ χαλεπῶν, ἥπερ φαίνωνται μηδὲν ὅμοιοι τοῖς γονεῦσιν ὄντες.—ISOCRATES Ep. Timoth.

[g] Nomen enim Jesu Hebraicè prolatum nihil aliud est nisi Τετραγράμματον vocatum per Schin. Videat, cui animus est, multa de mysterio hujus nominis apud Galatinum. Ad eundem sensum fuit vaticinium Sibyllæ:

Δὴ τότε γὰρ μεγάλοιο Θεοῦ τοῖς ἀνθρώποισιν
Ἥξει σαρκοφόρος, θνητοῖς ὁμοιούμενος ἐν γῇ,
Τέσσαρα φωνήεντα φέρων, τὸ δ' ἄφωνον ἐν αὐτῷ.

name of God could not be pronounced truly, till it came to be finished with a guttural, that made up the name given by this angel to the holy Child; nor God received or entertained by men, till he was made human and sensible, by the adoption of a sensitive nature, like vowels pronunciable by the intertexture of a consonant. Thus was his person made tangible, and his name utterable, and his mercy brought home to our necessities, and the mystery made explicate, at the circumcision of this holy Babe.

9. But now God's mercy was at full sea, now was the time when God made no reserves to the effusion of his mercy. For to the patriarchs, and persons of eminent sanctity and employment in the elder ages of the world, God, according to the degrees of his manifestation or present purpose, would give them one letter of this ineffable name. For the reward, that Abraham had in the change of his name, was, that he had the honour done him to have one of the letters of Jehovah put into it; and so had Joshua, when he was a type of Christ, and the prince of the Israelitish armies: and when God took away[h] one of these letters, it was a curse. But now he communicated all the whole name to this holy Child, and put a letter more to it, to signify that he was the glory of God, "the express image of his Father's person," God eternal; and then manifested to the world in his humanity, that all the intelligent world, who expected beatitude, and had treasured all their hopes in the ineffable name of God, might find them all, with ample returns, in this name of Jesus, which God "hath exalted above every name," even above that, by which God, in the Old Testament, did represent the greatest awfulness of his majesty. This miraculous name is above all the powers of magical enchantments, the nightly rites of sorcerers, the secrets of Memphis, the drugs of Thessaly, the silent and mysterious murmurs of the wise Chaldees, and the spells of Zoroastres. This is the name, at which the devils did tremble, and pay their enforced and involuntary adorations, by confessing the divinity, and quitting their possessions and usurped habitations. If our prayers be made in this name, God opens the windows of heaven, and rains down benediction: at the mention of this name, the blessed apostles, and Hermione, the daughter of St. Philip, and Philotheus, the son of Theophila, and St. Hilarion, and St. Paul the Eremite, and innumerable other lights, who followed hard after the Sun of righteousness, wrought great and prodigious miracles: "Signs and wonders and healings were done by the name of the holy Child Jesus." This is the name, which we should engrave in our hearts, and write upon our foreheads, and pronounce with our most harmonious accents, and rest our faith upon, and place our hopes in, and love with the overflowings of charity, and joy, and adoration. And as the revelation of this name satisfied the hopes of all the world, so it must determine our worshippings, and the addresses of our exterior and interior religion; it being that name, whereby God and God's mercies are made presential to us, and proportionate objects of our religion and affections.

[h] Isa. xxi. 11. in casu Idumeæ; Duma vocatur, dempto H.

THE PRAYER.

Most holy and ever blessed Jesu, who art infinite in essence, glorious in mercy, mysterious in thy communications, affable and presential in the descents of thy humanity; I adore thy glorious name, whereby thou hast shut up the abysses, and opened the gates of heaven, restraining the power of hell, and discovering and communicating the treasures of thy Father's mercies. O Jesu, be thou a Jesus unto me, and save me from the precipices and ruins of sin, from the expresses of thy Father's wrath, from the miseries and insufferable torments of accursed spirits, by the power of thy majesty, by the sweetnesses of thy mercy, and sacred influences and miraculous glories of thy name. I adore and worship thee in thy excellent obedience and humility, who hast submitted thy innocent and spotless flesh to the bloody covenant of circumcision. Teach me to practise so blessed and holy a precedent, that I may be humble, and obedient to thy sacred laws, severe and regular in my religion, mortified in my body and spirit, of circumcised heart and tongue; that what thou didst represent in symbol and mystery, I may really express in the exhibition of an exemplar, pious, and mortified life, cutting off all excrescences of my spirit, and whatsoever may minister to the flesh, or any of its ungodly desires; that now thy holy name is called upon me, I may do no dishonour to the name, nor scandal to the institution, but may do thee honour and worship, and adorations of a pure religion, O most holy and ever-blessed Jesu. Amen.

DISCOURSE II.

Of the Virtue of Obedience.

1. There are certain excellencies, either of habit or consideration, which spiritual persons use to call general ways; being a dispersed influence into all the parts of good life, either directing the single actions to the right end, or managing them with right instruments, and adding special excellencies and formalities to them, or morally inviting to the repetition of them. But they are like the general medicaments in physic, or the prime instruments in mathematical disciplines: such as are the consideration of the Divine presence, the example of Jesus, right intention; and such also is the virtue of obedience, which perfectly unites our actions to God, and conforms us to the Divine will, which is the original of goodness; and sanctifies and makes a man an holocaust to God, which contains in it eminently all other graces, but especially those graces, whose essence consists in a conformity of a part or the whole (such are faith, humility, pa-

tience, and charity); which gives quietness and tranquillity to the spirit, and is an antepast of Paradise (where their jubilee is the perpetual joys of obedience, and their doing is the enjoying the Divine pleasure); which adds an excellency and lustre to pious actions, and hallows them which are indifferent, and lifts up some actions from their unhallowed nature, to circumstances of good and of acceptation. If a man says his prayers, or communicates out of custom, or without intuition of the precept and Divine commandment, the act is like a ship returning from her voyage without her venture and her burden, as unprofitable as without stowage. But if God commands us either to eat or to abstain, to sleep or to be waking, to work or to keep a sabbath; these actions, which are naturally neither good nor evil, are sanctified by the obedience, and ranked amongst actions of the greatest excellency. And this also was it which made Abraham's offer to kill his son, and the Israelites' spoiling the Egyptians, to become acts laudable, and not unjust: they were acts of obedience, and therefore had the same formality and essence with actions of the most spiritual devotions. God's command is all our rule for practice; and our obedience, united to the obedience of Jesus, is all our title to acceptance.

2. But by obedience, I do not here mean the exterior execution of the work; for so, obedience is no grace, distinct from the acting any or all the commandments: but besides the doing of the thing, (for that also must be presupposed,) it is a sacrifice of our proper will to God, a choosing the duty, because God commands it. For beasts also carry burdens, and do our commands, by compulsion; and the fear of slaves, and the rigour of task-masters, made the number of bricks to be completed, when Israel groaned, and cried to God for help. But sons, that labour under the sweet paternal regiment of their fathers, and the influence of love, they love the precept, and do the imposition, with the same purposes and compliant affections, with which the fathers made it. When Christ commanded us to renounce the world, there were some, that did think it was a hard saying, and do so still; and the young rich man forsook him upon it: but Ananias and Sapphira, upon whom some violences were done by custom, or the excellent sermons of the apostles, sold their possessions too; but it was so against their will, that they retained part of it. But St. Paul did not only forsake all his secular fortunes, but "counted all to be dross, that he might gain Christ;" he gave his will, made an offertory of that, as well as of his goods, choosing the act which was enjoined. This was the obedience the holy Jesus paid to his heavenly Father, so voluntary, that it was "meat to him to do his Father's will."[a]

3. And this was intended always by God, "My son, give thy heart;" and particularly by the holy Jesus: for, in the saddest instance of all his precepts, even that of suffering persecution, we are commanded to "rejoice, and to be exceeding glad." And so did those holy martyrs, in the primitive ages, who upon just grounds, when God's glory, or the edification of the church, had interest in it,[b] offered themselves to tyrants, and dared the violence of the most cruel and bowelless hangmen. And this is the best oblation we can present to God. "To offer gold,[c] is a present fit to be made by young beginners in religion, not by men in christianity; yea, Crates the Theban threw his gold away, and so did Antisthenes: but to offer our will to God, to give ourselves, is the act of an apostle, the proper act of christians." And therefore, when the apostles made challenge of a reward for leaving all their possessions, Christ makes no reply to the instance, nor says, "You who have left all;" but, "You who have followed me in the regeneration, shall sit upon twelve thrones, and judge the twelve tribes of Israel:" meaning, that the quitting the goods was nothing; but the obedience to Christ, that they followed Jesus in the regeneration, going themselves in pursuit of him, and giving themselves to him, that was it which entitled them to a throne.

4. And this, therefore, God enjoins, that our offerings to him may be entire and complete; that we pay him a holocaust; that we do his work without murmuring; and that his burden may become easy, when it is borne up by the wings of love and alacrity of spirit. For, in effect, this obedience of the will is, in true speaking and strict theology, nothing else but that charity, which gives excellency to alms, and energy to faith, and acceptance to all graces. But I shall reduce this to particular and more minute considerations.

5. First: We shall best know, that our will is in the obedience, by our prompt undertaking,[d] by our cheerful managing, by our swift execution; for all degrees of delay are degrees of immorigerousness and unwillingness. And since time is extrinsical to the act, and alike to every part of it, nothing determines an action but the opportunity without, and the desires and willingness within. And therefore he who deliberates beyond his first opportunity, and exterior determination and appointment of the act, brings fire and wood, but wants a lamb for the sacrifice; and unless he offer up his Isaac, his beloved will, he hath no ministry prepared for God's acceptance. He that does not repent to-day, puts it to the question, whether he will repent at all or no. He that defers restitution, when all the circumstances are fitted, is not yet resolved upon the duty. And when he does it, if he does it against his will, he does but do honorary penance with a paper upon his hat, and a taper in his hand; it may satisfy the law, but not satisfy his conscience; it neither pleases himself, and less pleases

[a] John iv. 34. [b] S. Hieron. Epist. ad Licin. Hispan.
[c] Idem in Matt. xix. 28.
[d] Fidelis obediens nescit moras, fugit crastinum, ignorat tarditatem, præcipit præcipientem, parat oculos visui, aures auditui, linguam voci, manus operi, itineri pedes: totum se colligit, ut imperantis colligat voluntatem.—S. BERNARD. Serm. de Obedient.
Et barbaris cunctatio servilis, statim exsequi regium.—TACIT. lib. vi. Annal. 32.

God. A sacrifice without a heart was a sad and ominous presage in the superstition of the Roman augurs, and so it is in the service of God; for what the exhibition of the work is to man, that the presentation of the will is to God. It is but a cold charity to a naked beggar to say, "God help thee," and do nothing; give him clothes, and he feels your charity. But God, who is the searcher of the heart, his apprehension of actions relative to him is of the inward motions and addresses of the will; and, without this, our exterior services are like the paying of a piece of money, in which we have defaced the image; it is not current.

6. Secondly: But besides the willingness to do the acts of express command, the readiness to do the intimations and tacit significations of God's pleasure is the best testimony in the world, that our will is in the obedience. Thus did the holy Jesus undertake a nature of infirmity, and suffer a death of shame and sorrow, and became obedient from the circumcision even unto the death of the cross; not staying for a command, but because it was his Father's pleasure mankind should be redeemed. For, before the susception of it, he was not a person subjicible to a command: it was enough, that he understood the inclinations and designs of his Father's mercies. And therefore God hath furnished us with instances of uncommanded piety to be a touchstone of our obedience. He that does but his endeavour about the express commands, hath a bridle in his mouth, and is restrained by violence; but a willing spirit is like a greedy eye, devours all it sees, and hopes to make some proportionable returns and compensations of duty for his infirmity, by taking in the intimations of God's pleasure. When God commands chastity, he that undertakes a holy celibate, hath great obedience to the command of chastity. God bids us give alms of our increase; he obeys this with great facility, that "sells all his goods, and gives them to the poor." And, provided our hastiness to snatch at too much, does not make us let go our duty, like the indiscreet loads of too forward persons, too big, or too inconvenient and uncombined, there is not in the world a greater probation of our prompt obedience, than when we look farther than the precise duty, swallowing that and more with our ready and hopeful purposes; nothing being so able to do miracles as love, and yet nothing being so certainly accepted as love, though it could do nothing in productions and exterior ministries.

7. Thirdly: But God requires that our obedience should have another excellency to make it a becoming present to the Divine acceptance; our understanding must be sacrificed too, and become an ingredient of our obedience. We must also believe, that whatsoever God commands, is most fitting to be commanded, is most excellent in itself, and the best for us to do. The first gives our affections and desires to God, and this also gives our reason, and is a perfection of obedience not communicable to the duties we owe to man. For God only is Lord of this faculty, and, being the fountain of all wisdom, therefore commands our understanding, because he alone can satisfy it. We are bound to obey human laws, but not bound to think the laws we live under are the most prudent constitutions in the world. But God's commandments are not only "a lantern to our feet, and a light unto our paths," but a rule to our reason, and satisfaction to our understandings; as being the instruments of our address to God, and conveyances of his grace, and manuductions to eternity. And therefore St. John Climacus defines obedience to be "an unexamined and unquestioned motion, a voluntary death and sepulture of the will, a life without curiosity, a laying aside our own discretion in the midst of the riches of the most excellent understandings."

8. And certainly there is not in the world a greater strength against temptations, than is deposited in an obedient understanding; because that only can regularly produce the same affections, it admits of fewer degrees, and an unfrequent alteration. But the actions proceeding from the appetite, as it is determined by any other principle than a satisfied understanding, have their heightenings and their declensions, and their changes and mutations, according to a thousand accidents. Reason is more lasting than desire, and with fewer means to be tempted; but affections and motions of appetite, as they are procured by any thing, so may they expire by as great variety of causes. And therefore, to serve God by way of understanding, is surer, and in itself [unless it be by the accidental increase of degrees] greater, than to serve him upon the motion and principle of passions and desires; though this be fuller of comfort and pleasure than the other. When Lot lived amongst the impure Sodomites, where his righteous soul was in a continual agony, he had few exterior incentives to a pious life, nothing to enkindle the sensible flame of burning desires toward piety; but in the midst of all the discouragements of the world, nothing was left him but the way and precedency of a truly-informed reason and conscience. Just so is the way of those wise souls, who live in the midst of "a crooked and perverse generation:" where piety is out of countenance, where austerity is ridiculous, religion under persecution, no examples to lead us on; there the understanding is left to be the guide, and it does the work the surest; for this makes the duty of many to be certain, regular, and chosen, constant, integral, and perpetual: but this way is like the life of an unmarried or a retired person, less of grief in it, and less of joy. But the way of serving God with the affections, and with the pleasures and entertainments of desires, is the way of the more passionate and imperfect, not in a man's power to choose or to procure; but comes by a thousand chances, meeting with a soft nature, credulous or weak, easy or ignorant, softened with fears, or invited by forward desires.

9. Those that did live amidst the fervours of the primitive charity, and were warmed by their fires, grew inflamed by contact and vicinity to such burning and shining lights. And they therefore grew to high degrees of piety, because then every man made judgment of his own actions by the proportions which he saw before him, and believed all de-

scents from those greater examples to be so many degrees from the rule. And he that lives in a college of devout persons, will compare his own actions with the devotion and customs of that society, and not with the remissness of persons he hears of in story, but what he sees and lives with. But if we live in an age of indevotion, we think ourselves well assoiled if we be warmer than their ice; every thing, which is above our example, being eminent and conspicuous, though it be but like the light of a glow-worm, or the sparkling of a diamond, yet, if it be in the midst of darkness, it is a goodly beauty. This I call the way of serving God by desires and affections: and this is altered by example, by public manners, by external works, by the assignment of offices, by designation of conventions for prayer, by periods and revolutions of times of duty, by hours and solemnities; so that a man shall owe his piety to these chances, which, although they are graces of God, and instruments of devotion, yet they are not always in our power; and therefore they are but accidental ministers of a good life, and the least constant or durable. But when the principle of our piety is a conformity of our understanding to God's laws; when we are instructed what to do, and therefore do it, because we are satisfied it is most excellent to obey God; this will support our piety against objections, lead it on in despite of disadvantages: this chooses God with reason, and is not determined from without. And as it is in some degree necessary for all times, so it is the greatest security against the change of laws and princes, and religions and ages: when all the incentives of affections and exterior determinations of our piety shall cease, and perhaps all external offices, and "the daily sacrifice," and piety itself, shall fail from the face of the land; then the obedience, founded in the understanding, is the only lasting strength left us to make retreat to, and to secure our conditions. Thus, from the composition of the will and affections with our exterior acts of obedience to God, our obedience is made willing, swift, and cheerful; but from the composition of the understanding our obedience becomes strong, sincere, and persevering; and this is that which St. Paul calls "our reasonable service."

10. Fourthly: To which if we add, that our obedience be universal, we have all the qualifications which make the duty to be pious and prudent. The meaning is, that we obey God in all his sanctions, though the matter be in common account small and inconsiderable, and give no indulgence to ourselves to recede from the rule, in any matter whatsoever. For the veriest minute of obedience is worth our attention, as being by God esteemed the trial of our obedience in a greater affair. "He that is unjust in a little, will be unjust in a greater,"[e] said our blessed Saviour. And since to God all matter is alike, and no more accrues to him in an hecatomb than in a piece of gum, in an ascetic severity than in a secular life, God regards not the matter of a precept, but the obedience, which in all instances is the same; and he that will prevaricate, when the matter is trifling, and, by consequence, the temptations to it weak and impotent, and soon confuted, will think he may better be excused, when the temptations are violent and importunate; as it commonly happens in affairs of greater importance. He that will lie to save sixpence, will not stick at it when a thousand pound is the purchase; and possibly there is more contempt and despite done to the Divine authority, when we disobey it in such particulars, wherein the obedience is most easy, and the temptations less troublesome. I do not say there is more injustice or more malice in a small disobedience than in a greater; but there is either more contempt, or more negligence and dissolution of discipline, than in the other.

11. And it is no small temptation of the devil, soliciting of us not to be curious of scruples and grains, not to disturb our peace for lighter disobediences; persuading us that something must be indulged to public manners, something to the civilities of society, something to nature, and to the approaches of our passions, and the motions of our first desires; but that "we be not over-righteous." And true it is, that sometimes such surreptions and smaller indecencies are therefore pardoned, and lessened almost to anullity, because they dwell in the confines of things lawful and honest, and are not so notorious as to be separated from permissions by any public, certain, and universal cognizance; and therefore may pass upon a good man, sometimes without observation. But it is a temptation, when we think of neglecting them by a predetermined incuriousness, upon pretence they are small. But this must be reduced to more regular conclusions.

12. First: Although smaller disobediences expressed in slight misbecoming actions, when they come by surprise and sudden invasion, are, through the mercies of God, dashed in the very approach, their bills of accusation are thrown out, and they are not esteemed as competent instruments of separation from God's love; yet when a smaller sin comes by design, and is acted with knowledge and deliberation, (for then it is properly an act of disobedience,) "malitia supplet defectum ætatis," the malice of the agent heightens the smallness of the act, and makes up the iniquity. To drink liberally once, and something more freely than the strict rules of christian sobriety and temperance permit, is pardoned easier, when without deliberation and by surprise the person was abused, who intended not to transgress a minute, but by little and little was mistaken in his proportions: but if a man by design shall estimate his draughts and his good fellowship, and shall resolve upon a little intemperance, thinking, because it is not very much, it is therefore none at all, that man hath mistaken himself into a crime; and although a little wound upon the finger is very curable, yet the smallest prick upon the heart is mortal: so is a design and purpose of the smallest disobedience in its formality, as malicious and destructive as in its matter it was pardonable and excusable.

[e] Luke xvi. 10.

13. Secondly: Although every lesser disobedience, when it comes singly, destroys not the love of God; (for, although it may lessen the habit, yet it takes not away its natural being, nor interrupts its acceptation, lest all the world should in all instants of time be in a damnable condition;) yet when these smaller obliquities are repeated, and no repentance intervenes, this repetition combines and unites the lesser till they be concentred, and by their accumulation make a crime:[f] and therefore a careless reiterating, and an incurious walking in misbecoming actions, is deadly and damnable in the return, though it was not so much at the setting forth. Every idle word is to be accounted for, but we hope in much mercy; and yet he that gives himself over to immoderate talking,[g] will swell his account to a vast and mountainous proportion, and call all the lesser escapes into a stricter judgment. He that extends his recreation an hour beyond the limits of christian prudence, and the analogy of its severity and employment, is accountable to God for that improvidence and waste of time; but he that shall misspend a day, and because that sin is not scandalous like adultery, or clamorous like oppression, or unusual like bestiality, or crying for revenge like detaining the portion of orphans, shall therefore misspend another day, without revocation of the first by an act of repentance and redemption of it, and then shall throw away a week, still adding to the former account upon the first stock, will at last be answerable for a habit of idleness, and will have contracted a vain and impertinent spirit. For since things, which in their own kind are lawful, become sinful by the degree; if the degree be heightened by intention, or become great, like a heap of sand by a coacervation of the innumerable atoms of dust, the actions are as damnable as any of the natural daughters and productions of hell, when they are entertained without scruple, and renewed without repentance, and continued without dereliction.

14. Thirdly: Although some inadvertencies of our life and lesser disobedience accidentally become less hurtful, and because they are entailed upon the infirmities of a good man, and the less wary customs and circumstances of society, are also consistent with the state of grace; yet all affection[h] to the smallest sins becomes deadly and damnable. "He that loves his danger, shall perish in it," saith the wise man; and every friendly entertainment of an indecency invites in a greater crime; for no man can love a small sin, but there are in the greater crimes of its kind more desirable flatteries, and more satisfactions of sensuality, than in those suckers and sprigs of sin. At first, a little disobedience is proportionable to a man's temper, and his conscience is not fitted to the bulk of a rude crime: but when a man hath accepted the first insinuation of delight and swallowed it, that little sin is past, and needs no more to dispute for entrance; then the next design puts in, and stands in the same probability to succeed the first, and greater than the first had to make the entry. However, to love any thing that God hates, is direct enmity with him; and whatsoever the instance be, it is absolutely inconsistent with charity, and therefore incompetent with the state of grace. So that if the sin be small, it is not a small thing that thou hast given thy love to it; every such person perishes like a fool, cheaply and ingloriously.

15. Fourthly: But it also concerns the niceness and prudence of obedience to God, to stand at farther distance from a vice, than we usually attend to. For many times virtue and vice differ but one degree;[i] and the neighbourhood is so dangerous, that he who desires to secure his obedience and duty to God, will remove further from the danger. For there is a rule of justice, to which if one degree more of severity be added, it degenerates into cruelty; and a little more mercy is remissness, and want of discipline introduces licentiousness, and becomes unmercifulness as to the public, and unjust as to the particular. Now this consideration is heightened, if we observe, that virtue and vice consist not in an indivisible point; but there is a latitude for either, which is not to be judged by any certain rules drawn from the nature of the thing, but to be estimated in proportion to the persons and other accidental circumstances. He that is burdened with a great charge, for whom he is bound, under a curse and the crime of infidelity, to provide, may go farther in the acquisition, and be more provident in the use of his money, than those persons for whom God hath made more ample provisions, and hath charged them with fewer burdens and engagements economical. And yet no man can say, that just beyond such a degree of care stands covetousness, and thus far on this side is carelessness; and a man may be in the confines of death before he be aware. Now, the only way to secure our obedience and duty in such cases, is to remove farther off, and not to dwell upon the confines of the enemy's country. My meaning is, that it is not prudent nor safe for a man to do whatsoever he lawfully may do.

16. For besides that we are often mistaken in our judgments concerning the lawfulness or unlawfulness of actions, he that will do all that he thinks he may lawfully do, if ever he does change his station, and increase in giving himself liberty, will quickly arrive at doing things unlawful. It is good to keep a reserve of our liberty, and to restrain ourselves within bounds narrower than the largest sense of the commandment, that when our affections wander and enlarge themselves, (as some time

[f] Quæ humanæ fragilitati, quamvis parva, tamen crebra subrepunt, si collecta contra nos fuerint, ità nos gravabunt et oppriment, sicut unum aliquod grande peccatum.—S. Aug. lib. 1. hom. 50. Idem lib. de Pœnit. Peccata venialia si multiplicentur, decorum nostrum ità exterminant, ut à cœlestis sponsi amplexibus nos separent.

[g] Γλώσσῃ ματαίᾳ ζημία προστρίβεται.
Æsch. Prom.

Ἀχαλίνων στομάτων τέλος δυστυχία.
Eurip. Bacch.

[h] Nullum peccatum est adeò veniale, quod non fiat criminale, dum placet.—Dist. 25. sect. Nunc autem, ex S. August.

[i] Cùm fas atque nefas exiguo fine libidinum
Discernunt avidi. Horat. Od. xviii. lib. i.

or other they will do,) then they may enlarge beyond the ordinary, and yet be within the bounds of lawfulness. That of which men make a scruple and a question at first, after an habitual resolution of it, stirs no more; but then their question is of something beyond it. When a man hath accustomed himself to pray seven times a day, it will a little trouble his peace if he omits one or two of those times; but if it be resolved then, that he may please God with praying devoutly, though but thrice every day, after he hath digested the scruples of this first question, possibly some accidents may happen, that will put his conscience and reason to dispute, whether three times be indispensably necessary: and still, if he be far within the bounds of lawfulness, 'tis well; but if he be at the margin of it, his next remove may be into dissolution and unlawfulness. He that resolves to gain all that he may lawfully this year, it is odds but next year he will be tempted to gain something unlawfully. He that, because a man may be innocently angry, will never restrain his passion, in a little time will be intemperate in his anger, and mistake both his object and the degree. Thus facetiousness and urbanity, entertained with an open hand, will turn into jestings that are uncomely.

17. If you will be secure, remove your tent, dwell farther off. God hath given us more liberty than we may safely use; and although God is so gracious as to comply much with our infirmities, yet if we do so too, as God's goodness in indulging liberty to us was to prevent our sinning, our complying with ourselves will engage us in it: but if we imprison and confine our affections into a narrower compass, then our extravagancies may be imperfect, but will not easily be criminal. The dissolution of a scrupulous and strict person is not into a vice, but into a less degree of virtue. He that makes a conscience of loud laughter, will not easily be drawn into the wantonness of balls and revellings, and the longer and more impure carnivals. This is the way to secure our obedience; and no men are so curious of their health as they that are scrupulous of the air they breathe in.

But now, for our obedience to man, that hath distinct considerations, and apart.

18. First: All obedience to man is for God's sake; for God, imprinting his authority upon the sons of men,[k] like the sun reflecting upon a cloud, produces a parhelius, or a representation of his own glory, though in great distances and imperfection; it is the Divine authority, though charactered upon a piece of clay, and imprinted upon a weak and imperfect man. And therefore obedience to our superiors must be universal, in respect of persons, "to all superiors." This precept is expressly apostolical: "Be subject to every constitution and authority of man, for the Lord's sake."[l] It is for God's sake, and therefore to every one, "Whether it be to the king, as supreme, or to his ministers in subordination." That is for civil government. For ecclesiastical, this: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account."[m] All, upon whom any ray of the Divine authority is imprinted, whether it be in greater or smaller characters, are, in proportion to their authority, to be obeyed; to all upon the same ground; for "there is no power but of God."[n] So that no infirmity of person, no undervaluing circumstance, no exterior accident, is an excuse for disobedience: and to obey the Divine authority, passing through the dictates of a wise, excellent, and prudent governor, but to neglect the impositions of a looser head, is to worship Christ only upon the mount Tabor, and in the glories of his transfiguration, and to despise him upon mount Calvary, and in the clouds of his inglorious and humble passion: "Not only to the good and gentle," so St. Peter, "but to the harsh and rigid."[o] And it was by Divine Providence, that all those many and stricter precepts of obedience to governors in the New Testament were verified by instances of tyrants, persecutors, idolaters, and heathen princes; and for others amongst whom there was variety of disposition, there is no variety of imposition, but all excuses are removed, and all kinds of governors drawn into the sanction and sacredness of authority.

19. Secondly: Not only "to all governors," but "in all things," we must obey. "Children, obey your parents in all things:"[p] and, "Servants, obey your masters in all things." And this also is upon the same ground; do it "as unto Christ; as unto the Lord, and not unto men."[q] But then this restrains the universality of obedience, that it may run within its own channel; "as unto the Lord," therefore nothing against the Divine commandment. For if God speaks to us by man, transmitting laws for conservation of civil society, for ecclesiastical policy, for justice and personal advantages, for the interests of virtue and religion, for discountenancing of vice, we are to receive it with the same veneration as if God spake himself to us immediately. But because, by his terror upon mount Sinai, he gave testimony, how great favour it is to speak to us by the ministration of our brethren, it were a strange impudence, when we desire a proportionable and gentle instrument of Divine commands, we should, for this very proportion, despise the minister; like the frogs in the apologue, insulting upon their wooden king. But then, if any thing come contrary to a Divine law, know "it is the voice of Jacob," of the supplanter, not of the right heir; and though we must obey man for God's sake, yet we must never disobey God for man's sake. In all things else we find no exception; but according as the superiors intend the obligation, and express it by the signature of laws, customs, interpretations, permissions, and dispensations; that is, so far as the law is obli-

[k] "Εκαστοι τῶν ἐξ ἔθνους ἔνθεόν τι γένος τὸ βασιλικὸν ὑπολαβόντες, θεοὺς ἀυτοῖς πατέρας ἐπεστησαν· καὶ τοίνυν οἷς μὲν τὸ εὐγενὲς καὶ τὸ βασιλικὸν ἄκρως ἐπέπρεπεν, ἐκ Διὸς τούτους ἐποίουν κατάγειν τὸ γένος.—Eustath. ad Iliad. i.

[l] 1 Pet. ii. 13. [m] Heb. xiii. 1. 7.

[n] Rom. xiii. 1.
Regum timendorum in proprios greges,
Reges in ipsos imperium est Jovis,
Cuncta supercilio moventis.—Hor. lib. iii. Od. 1.

[o] Ubi suprâ. [p] Col. iii. 20, 22. [q] Ephes. vi. 5, 7.

gatory in general, and not dispensed with in particular, so far obedience is a duty in all instances of acts, where no sin is ingredient.

20. Thirdly: And here also the smallness and cheapness of the duty does not tolerate disobedience; for the despising the smallest injunction is an act of as formal and direct rebellion, as when the prevarication is in a higher instance. It is here as in Divine laws, but yet with some difference: for small things do so little co-operate to the end of human laws, that a smaller reason does, by way of interpretation and tacit permission, dispense, than can in a Divine sanction, though of the lowest offices. Because God commands duties not for the end, to which they of themselves do co-operate; but to make sacred his authority; and that we, by our obedience, may confess him to be Lord: but in human laws, the authority is made sacred, not primarily for itself, but principally, that the laws, made in order to the conservation of societies, may be observed. So that, in the neglect of the smallest of Divine ordinances, we as directly oppose God's great purpose and intendment as in greater matters; God's dominion and authority (the conservation of which was his principal intention) is alike neglected: but, in omitting a human imposition of small concernment, the case is different;[r] it is certain, there is not any considerable violence done to the public interest by a contemptible omission of a law: the thing is not small, if the commonwealth be not safe, and all her great ends secured: but if they be, then the authority is inviolate, unless a direct contempt were intended; for its being was in order to that end; not for itself, as it is in the case of Divine laws, but that the public interest be safe.

21. And therefore, as great matters of human laws may be omitted for great reasons, so may smaller matters for smaller reasons, but never without reason: for, "causelessly" and "contemptuously" are all one. But in the application of the particulars, either the laws themselves, or custom, or the prudence of a sincere righteous man, or of a wise and disinterested person, is to be the judge. But let no man's confidence increase, from the smallness of the matter to a contempt of the authority; for there are some sins whose malignity is accidentally increased by the slightness of the subject matter; such are blasphemy, perjury, and the contempt of authority. To blaspheme God for the loss of an asper or a penny, to be forsworn in judgment for the rescuing of a few maravides or a five-groats fine, is a worse crime than to be perjured for the saving ten thousand pounds; and to despise authority, when the obedience is so easy as the wearing of a garment or doing of a posture, is a greater and more impudent contempt, than to despise authority imposing a great burden of a more considerable pressure, where human infirmity may tempt to a disobedience, and lessen the crime. And let this caution also be inserted, that we do not at all neglect small impositions, if there be direct and signal injunction in the particular instance. For as a great body of light, transmitting his rays through a narrow hollowness, does, by that small pyramis, represent all the parts of its magnitude and glory; so it may happen, that a public interest, and the concernments of authority, and the peace of a church, and the integral obedience of the subjects, and the conservation of a community, may be transferred to us by an instance, in its own nature, inconsiderable; such as are wearing of a cognizance, remembering of a word, carrying a branch in time of war, and things of the same nature: and therefore, when the hand of authority is stretched out and held forth upon a precept, and designs the duty upon particular reason, or with actual intuition; there is not the same facility of being dispensed with, as in the neglected and unconsidered instances of other duties.

This only I desire to be observed; that if death, or any violent accident, imprisonment, loss of livelihood, or intolerable inconveniences, be made accidentally consequent to the observing of a law merely human, the law binds not in the particular instance. No man is bound to be a martyr for a ceremony, or to die rather than break a canon, or to suffer confiscation of goods for the pertinacious keeping of a civil constitution. And it is not to be supposed, that a lawgiver would have decreed a rite, and bound the lives of the subjects to it, which are of a far greater value than a rite; not only because it were tyrannical and unreasonable, but because the evil of the law were greater than the good of it; it were against the reason of all laws, and destroys the privileges of nature, and it puts a man into a condition as bad as the want of all laws; for nothing is civilly or naturally worse than death, to which the other evils arrive in their proportion. This is to be understood in particular and positive precepts, introduced for reasons particular, that is, less than those are which combine all societies, and which are the cement of all bodies political; I mean, laws ritual in the church, and accidental and emergent in the state. And that, which is the best sign to distinguish these laws from others, is also the reason of the assertion. Laws, decreed with a penalty to the transgressors, cannot bind to an evil greater than that penalty. If it be appointed, that we use a certain form of liturgy, under the forfeiture of five pounds for every omission, I am bound in conscience to obey it, where I can: but I am supposed legally to be disabled, if any tyrant power shall threaten to kill me if I do, or make me pay a hundred pounds, or any thing greater than the forfeiture of the law. For all the civil and natural power of the law is by its coercion, and the appendant punishment. The law operates by rewards and punishments, by hope and fear; and it is unimaginable that the law, under a less penalty, can oblige us, in any case or accident, to suffer a greater. For the compulsion of the tyrant is greater than the coercion of the lawgiver; and the prince, thinking the penalty annexed to be band sufficient, intended no greater evil to the transgressor than the expressed penalty; and therefore much less would he have them, that obey the law by any

[r] De minimis non curat lex.

necessity, be forced to a greater evil; for, then disobedience should escape better than obedience. True it is, every disobeying person, that pays the penalty, is not quite discharged from all his obligation; but it is then, when his disobeying is criminal upon some other stock besides the mere breach of the law, as contempt, scandal, or the like: for the law binds the conscience indirectly, and by consequence; that is, in plain language, God commands us to obey human laws, and the penalty will not pay for the contempt, because that is a sin against God; it pays for the violation of the law, because that was all the direct transgression against man.[s] And then who shall make him recompence, for suffering more than the law requires of him? Not the prince; for it is certain, the greatest value he set upon the law was no bigger than the penalty; and the commonwealth is supposed to be sufficiently secured in her interest by the penalty, or else the law was weak, impotent, and unreasonable. Not God; for it is not an act of obedience to him; for he binds us no farther to obey human laws than the lawgiver himself intends or declares; who cannot reasonably be supposed so over careful, as to bind hay with cords of silk and gold, or sumptuary laws with the threads of life; nor a father commanding his child to wait on him every meal, be thought to intend his obligation, even though the house be ready to fall on his head, or when he is to pass a sudden or unfordable flood, before he can get to him. And that it may appear man ought not, it is certain God himself doth not oblige us, in all cases and in all circumstances, to observe every of his positive precepts. For, "assembling together"[t] is a duty of God's commanding, which we are "not to neglect:" but if death waits at the door of these assemblies, we have the practice of the primitive and best christians, to warrant us to serve God in retirements, and cells, and wildernesses, and leave "the assembling together" till better opportunities. If I receive more benefit, or the commonwealth, or the church and religion, any greater advantage, by my particular obedience in these circumstances, (which cannot easily be supposed will be,) it is a great act of charity to do it, and then to suffer for it: but if it be no more,[u] that is, if it be not expressly commanded to be done, (though with loss of life or confiscation,) it is a good charity to save my own life, or my own estate: and though the other may be better, yet I am not in all cases obliged to do that which is simply the best. It is a tolerable infirmity, and allowed amongst the very first permissions of nature, that I may preserve my life, unless it be in a very few cases, which are therefore clearly to be expressed, or else the contrary is to be presumed, as being a case most favourable. And it is considerable, that nothing is worse than death, but damnation, or something that partakes of that in some of its worst ingredients; such as is a lasting torment, or a daily great misery in some other kind. And therefore, since no human law can bind a man to a worse thing than death, if obedience brings me to death, I cannot be worse, when I disobey it; and I am not so bad, if the penalty of death be not expressed. And so for other penalties, in their own proportions.

This discourse is also to be understood concerning the laws of peace, not of war; not only because every disobedience in war may be punished with death, (according as the reason may chance,) but also, because little things may be of great and dangerous consequence. But in peace it is observable, that there is no human, positive, superinduced law, but by the practice of all the world, (which, because the permission of the prince is certainly included in it, is the surest interpretation,) it is dispensed withal, by ordinary necessities, by reason of lesser inconveniences and common accidents: thus the not saying of our office daily, is excused by the study of divinity; the publishing the banns of matrimony, by an ordinary incommodity; the fasting days of the church, by a little sickness or a journey; and therefore much rather if my estate, and most of all if my life, be in danger with it: and to say, that, in these cases, there is no interpretative permission to omit the particular action, is to accuse the laws and the lawgiver, the one of unreasonableness, the other of uncharitableness.

22. Fourthly: These considerations are upon the execution of the duty; but even towards man our obedience must have a mixture of the will and choice, like as our injunction of obedience to the Divine command. "With good will doing service," (saith the apostle,) for it is impossible to secure the duty of inferiors but by conscience and good will; unless provision could be made against all their secret arts, and concealments and escapings; which, as no providence can foresee, so no diligence can cure. It is but an "eye-service," whatsoever is compelled and involuntary. Nothing rules a man in private, but God and his own desires; and they give laws in a wilderness, and accuse in a cloister, and do execution in a closet, if there be any prevarication.

23. Fifthly: But obedience to human laws goes no farther: we are not bound to obey with a direct and particular act of understanding, as in all Divine sanctions; for so long as our superiors are fallible, though it be highly necessary we conform our wills to their innocent laws, yet it is not a duty, we should think the laws most prudent or convenient; because all laws are not so; but it may concern the interest of humility and self-denial, to be subject to an inconvenient, so it be not a sinful, command: for so we must choose an affliction, when God offers it, and give God thanks for it; and yet we may cry under the smart of it, and call to God for ease and remedy. And yet it were well, if inferiors would not be too busy in disputing the prudence of their governors, and the convenience of their constitutions: whether they be sins or no in the execution, and to our particulars, we are concerned to look to; I say, as to our

[s] Lucius Veratius pro delectamento habuit os hominis liberi palmâ verberare. Eum servus sequebatur crumenam plenam assium gestans, et quemcunque percusserat, jussit statim numerari 25 asses, qui pro mulctâ huic offensæ ex lege XII. Tab. imponebantur.—A. GEL. lib. XX. c. i.

[t] Heb. x. 25. [u] Vide Part ii. Disc. x. n. 11.

particulars; for an action may be a sin in the prince commanding it, and yet innocent in the person executing: as in the case of unjust wars, in which the subject, who cannot, ought not to be a judge, yet must be a minister; and it is notorious in the case of executing an unjust sentence, in which not the executioner, but the judge, is the only unjust person;[x] and he that serves his prince in an unjust war, is but the executioner of an unjust sentence: but whatever goes farther, does but undervalue the person, slight the government, and unloose the golden cords of discipline. For we are not intrusted in providing for degrees, so we secure the kind and condition of our actions. And since God, having derived rays and beams of majesty, and transmitted it in parts upon several states of men,[y] hath fixed human authority and dominion in the golden candlestick of understanding, he that shall question the prudence of his governor, or the wisdom of his sanction, does unclasp the golden rings that tie the purple upon the prince's shoulder; he tempts himself with a reason to disobey, and extinguish the light of majesty by overturning the candlestick, and hiding the opinion of his wisdom and understanding. And let me say this; he that is confident of his own understanding and reasonable powers, (and who is more than he that thinks himself wiser than the laws?) needs no other devil in the neighbourhood, no tempter but himself to pride and vanity, which are the natural parents of disobedience.

24. But a man's disobedience never seems so reasonable,[z] as when the subject is forbidden to do an act of piety, commanded indeed in the general, but uncommanded in certain circumstances. And forward piety and assiduous devotion, a great and indiscreet mortifier, is often tempted to think no authority can restrain the fervours and distempers of zeal in such holy exercises; and yet it is very often as necessary to restrain the indiscretions of a forward person, as to excite the remissness of the cold and frozen. Such persons were the Sarabites, spoken of by Cassian,[a] who were greater labourers and stricter mortifiers, than the religious in families and colleges; and yet they endured no superior, nor laws. But such customs as these are humiliation without humility; humbling the body and exalting the spirit; or, indeed, sacrifices, and no obedience. It was an argument of the great wisdom of the fathers of the desert:[b] when they heard of the prodigious severities exercised by Simeon Stylites upon himself, they sent one of the religious to him, with power to inquire what was his manner of living, and what warrant he had for such a rigorous undertaking, giving in charge to command him to give it over, and to live in a community with them, and according to the common institution of those religious families. The messenger did so; and immediately Simeon removed his foot from his pillar, with a purpose to descend; but the other, according to his commission, called to him to stay, telling him his station and severity were from God. And he that in so great a piety was humble and obedient, did not undertake that strictness out of singularity, nor did it transport him to vanity; for that he had received from the fathers to make judgment of the man, and of his institution: whereas if upon pretence of the great holiness of that course, he had refused the command, the spirit of the person was to be declared caitive and imprudent, and the man driven from his troublesome and ostentatious vanity.

25. Our fasts, our prayers, our watchings, our intentions of duty, our frequent communions, and all exterior acts of religion, are to be guided by our superior, if he sees cause to restrain or assuage any excrescence. For a wound may heal too fast, and then the tumour of the flesh is proud, not healthful; and so may the indiscretions of religion swell to vanity, when we think they grow towards perfection: but when we can endure the caustics and correctives of our spiritual guides, in those things in which we are most apt to please ourselves, then our obedience is regular and humble; and in other things there is less of danger. There is a story told of a very religious person,[c] whose spirit in the ecstasy of devotion, was transported to the clarity of a vision; and he seemed to converse personally with the holy Jesus, feeling from such intercourse great spiritual delights and huge satisfactions. In the midst of these joys, the bell called to prayers; and he, used to the strictness and well instructed in the necessities of obedience, went to the church, and having finished his devotions, returned, and found the vision in the same posture of glories and entertainment; which also said to him, "Because thou hast left me, thou hast found me; for if thou hadst not left me, I had presently left thee." Whatever the story be, I am sure it is a good parable; for the way to increase spiritual comforts is, to be strict in the offices of humble obedience; and we never lose any thing of our joy, by laying it aside to attend a duty; and Plutarch reports more honour of Agesilaus' prudence and modesty, than of his gallantry and military fortune;[d] for he was more honourable by obeying the decree of the Spartan senate, recalling him from the midst of his triumphs, than he could have been by finishing the war with prosperous success and disobedience.

26. Our obedience, being guided by these rules, is urged to us by the consignation of Divine precepts and the loud voice of thunder, even sealed by a signet of God's right hand, the signature of greatest judgments. Gor God did, with greater severity, punish the rebellion of Korah and his company, than the express murmurs against himself; nay, than the high crime of idolatry: for this crime God visited them with a sword; but for disobedi-

[x] Is damnum dat, qui jubet dare: ejus verò nulla culpa est, cui parere necesse fit.—Ulpian, l. 130.

[y] Μὴ ἔριζε γονεῦσι, κἂν δίκαια λέγῃς.—Laert.

[z] Modum autem tenere in eo difficile est, quod bonum esse credideris.—Sen. ep. 23.

[a] Collat. xviii. c. 17.

[b] Apud Euagrium. De eodem Stylite consulat lector Epiph. lib. i. c. 13. Theod. et 7. Synod. gener. et Baron. ad A. D. 432.

[c] Cassian. Collat. iv. Abbat. Dam. c. 20. et S. Basil. Exhort. ad Vitam Monast. S. Greg. lib. xxxv. Moral. c. 13. S. Bern. De Ord. Vitæ et Morum Instit. c. 1.

[d] Titus Manlius securi percussit filium, postquam hostem gloriosè vicerat in interdicta pugna.—A. Gell. lib. ix. c. 13.

ence and mutiny against their superiors, God made the earth to swallow some of them, and fire from heaven to consume the rest; to show that rebellion is to be punished by the conspiration of heaven and earth, as it is hateful and contradictory both to God and man. And it is not amiss to observe that obedience to man, being as it is, "for God's sake," and yet to a person clothed with the circumstances and the same infirmities with ourselves, is a greater instance of humility, than to obey God immediately, whose authority is divine, whose presence is terrible, whose power is infinite, and not at all depressed by exterior disadvantages or lessening appearances; just as it is both greater faith and greater charity to relieve a poor saint for Jesus' sake, than to give any thing to Christ himself, if he should appear in all the robes of glory and immediate address. For it is to God and to Christ, and wholly for their sakes, and to them that the obedience is done, or the charity expressed; but themselves are persons whose awfulness, majesty, and veneration, would rather force than invite obedience or alms. But when God and his holy Son stand behind the cloud, and send their servants to take the homage or the charity, it is the same as if it were done to them, but receives the advantage of acceptation, by the accidental adherences of faith and humility to the several actions respectively. When a king comes to rebels in person, it strikes terror and veneration into them, who are too apt to neglect and despise the persons of his ministers, whom they look upon as their fellow-subjects, and consider not in the exaltation of a deputed majesty. Charles the Fifth found a happy experience of it at Gaunt, in Flanders, whose rebellion he appeased by his presence, which he could hardly have done by his army. But if the king's authority be as much revered in his deputy, as it is sacred in his own person, it is the greater humility and more confident obedience. And as it is certain, that he is the most humble that submits to his inferiors; so, in the same proportion, the lower and meaner the instrument upon which God's authority is borne, the higher is the grace that teaches us to stoop so low. I do not say, that a sin against human laws is greater than a prevarication against a Divine commandment; as the instances may be, the distance is next to infinite, and to touch the earth with our foot within the octaves of Easter, or to taste flesh upon days of abstinence, (even in those places, and to those persons, where they did or do oblige,) have no consideration, if they be laid in balance against the crimes of adultery, or blasphemy, or oppression, because these crimes cannot stand with the reputation and sacredness of Divine authority; but those others may, in most instances, very well consist with the ends of government, which are severally provided for in the diversity of sanctions respectively. But if we make our instances to other purposes, we find, that to mutiny in an army, or to keep private assemblies in a monarchy, are worse than a single thought or morose delectation in a fancy of impurity; because those others destroy government more than these destroy charity of God, or obedience. But then, though the instances may vary the conclusion, yet the formal reason is alike, and disobedience to man is a disobedience against God, for God's authority, and not man's, is imprinted upon the superior; and it is like sacred fire in an earthen censer, as holy as if it were kindled with the fanning of a cherub's wing, or placed just under the propitiatory upon a golden altar; and it is but a gross conceit, which cannot distinguish religion from its porter, Isis from the beast that carried it: so that, in all disobedience to men, in proportion to the greatness of the matter, or the malice of the person, or his contradiction to the ends of government and combinations of society, we may use the words by which the prophet upbraided Israel, "Is it not enough that you are grievous unto men, but will you grieve my God also?" [e] It is a contempt of the Divinity, and the affront is transmitted to God himself, when we despise the power which God hath ordained, and all power of every lawful superior is such; the Spirit of God being witness in the highest measure, "rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness as idolatry." [f] It is spoken of rebellion against God, [g] and all rebellion is so; for "he that despiseth you, despiseth me," [h] saith the blessed Jesus; that is menace enough in the instance of spiritual regiment. And, "you are gathered together against the Lord," saith Moses to the rebellious princes in the conspiracy of Dathan; that is for the temporal. And to encourage this duty I shall use no other words than those of Achilles in Homer, "They that obey in this world, are better than they that command in hell." [i]

A Prayer for the Grace of Holy Obedience.

O Lord and blessed Saviour Jesus, by whose obedience many became righteous, and reparations were made of the ruins, brought to human nature by the disobedience of Adam; thou camest into the world with many great and holy purposes concerning our salvation, and hast given us a great precedent of obedience, which, that thou mightest preserve to thy heavenly Father, thou didst neglect thy life, and becamest obedient even to the death of the cross. O, let me imitate so blessed example, and, by the merits of thy obedience, let me obtain the grace of humility and abnegation of all my own desires in the clearest renunciation of my will; that I may will and refuse in conformity to thy sacred laws and holy purposes; that I may do all thy will cheerfully, choosingly, humbly, confidently, and continually; and thy

[e] Isaiah vii. 13. [f] 1 Samuel xv. 23.

[g] Ἡμῖν δὲ πολλῶν νόμων καὶ καλῶν ὄντων, κάλλιστος οὗτός ἐστι,
Τιμᾶν βασιλέα, καὶ προσκυνεῖν εἰκόνα Θεοῦ πάντα σώζοντος. Plutarch in Themist.

[h] Ὃς μάχεται μακάρεσσιν, ἐμῷ βασιλῆι μάχοιτο.

[i] Βουλοίμην κ' ἐπάρουρος ἐὼν θητεύεμεν ἄλλῳ
Ἀνδρὶ παρ' ἀκλήρῳ, ᾧ μὴ βίοτος πολὺς εἴη,
Ἢ πᾶσιν νεκύεσσι καταφθιμένοισιν ἀνάσσειν.
Od. λ. 488

will may be done upon me with much mercy and fatherly dispensation of thy providence. Amen.

II.

Lord, let my understanding adhere to, and be satisfied in, the excellent wisdom of thy commandments; let my affections dwell in their desires, and all my other faculties be set on daily work for performance of them: and let my love to obey thee make me dutiful to my superiors, upon whom the impresses of thy authority are set by thine own hand; that I may never despise their persons, nor refuse their injunctions, nor choose mine own work, nor murmur at their burdens, nor dispute the prudence of the sanction, nor excuse myself, nor pretend difficulties or impossibilities; but, that I may be indifferent in my desires, and resigned to the will of those whom thou hast set over me; that since all thy creatures obey thy word, I alone may not disorder the creation, and cancel those bands and intermedial links of subordination, whereby my duty should pass to thee and thy glory, but that my obedience being united to thy obedience, I may also have my portion in the glories of thy kingdom, O Lord and blessed Saviour Jesus. Amen.

Considerations upon the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple.

1. THE holy virgin mother, according to the law of Moses, at the expiration of a certain time, came to the temple to be purified. Although, in her sacred parturition, she had contracted no legal impurity, yet she exposed herself to the public opinion and common reputation of an ordinary condition; and still amongst all generations, she is, in all circumstances, accounted blessed, and her reputation no tittle altered, save only, that it is made the more sacred by this testimony of her humility. But this we are taught from the consequence of this instance; that if an end, principally designed in any duty, should be supplied otherwise in any particular person, the duty is nevertheless to be observed; and then the obedience and public order is reason enough for the observation, though the proper end of its designation be wanting in the single person. Thus is fasting designed for mortification[a] of the flesh, and killing all its unruly appetites; and yet married persons, who have another remedy, and a virgin whose temple is hallowed by a gift and the strict observances of chastity, may be tied to the duty: and if they might not, then fasting were nothing else but a publication of our impure desires, and an exposing the person to the confidence of a bold temptation, whilst the young men did observe the faster to be tempted from within. But the holy Virgin, from these acts, (of which, in signification, she had no need, because she sinned not in the conception, nor was impure in the production,) expressed other virtues besides obedience; such as were humble thoughts of herself, devotion and reverence to public sanctions, religion, and charity, which were like the pure leaves of the whitest lily, fit to represent the beauties of her innocence, but were veiled and shadowed by that sacramental of the Mosaic law.

2. The holy Virgin received the greatest favour that any of the daughters of Adam ever did; and knowing from whence, and for whose glory, she had received it, returns the holy Jesus in a present to God again; for she had nothing so precious as himself to make oblation of: and besides that "every first-born among the males was holy to the Lord;" this Child had an eternal and essential sanctity; and until he came into the world, and was made apt for her to make a present of him, there was never in the world any act of adoration proportionable to the honour of the great God; but now there was, and the holy Virgin made it, when she presented the holy Child Jesus. And now, besides that we are taught to return to God whatsoever we have received from him, if we unite our offerings and devotions to this holy present, we shall, by the merit and excellency of this oblation, exhibit to God an offertory, in which he cannot but delight, for the combination's sake and society of his holy Son.

3. The holy mother brought five sicles, and a pair of turtle-doves, to redeem the Lamb of God from the anathema; because every first-born was to be sacrificed to God, or redeemed if it was clean: it was the poor man's price, and the holy Jesus was never set at the greater prices, when he was estimated upon earth. For he, that was Lord of the kingdom, chose his portion among the poor of this world, that he might advance the poor to the riches of his inheritance; and so it was from his nativity hither. For at his birth he was poor, at his circumcision poor, and in the likeness of a sinner; at his presentation poor, and like a sinner and a servant, for he chose to be redeemed with an ignoble price. The five sicles were given to the priest for the redemption of the child; and if the parents were not able, he was to be a servant of the temple, and to minister in the inferior offices to the priest; and this was God's seizure and possession of him: for although all the servants of God are his inheritance, yet the ministers of religion, who derive their portion of temporals from his title, who live upon the corban, and eat the meat of the altar, which is God's peculiar, and come nearer to his holiness by the addresses of an immediate ministration, are God's own upon another and a distinct challenge. But because Christ was to be the prince of another ministry, and the chief priest of another order, he was redeemed from attending the Mosaic rites, which he came to abolish, that he might do his Father's business, in establishing the evangelical. Only remember, that the ministers of religion are but God's usufructuaries: as they are not lords of God's portion, and therefore must dispense it like stewards, not like masters; so the people are not their patrons in paying, nor they

[a] Vide Rodriquez in Explic. Bullæ Cruciatæ; and Sir Thomas More against Tindal.

their beneficiaries in receiving tithes, or other provisions of maintenance; they owe for it to none but to God himself: and it would also be considered, that, in all sacrilegious detentions of ecclesiastical rights, God is the person principally injured.

4. The turtle-doves[d] were offered also with the signification of another mystery. In the sacred rites of marriage, although the permissions of natural desires are such as are most ordinate to their ends, the avoiding fornication, the alleviation of economical cares and vexations, and the production of children, and mutual comfort and support; yet the apertures and permissions of marriage have such restraints of modesty and prudence, that all transgressions of the just order to such ends is a crime: and besides these, there may be degrees of inordination or obliquity of intention, or too sensual complacency, or unhandsome preparations of mind, or unsacramental thoughts; in which particulars, because we have no determined rule but prudence, and the analogy of the rite, and the severity of our religion, which allow in some cases more, in some less, and always uncertain latitudes, for aught we know, there may be lighter transgressions, something that we know not of: and for these at the purification of the woman, it is supposed, the offering was made, and the turtles, by being an oblation, did deprecate a supposed irregularity; but by being a chaste and marital emblem, they professed the obliquity (if any were) was within the protection of the sacred bands of marriage, and therefore so excusable as to be expiated by a cheap offering. And what they did in hieroglyphic, christians must do in the exposition; be strict observers of the main rites and principal obligations, and not neglectful to deprecate the lesser unhandsomenesses of the too sensual applications.

5. God had, at that instant, so ordered, that, for great ends of his own and theirs, two very holy persons of diverse sexes and like piety, Simeon and Anna, the one who lived an active and secular, the other a retired and contemplative life, should come into the temple by revelation and direction of the Holy Spirit, and see him whom they and all the world did look for, "the Lord's Christ, the consolation of Israel." They saw him, they rejoiced, they worshipped, they prophesied, they sang hymns; and old Simeon did comprehend and circumscribe in his arms him that filled all the world, and was then so satisfied that he desired to live no longer; God had verified his promise, had shown him the Messias, had filled his heart with joy, and made his old age honourable; and now, after all this sight, no object could be pleasant but the joys of paradise. For as a man who has stared too freely upon the face and beauties of the sun, is blind and dark to objects of a less splendour, and is forced to shut his eyes, that he may, through the degrees of darkness, perceive the inferior beauties of more proportioned objects; so was old Simeon: his eyes were so filled with the glories of this revelation, that he was willing to close them in his last night, that he might be brought into the communications of eternity; and he could never more find comfort in any other object this world could minister. For such is the excellency of spiritual things, when they have once filled the corners of our hearts, and made us highly sensible and apprehensive of the interior beauties of God and of religion, all things of this world are flat and empty, and unsatisfying vanities, as unpleasant as the lees of vinegar to a tongue filled with the spirit of high Italic wines. And until we are so dead to the world as to apprehend no gust or freer complacency in exterior objects, we never have entertained Christ, or have had our cups overflow with devotion, or are filled with the Spirit. When our chalice is filled with holy oil, with the anointing from above, it will entertain none of the waters of bitterness; or if it does, they are thrust to the bottom, they are the lowest of our desires, and therefore only admitted, because they are natural and constituent.

6. The good old prophetess, Anna, had lived long in chaste widowhood, in the service of the temple, in the continual offices of devotion, in fasting and prayer; and now came the happy instant, in which God would give her a great benediction, and an earnest of a greater. The returns of prayer, and the blessings of piety, are certain; and though not dispensed according to the expectances of our narrow conceptions, yet shall they so come, at such times and in such measures, as shall crown the piety, and satisfy the desires, and reward the expectation. It was in the temple, the same place where she had for so many years poured out her heart to God, that God poured forth his heart to her, sent his Son from his bosom, and there she received his benediction. Indeed in such places God does most particularly exhibit himself, and blessing goes along with him wherever he goes. In holy places God hath put his holy name, and to holy persons God does oftentimes manifest the interior and more secret glories of his holiness; provided they come thither, as old Simeon and Anna did, by the motions of the Holy Spirit, not with designs of vanity, or curiosity, or sensuality; for such spirits as those come to profane and desecrate the house, and unhallow the person, and provoke the Deity of the place, and blast us with unwholesome airs.

7. But "Joseph and Mary wondered at those things which were spoken," and treasured them in their hearts, and they became matter of devotion and mental prayer, or meditation.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal God, who, by the inspirations of thy Holy Spirit, didst direct thy servants, Simeon and Anna, to the temple, at the instant of the presentation of the holy Child Jesus, that so thou mightest verify thy promise, and manifest thy Son, and reward the piety of holy people, who longed for redemption by the coming of the Messias; give me the perpetual assistance of the same Spirit to be as a monitor and a guide to me, leading me to all holy actions, and to the embracements and possessions of thy glorious Son; and remember all thy faithful people, who wait for the consolation and re-

[b] Sed pudicitia illis prima, et neutri nota adulteria: conjugii fidem non violant.—PLIN. lib. x. c. 33.

demption of the church from all her miseries and persecutions, and at last satisfy their desires by the revelations of thy mercies and salvation. Thou hast advanced thy holy Child, and set him up for a sign of thy mercies, and a representation of thy glories. Lord, let no act, or thought, or word of mine, ever be in contradiction to this blessed sign; but let it be for the ruin of all my vices, and all the powers the devil employs against the church, and for the raising up all those virtues and graces, which thou didst design me in the purposes of eternity; but let my portion never be amongst the incredulous, or the scornful, or the heretical, or the profane, or any of those who stumble at this stone, which thou hast laid for the foundation of thy church, and the structures of a virtuous life. Remember me with much mercy and compassion, when the sword of sorrows or afflictions shall pierce my heart; first transfix me with love, and then all the troubles of this world will be consignations to the joys of a better: which grant for the mercies and the name's sake of thy holy Child Jesus. Amen.

DISCOURSE III.

Of Meditation.

1. IF, in the definition of meditation, I should call it an unaccustomed and unpractised duty, I should speak a truth, though somewhat inartificially: for not only the interior beauties and brighter excellencies are as unfelt as ideas and abstractions are, but also the practice and common knowledge of the duty itself are strangers to us, like the retirements of the deep, or the undiscovered treasures of the Indian hills. And this is a very great cause of the dryness and expiration of men's devotion, because our souls are so little refreshed with the waters and holy dews of meditation. We go to our prayers by chance, or order, or by determination of accidental occurrences; and we recite them, as we read a book; and sometimes we are sensible of the duty, and a flash of lightning makes the room bright, and our prayers end, and the lightning is gone, and we as dark as ever. We draw our water from standing pools, which never are filled but with sudden showers, and therefore we are dry so often: whereas if we would draw water from the fountains of our Saviour, and derive them through the channel of diligent and prudent meditations, our devotion would be a continual current, and safe against the barrenness of frequent droughts.

2. For meditation is an attention and application of spirit to divine things; a searching out all instruments to a holy life, a devout consideration of them, and a production of those affections which are in a direct order to the love of God and a pious conversation. Indeed, meditation is all that great instrument of piety, whereby it is made prudent, and reasonable, and orderly, and perpetual. For, supposing our memory instructed with the knowledge of such mysteries and revelations as are apt to entertain the spirit, the understanding is first and best employed in the consideration of them, and then the will in their reception, when they are duly prepared and so transmitted; and both these in such manner, and to such purposes, that they become the magazine and great repositories of grace, and instrumental to all designs of virtue.

3. For the understanding is not to consider the matter of any meditation in itself, or as it determines in natural excellencies or unworthiness respectively, or with a purpose to furnish itself with notion and riches of knowledge; for that is like the winter sun: it shines, but warms not; but in such order as themselves are put in the designations of theology, in the order of Divine laws, in their spiritual capacity, and as they have influence upon holiness: for the understanding here is something else besides the intellectual power of the soul, it is the spirit; that is, it is celestial in its application, as it is spiritual in its nature; and we may understand it well by considering the beatifical portions of soul and body in their future glories. For therefore, even our bodies in the resurrection shall be spiritual, because the operation of them shall be in order to spiritual glories, and their natural actions (such as are seeing and speaking) shall have a spiritual object and supernatural end; and here, as we partake of such excellencies and co-operate to such purposes, men are more or less spiritual. And so is the understanding taken from its first and lowest ends of resting in notion and ineffective contemplation, and is made spirit; that is, wholly ruled and guided by God's Spirit to supernatural ends and spiritual employments; so that it understands and considers the motions of the "heavens, to declare the glory of God," the prodigies and alterations in the firmament, to demonstrate his handy work; it considers the excellent order of creatures, that we may not disturb the order of creation, or dissolve the golden chain of subordination. Aristotle and Porphyry, and the other Greek philosophers, studied the heavens, to search out their natural causes and production of bodies; the wiser Chaldees and Assyrians studied the same things, that they might learn their influences upon us, and make predictions of contingencies; the moral Egyptian described his theorems in hieroglyphics and fantastic representments, to teach principles of policy, economy, and other prudences of morality and secular negociation: but the same philosophy, when it is made christian, considers as they did, but to greater purposes, even that from the book of the creatures we may glorify the Creator, and hence derive arguments of worship and religion: this is christian philosophy.

4. I instance only in considerations natural to spiritual purposes; but the same is the manner in all meditation, whether the matter of it be nature or revelation. For if we think of hell, and consider the infinity of its duration, and that its flames last as long as God lasts, and thence conjecture, upon the rules of proportion, why a finite creature

may have an infinite, unnatural duration; or think by what ways a material fire can torment an immaterial substance; or why the devils, who are intelligent and wise creatures, should be so foolish as to hate God, from whom they know every rivulet of amability derives; this is to study, not to meditate: for meditation considers any thing that may best make us to avoid the place and to quit a vicious habit, or master and rectify an untoward inclination, or purchase a virtue, or exercise one: so that meditation is an act of the understanding put to the right use.

5. For the holy Jesus, coming to redeem us from the bottomless pit, did it, by lifting us up out of the puddles of impurity and the unwholesome waters of vanity; "he redeemed us from our vain conversation;" and our understandings had so many vanities, that they were made instruments of great impiety. The unlearned and ruder nations had fewer virtues, but they had also fewer vices, than the wise empires, that ruled the world with violence and wit together. The softer Asians[a] had lust and intemperance in a full chalice; but their understandings were ruder than the finer Latins; for these men's understandings distilled wickedness as through a limbeck, and the Romans drank spirits and the sublimed quintessences of villany; whereas the other made themselves drunk with the lees and cheaper instances of sin: so that the understanding is not an idle and useless faculty; but naturally drives to practice, and brings guests into the inward cabinet of the will, and there they are entertained and feasted. And those understandings, which did not serve the baser end of vices, yet were unprofitable for the most part, and furnished their inward rooms with glasses and beads, and trifles fit for an American mart. From all these impurities and vanities, Jesus hath redeemed all his disciples, and not only thrown out of his temples all the impure rites of Flora and Cybele, but also the trifling and unprofitable ceremonies of the more sober deities; not only vices, but useless and unprofitable speculations; and hath consecrated our head into a temple, our understanding to spirit, our reason to religion, our study to meditation: and this is the first part of the sanctification of our spirit.

6. And this was the cause, holy Scripture commands the duty of meditation in proportion still to the excellencies of piety and a holy life, to which it is highly and aptly instrumental. "Blessed is the man that meditates in the law of the Lord day and night."[b] And the reason of the proposition, and the use of the duty, is expressed to this purpose: "Thy words have I hid in my heart, that I should not sin against thee."[c] The placing and fixing those divine considerations in our understandings, and hiding them there, are designs of high christian prudence, that they, with advantage, may come forth in the expresses of a holy life. For what in the world is more apt and natural to produce humility, than to meditate upon the low stoopings and descents of the holy Jesus, to the nature of a man, to the weaknesses of a child, to the poverties of a stable, to the ignobleness of a servant, to the shame of the cross, to the pains of cruelty, to the dust of death, to the title of a sinner, and to the wrath of God? By this instance, poverty is made honourable, and humility is sanctified and made noble, and the contradictions of nature are amiable, and fitted for a wise election. Thus hatred of sin, shame of ourselves, confusion at the sense of human misery, the love of God, confidence in his promises, desires of heaven, holy resolutions, resignation of our own appetites, conformity to Divine will, oblations of ourselves, repentance and mortification, are the proper emanations from meditation of the sordidness of sin, our proneness to it, our daily miseries as issues of Divine vengeance, the glories of God, his infinite unalterable veracity, the satisfactions in the vision of God the rewards of piety, the rectitude of the laws of God and perfection of his sanctions, God's supreme and paternal dominion, and his certain malediction of sinners: and when any one of these considerations is taken to pieces, and so placed in the rooms of application, that a piece of duty is conjoined to a piece of the mystery, and the whole office to the purchase of a grace, or the extermination of a vice, it is like opening our windows to let in the sun and the wind; and holiness is as proportioned an effect to this practice, as glory is to a persevering holiness, by way of reward and moral causality.

7. For all the affections that are in man are either natural, or by chance, or by the incitation of reason and discourse. Our natural affections are not worthy the entertainments of a christian; they must be supernatural and divine that put us into the hopes of perfection and felicities: and these other, that are good, unless they come by meditation, they are but accidental, and set with the evening sun. But if they be produced upon the strengths of pious meditation, they are as perpetual as they are reasonable, and excellent in proportion to the piety of the principle. A garden that is watered with short and sudden showers is more uncertain in its fruits and beauties, than if a rivulet waters it with a perpetual distilling and constant humectation: and just such are the short emissions and unpremeditated resolutions of piety, begotten by a dash of holy rain from heaven, whereby God sometimes uses to call the careless but to taste what excellencies of piety they neglect; but if they be not produced by the reason of religion, and the philosophy of meditation, they have but the life of a fly or a tall gourd; they come into the world only to say they they had a being; you could scarce know their length, but by measuring the ground they cover in their fall.

8. For since we are more moved by material and sensible objects than by things merely speculative and intellectual, and generals, even in spiritual things, are less perceived and less motive than particulars; meditation frames the understanding part of religion to the proportions of our nature and our weakness, by making some things more circumstantiate and material, and the more spiritual to be

[a] Τοὺς Περσῶν βασιλεῖς ὑπὸ τρυφῆς προκηρύττειν τοῖς ἐφευρίσκουσί τινα καινὴν ἡδονὴν ἀργυρίου πλῆθος.—ATHEN. lib. iv.

[b] Psalm i. 1, 2.
[c] Psalm cxix. 11.

particular, and therefore the more applicable: and the mystery is made like the gospel to the apostles: "Our eyes do see, and our ears do hear, and our hands do handle, thus much of the word of life," as is prepared for us in the meditation.

9. First: And, therefore, every wise person, that intends to furnish himself with affections of religion, or detestation against a vice, or glorifications of a mystery, still will proportion the mystery, and fit it with such circumstances of fancy and application, as, by observation of himself, he knows aptest to make impression. It was a wise design of Mark Antony, when he would stir up the people to revenge the death of Cæsar; he brought his body to the pleading-place, he showed his wounds, held up the rent mantle, and showed them the garment that he put on that night in which he beat the Nervii; that is, in which he won a victory, for which his memory was dear to them; he showed them that wound, which pierced his heart, in which they were placed by so dear a love, that he made them his heirs, and left to their public use places of delight and pleasure: and then it was natural, when he had made those things present to them which had once moved their love and his honour, that grief at the loss of so honourable and so loved a person should succeed; and then they were lords of all; their sorrow and revenge seldom slept in two beds. And thus holy meditation produces the passions and desires it intends; it makes the objects present and almost sensible; it renews the first passions by a fiction of imagination; it passes from the paschal parlour to Cedron, it tells the drops of sweat, and measures them, and finds them as big as drops of blood, and then conjectures at the greatness of our sins; it fears in the midst of Christ's agonies, it hears his groans, it spies Judas's lantern afar off, it follows Jesus to Gabbatha, and wonders at his innocence and their malice, and feels the strokes of the whip, and shrinks the head when the crown of thorns is thrust hard upon his holy brows; and, at last, goes step by step with Jesus, and carries part of the cross, and is nailed fast with sorrow and compassion, and dies with love. For if the soul be the principle of its own actions, it can produce the same effects by reflex acts of the understanding, when it is assisted by the imaginative part, as when it sees the thing acted: only let the meditation be as minute, particular, and circumstantiate as it may; for a widow, by representing the caresses of her dead husband's love, produces sorrow, and the new affections of a sad endearment. It is too sure, that the recalling the circumstances of a past impurity does re-enkindle the flame, and entertain the fancy with the burnings of an impure fire; and this happens, not by any advantages of vice, but by the nature of the thing, and the efficacy of circumstances. So does holy meditation produce those impresses and signatures, which are the proper effects of the mystery, if presented in a right line and direct representation.

10. Secondly: He that means to meditate in the best order to the productions of piety, must not be inquisitive for the highest mysteries; but the plainest propositions are to him of the greatest use and evidence. For meditation is the duty of all; and therefore God hath fitted such matter for it, which is proportioned to every understanding; and the greatest mysteries of christianity are plainest, and yet most fruitful of meditation, and most useful to the production of piety. High speculations are as barren as the tops of cedars; but the fundamentals of christianity are fruitful as the valleys or the creeping vine. For know, that it is no meditation, but it may be an illusion, when you consider mysteries to become more learned, without thoughts of improving piety. Let your affections be as high as they can climb towards God, so your considerations be humble, fruitful, and practically mysterious. "Oh that I had the wings of a dove, that I might fly away and be at rest," said David. The wings of an eagle would have carried him higher, but yet the innocent dove did furnish him with the better emblem to represent his humble design; and lower meditations might sooner bring him to rest in God. It was a saying of Ægidius, "that an old and a simple woman, if she loves Jesus, may be greater than was brother Bonaventure." Want of learning, and disability to consider great secrets of theology, do not at all retard our progress to spiritual perfections; love to Jesus may be better promoted by the plainer understandings of honest and unlettered people, than by the finer and more exalted speculations of great clerks, that have less devotion. For although the way of serving God by the understanding be the best and most lasting, yet it is not necessary the understanding should be dressed with troublesome and laborious notions: the reason that is in religion is the surest principle to engage our services, and more perpetual than the sweetnesses and the motives of affection; but every honest man's understanding is then best furnished with the discourses and the reasonable parts of religion, when he knows those mysteries of religion upon which Christ and his apostles did build a holy life, and the superstructures of piety; those are the best materials of his meditation.

11. So that meditation is nothing else but the using of all those arguments, motives, and irradiations, which God intended to be instrumental to piety. It is a composition of both ways; for it stirs up our affections by reason and the way of understanding, that the wise soul may be satisfied in the reasonableness of the thing, and the affectionate may be entertained with the sweetnesses of holy passion; that our judgment be determined by discourse, and our appetites made active by the caresses of a religious fancy. And, therefore, the use of meditation is, to consider any of the mysteries of religion with purposes to draw from it rules of life, or affections of virtue, or detestation of vice; and from hence the man rises to devotion, and mental prayer, and intercourse with God: and, after that he rests himself in the bosom of beatitude, and is swallowed up with the comprehensions of love and contemplation. These are the several degrees of meditation. But let us first understand that part of it which is duty, and then, if any thing succeed of a middle condition between duty and re-

ward, we will consider also how that duty is to be performed, and how the reward is to be managed, that it may prove to be no illusion: therefore I add also this consideration.

12. Thirdly: Whatsoever pious purposes and deliberations are entertained in the act of meditation, they are carefully to be maintained and thrust forward to actual performances, although they were indefinite and indeterminate, and no other ways decreed but by resolutions and determinations of reason and judgment. For God assists every pious action according to its exigence and capacity; and therefore blesses holy meditations with results of reason, and prepossessions dogmatically decreeing the necessity of virtue, and the convenience of certain exercises in order to the purchase of it. He, then, that neglects to actuate such discourses, loses the benefit of his meditation; he is gone no farther than when he first set out, and neglects the inspirations of the Holy Spirit. For if, at any time, it be certain what spirit it is that speaks within the soul, it is most certain, that it is the good Spirit that moves us to an act of virtue, in order to acquisition of the habit: and when God's grace hath assisted us so far in our meditations, that we understand our duty, and are moved with present arguments, if we put not forth our hand and make use of them, we do nothing towards our duty; and it is not certain, that God will create graces in us, as he does the soul. Let every pious person think every conclusion of reason in his meditation to have passed an obligation upon him: and if he hath decreed, that fasting so often, and doing so many religious acts, is convenient and conducing to the production of a grace he is in pursuit of; let him know, that every such decree and reasonable proposition is the grace of God, instrumental to piety, part of his assistance, and therefore, in no case, to be extinguished.

13. Fourthly: In meditation, let the understanding be restrained, and under such prudent coercion and confinement, that it wander not from one discourse to another, till it hath perceived some fruit from the first; either that his soul be instructed in a duty, or moved by a new argument, or confirmed in an old, or determined to some exercise and intermedial action of religion, or hath broke out into some prayers and intercourse with God, in order to the production of a virtue. And this is the mystical design of the spouse in the Canticles of Solomon: "I adjure you, O you daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes and by the hinds of the field, that you stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please."[d] For it is lightness of spirit to pass over a field of flowers and to fix nowhere, but to leave it without carrying some honey with us; unless the subject be of itself barren and unfruitful, and then why was it chosen? or that it is made so by our indisposition, and then indeed it is to be quitted. But (it is St. Chrysostom's simile) as a lamb sucking the breast of its dam and mother, moves the head from one part to another, till it hath found a distilling fontinel, and then it fixes, till it be satisfied, or the fountain cease dropping; so should we, in meditation, reject such materials as are barren like the tops of hills, and fix upon such thoughts which nourish and refresh; and there dwell, till the nourishment be drawn forth, or so much of it as we can then temperately digest.

[d] Cant. iii. 5.

14. Fifthly: In meditation, strive rather for graces than for gifts, for affections in the way of virtue more than the overflowings of sensible devotion; and, therefore, if thou findest any thing by which thou mayest be better, though thy spirit do not actually rejoice, or find any gust or relish in the manducation, yet choose it greedily. For although the chief end of meditation be affection, and not determinations intellectual; yet there is choice to be had of the affections; and care must be taken, that the affections be desires of virtue, or repudiations and aversions from something criminal; not joys and transportations spiritual, comforts, and complacencies; for they are no part of our duty: sometimes they are encouragements, and sometimes rewards; sometimes they depend upon habitude and disposition of body, and seem great matters when they have little in them; and are more bodily than spiritual, like the gift of tears, and yearning of the bowels; and sometimes they are illusions and temptations, at which if the soul stoops and be greedy after, they may prove like Hippomenes's golden apples to Atalanta, retard our course, and possibly do some hazard to the whole race. And this will be nearer reduced to practice, if we consider the variety of matter, which is fitted to the meditation in several states of men travelling towards heaven.

15. For the first beginners in religion are employed in the mastering of their first appetites, casting out their devils, exterminating all evil customs, lessening the proclivity of habits, and countermanding the too great forwardness of vicious inclinations; and this, which divines call the purgative way, is wholly spent in actions of repentance, mortification, and self-denial: and therefore, if a penitent person snatches at comforts, or the tastes of sensible devotion, his repentance is too delicate; it is but a rod of roses and jessamine. If God sees the spirit broken all in pieces, and that it needs a little of the oil of gladness for its support and restitution to the capacities of its duty, he will give it: but this is not to be designed, nor snatched at in the meditation: tears of joy are not good expressions nor instruments of repentance; we must not "gather grapes from thorns, nor figs from thistles;" no refreshments to be looked for here, but such only as are necessary for support; and when God sees they are, let not us trouble ourselves; he will provide them. But the meditations, which are prompt to this purgative way and practice of first beginners, are not apt to produce delicacies, but in the sequel and consequent of it. "Afterwards it brings forth the pleasant fruit of righteousness," but "for the present it hath not joy in it," no joy of sense, though much satisfaction to reason. And such are meditations of the fall of angels and man, the ejection of them from heaven, of our parents from paradise, the

horror and obliquity of sin, the wrath of God, the severity of his anger, mortification of our body and spirit, self-denial, the cross of Christ, death, and hell, and judgment, the terrors of an evil conscience, the insecurities of a sinner, the unreasonableness of sin, the troubles of repentance, the worm and sting of a burdened spirit, the difficulties of rooting out evil habits, and the utter abolition of sin: if these nettles bear honey, we may fill ourselves; but such sweetnesses spoil the operations of these bitter potions. Here, therefore, let your addresses to God, and your mental prayers, be affectionate desires of pardon, humble considerations of ourselves, thoughts of revenge against our crimes, designs of mortification, indefatigable solicitations for mercy, expresses of shame and confusion of face; and he meditates best in the purgative way, that makes these affections most operative and high.

16. After our first step is taken, and the punitive part of repentance is resolved on, and begun, and put forward into good degrees of progress, we then enter into the illuminative way of religion, and set upon the acquist of virtues, and the purchase of spiritual graces; and, therefore, our meditations are to be proportioned to the design of that employment: such as are considerations of the life of Jesus, examples of saints, reasons of virtue, means of acquiring them, designations of proper exercises to every pious habit, the eight beatitudes, the gifts and fruits of the Holy Ghost, the promises of the gospel, the attributes of God, as they are revealed to represent God to be infinite, and to make us religious, the rewards of heaven, excellent and select sentences of holy persons, to be as incentives of piety. These are the proper matter for proficients in religion. But then the affections producible from these are, love of virtue, desires to imitate the holy Jesus, affections to saints and holy persons, conformity of choice, subordination to God's will, election of the ways of virtue, satisfaction of the understanding in the ways of religion, and resolutions to pursue them in the midst of all discomforts and persecutions; and our mental prayers or intercourse with God, which are the present emanations of our meditations, must be in order to these affections, and productions from those: and in all these, yet there is safety and piety, and no seeking of ourselves, but designs of virtue in just reason and duty to God, and for his sake; that is, for his commandment. And in all these particulars, if there be such a sterility of spirit, that there be no end served but of spiritual profit, we are never the worse; all that God requires of us is, that we will live well, and repent in just measure and right manner; and he that doth so, hath meditated well.

17. From hence, if a pious soul passes to affections of greater sublimity, and intimate and more immediate, abstracted and immaterial love, it is well; only remember, that the love God requires of us, is an operative, material, and communicative love; "If ye love me, keep my commandments:" so that still a good life is the effect of the sublimest meditation; and if we make our duty sure behind us, ascend up as high into the mountain as you can, so your ascent may consist with the securities of your person, the condition of infirmity, and the interests of your duty. According to the saying of Ildefonsus, "Our empty saying of lauds, and reciting verses in honour of his name, please not God so well, as the imitation of him does advantage to us; and a devout imitator pleases the spouse better than an idle panegyric."[e] Let your work be like his, your duty in imitation of his precept and example, and then sing praises as you list; no heart is large enough, no voice pleasant enough, no life long enough, nothing but an eternity of duration and a beatifical state can do it well: and therefore holy David joins them both: "Whoso offereth me thanks and praise, he honoureth me; and to him that ordereth his conversation aright, I will show the salvation of God."[f] All thanks and praise, without a right-ordered conversation, are but the echo of religion, a voice and no substance; but if those praises be sung by a heart righteous and obedient, that is, singing with the spirit and singing with understanding, that is the music God delights in.

18. Sixthly: But let me observe and press this caution: It is a mistake, and not a little dangerous, when people, religious and forward, shall too promptly, frequently, and nearly, spend their thoughts in consideration of Divine excellencies. God hath shown thee merit enough to spend all thy stock of love upon him in the characters of his power, the book of the creature, the great tables of his mercy, and the lines of his justice; we have cause enough to praise his excellencies in what we feel of him, and are refreshed with his influence, and see his beauties in reflection, though we do not put our eyes out with staring upon his face. To behold the glories and perfections of God with a more direct intuition, is the privilege of angels, who yet cover their faces in the brightness of his presence: it is only permitted to us to consider the back parts of God. And, therefore, those speculations are too bold and imprudent addresses, and minister to danger more than to religion, when we pass away from the direct studies of virtue, and those thoughts of God, which are the freer and safer communications of the Deity, which are the means of intercourse and relation between him and us, to those considerations concerning God which are metaphysical and remote, the formal objects of adoration and wonder, rather than of virtue and temperate discourses: for God in Scripture never revealed any of his abstracted perfections and remoter and mysterious distances, but with a purpose to produce fear in us, and therefore to chide the temerity and boldness of too familiar and nearer intercourse.

19. True it is that every thing we see or can consider, represents some perfections of God; but this I mean, that no man should consider too much,

[e] Serm. 1. de Assumpt. Καὶ ἡ τῶν προσφερομένων πολυτέλεια τιμὴ εἰς Θεὸν οὐ γίνεται, εἰ μὴ μετὰ τοῦ ἐνθέου φρονήματος προσάγοιτο. Δῶρα γὰρ καὶ θυηπολίαι ἀφρόνων, πυοὸς τροφή· καὶ ἀναθήματα, ἱεροσύλοις χορηγία. Τὸ δὲ ἔνθεον φρόνημα, διαρκῶς ἡδρασμένον, συνάπτει Θεῷ.—Hierocl.

[f] Psalm l. 23.

and meditate too frequently, upon the immediate perfections of God, as it were by way of intuition, but as they are manifested in the creatures and in the ministers of virtue: and also, whenever God's perfections be matter of meditation, we should not ascend upwards unto him, but descend upon ourselves, like fruitful vapours drawn up into a cloud, descending speedily into a shower, that the effect of the consideration be a design of good life; and that our loves to God be not spent in abstractions, but in good works and humble obedience. The other kind of love may deceive us; and therefore so may such kinds of considerations, which are its instruments. But this I am now more particularly to consider.

20. For beyond this I have described, there is a degree of meditation so exalted, that it changes the very name, and is called contemplation; and it is in the unitive way of religion, that is, it consists in unions and adherences to God; it is a prayer of quietness and silence, and a meditation extraordinary, a discourse without variety, a vision and intuition of Divine excellencies, an immediate entry into an orb of light, and a resolution of all our faculties into sweetnesses, affections, and starings upon the Divine beauty; and is carried on to ecstasies, raptures, suspensions, elevations, abstractions, and apprehensions beatifical. In all the course of virtuous meditation, the soul is like a virgin, invited to make a matrimonial contract; it inquires the condition of the person, his estate and disposition, and other circumstances of amability and desire: but when she is satisfied with these inquiries, and hath chosen her husband, she no more considers particulars, but is moved by his voice and his gesture, and runs to his entertainment and fruition, and spends herself wholly in affections, not to obtain, but enjoy his love.

Thus it is said.

21. But this is a thing not to be discoursed of, but felt: and although, in other sciences, the terms must first be known, and then the rules and conclusions scientifical; here it is otherwise: for first, the whole experience of this must be obtained, before we can so much as know what it is; and the end must be acquired first, the conclusion before the premises. They that pretend to these heights, call them the secrets of the kingdom; but they are such, which no man can describe; such, which God hath not revealed in the publication of the gospel; such, for the acquiring of which there are no means prescribed, and to which no man is obliged, and which are not in any man's power to obtain; such, which it is not lawful to pray for or desire, and concerning which we shall never be called to an account.

22. Indeed, when persons have been long softened with the continual droppings of religion, and their spirits made timorous and apt for impression by the assiduity of prayer, and perpetual alarms of death, and the continual dyings of mortification; the fancy, which is a very great instrument of devotion, is kept continually warm, and in a disposition and aptitude to take fire, and to flame out in great ascents: and when they suffer transportations beyond the burdens and support of reason, they suffer they know not what, and call it what they please; and other pious people, that hear talk of it, admire that devotion, which is so eminent and beatified; (for so they esteem it;) and so they come to be called raptures and ecstasies, which, even amongst the apostles, were so seldom, that they were never spoken of; for those visions, raptures, and intuitions of St. Stephen, St. Paul, St. Peter, and St. John, were not pretended to be of this kind;[g] not excesses of religion, but prophetical and intuitive revelations, to great and significant purposes, such as may be and are described in story; but these other cannot: for so Cassian reports, and commends a saying of Antony the Eremite, "That is not a perfect prayer, in which the votary does either understand himself or the prayer;" meaning, that persons eminently religious were "divina patientes," as Dionysius Areopagita said of his master Hierotheus, patics in devotion, suffering ravishments of senses,[h] transported beyond the uses of humanity, into the suburbs of beatifical apprehensions: but whether or no this be any thing besides a too intense and indiscreet pressure of the faculties of the soul to inconveniences of understanding, or else a credulous, busy, and untamed fancy, they, that think best of it, cannot give a certainty. There are, and have been, some religious, who have acted madness, and pretended inspirations; and when these are destitute of a prophetic spirit, if they resolve to serve themselves upon the pretences of it, they are disposed to the imitation, if not to the sufferings, of madness; and it would be a great folly to call such "Dei plenos," full of God, who are no better than fantastic and mad people.

23. This we are sure of, that many illusions have come in the likeness of visions, and absurd fancies under the pretence of raptures; and what some have called the spirit of prophecy, hath been the spirit of lying; and contemplation hath been nothing but melancholy and unnatural lengths; and stillness of prayer hath been a mere dream and hypochondriacal devotion, and hath ended in pride or despair, or some sottish and dangerous temptation. It is reported of Heron, the monk, that having lived a retired, mortified, and religious life, for many

[g] Acts x. 10. ἐπέπεσεν ἐπ' αὐτὸν ἔκστασις, and chap. xi. 5. καὶ εἶδον ἐν ἐκστάσει ὅραμα. Raptus vidit visionem, dum oraverat.

——————Mentemque priorem
Expulit, atque hominem toto sibi cedere jussit
Pectore.—Quod de Apolline dixit Lucanus, v. 168.

Qualis erat visio sive ecstasis Balaami, qui visionem Omnipotentis vidit, excidens, sed retectis oculis.—Num. xxiv. 4, 16.

[h] Μανίας δὲ γὲ εἴδη δύο· ἡ μὲν ὑπὸ νοσημάτων ἀνθρωπίνων, ἡ δὲ ὑπὸ θείας ἐξαλλαγῆς.—Plato in Phædr. c. 48.

Τῆς δὲ θείας τεττάρων θεῶν τέτταρα μέρη διελόμενοι, μαντικὴν μὲν ἐπίπνοιαν Ἀπόλλωνος θέντες, Διονύσου δὲ τελεστικὴν, Μουσῶν δ' ἂν ποιητικὴν, τετάρτην Ἔρωτος, &c. —Ibid.

Ἔγνων οὖν ἂν περὶ τῶν ποιητῶν ἐν ὀλίγῳ τοῦτο· ὅτι οὐ σοφίᾳ ποιοῖεν, ἃ ποιοῖεν, ἀλλὰ φύσει τινὶ, καὶ ἐνθουσιάζοντες, ὥσπερ οἱ θεομάντεις καὶ οἱ χρησμῳδοί· καὶ γὰρ οὗτοι λέγουσι μὲν πολλὰ, ἴσασι δὲ οὐδὲν, ὧν λέγουσι.—Plato in Apol. c. 7.

years together, at last he came to that habit of austerity or singularity, that he refused the festival refection and freer meals of Easter, and other solemnities, that he might do more eminently than the rest, and spend his time in greater abstractions and contemplations; but the devil, taking advantage of the weakness of his melancholic and unsettled spirit, gave him a transportation and an ecstasy, in which he fancied himself to have attained so great perfection, that he was as dear to God as a crowned martyr, and angels would be his security for indemnity, though he threw himself to the bottom of a well. He obeyed his fancy and temptation, did so, bruised himself to death, and died possessed with a persuasion of the verity of that ecstasy and transportation.

24. I will not say, that all violences and extravagances of a religious fancy are illusions; but I say, that they are all unnatural, not hallowed by the warrant of a revelation, nothing reasonable, nothing secure. I am not sure, that they ever consist with humility; but it is confessed, that they are often produced by self-love, arrogancy, and the great opinion others have of us. I will not judge the condition of those persons, who are said to have suffered these extraordinaries; for I know not the circumstances, or causes, or attendants, or the effects, or whether the stories be true that make report of them; but I shall only advise, that we follow the intimation of our blessed Saviour, that "we sit down in the lowest place, till the master of he feast comes, and bids us sit up higher." If we entertain the inward man in the purgative and illuminative way, that is, in actions of repentance, virtue, and precise duty, that is the surest way of uniting us to God, whilst it is done by faith and obedience; and that also is love; and in these peace and safety dwell. And after we have done our work, it is not discretion in a servant to hasten to his meal, and snatch at the refreshment of visions, unions, and abstractions; but first we must gird ourselves, and wait upon the master, and not sit down ourselves, till we all be called at the great supper of the Lamb.

25. It was, therefore, an excellent desire of St. Bernard, who was as likely as any to have such altitudes of speculation, if God had really dispensed them to persons holy, fantastic, and religious: "I pray God grant to me peace of spirit, joy in the Holy Ghost, to compassionate others in the midst of my mirth, to be charitable in simplicity, to rejoice with them that rejoice, and to mourn with them that mourn; and with these I shall be content: other exaltations of devotion I leave to apostles and apostolic men; the high hills are for the harts and the climbing goats; the stony rocks, and the recesses of the earth, for the conies." It is more healthful and nutritive to dig the earth, and to eat of her fruits, than to stare upon the greatest glories of the heavens, and live upon the beams of the sun: so unsatisfying a thing is rapture and transportation to the soul; it often distracts the faculties, but seldom does advantage piety, and is full of danger in the greatest of its lustre. If ever a man be more in love with God by such instruments, or more endeared to virtue, or made more severe and watchful in his repentance, it is an excellent grace and gift of God; but then this is nothing but the joys and comfort of ordinary meditation: those extraordinary, as they have no sense in them, so are not pretended to be instruments of virtue, but are, like Jonathan's arrows, shot beyond it, to signify the danger the man is in, towards whom such arrows are shot. But if the person be made unquiet, inconstant, proud, pusillanimous, of high opinion, pertinacious, and confident in uncertain judgments, or desperate, it is certain they are temptations and illusions: so that, as all our duty consists in the ways of repentance and acquist of virtue; so there rests all our safety, and, by consequence, all our solid joys; and this is the effect of ordinary, pious, and regular meditations.

26. If I mistake not, there is temptation like this, under another name, amongst persons whose religion hath less discourse and more fancy, and that is a familiarity with God; which, indeed, if it were rightly understood, is an affection consequent to the illuminative way; that is, an act or an effect of the virtue of religion and devotion, which consists in prayers and addresses to God, lauds, and eucharists, and hymns, and confidence of coming to the throne of grace, upon assurance of God's veracity and goodness infinite: so that familiarity with God, which is an affection of friendship, is the intercourse of giving and receiving blessings and graces respectively; and it is produced by a holy life, or the being in the state of grace, and is a part of every man's inheritance, that is a friend of God. But when familiarity with God shall be esteemed a privilege of singular and eminent persons, not communicated to all the faithful, and is thought to be an admission to a nearer intercourse of secrecy with God, it is an effect of pride, and a mistake in judgment concerning the very same thing, which the old divines call the unitive way, if themselves that claim it understood the terms of art, and the consequents of their own intentions.

27. Only I shall observe one circumstance: That familiarity with God is nothing else but an admission to be of God's family, the admission of a servant, or a son in minority, and implies obedience, duty, and fear on our parts; care and providence, and love on God's part: and it is not the familiarity of sons, but the impudence of proud equals, to express this pretended privilege in even, unmannerly, and irreverent addresses and discourses: and it is a sure rule, that whatsoever heights of piety, union, or familiarity, any man pretends to, it is of the devil, unless the greater the pretence be, the greater also be the humility of the man. The highest flames are the most tremulous; and so are the most holy and eminently religious persons more full of awfulness, and fear, and modesty, and humility: so that, in true divinity and right speaking, there is no such thing as the unitive way of religion, save only in the effects of duty, obedience, and the expresses of the precise virtue of religion. Meditations in order to a good life, let them be as exalted as the capacity of the

person and subject will endure, up to the height of contemplation; but if contemplation comes to be a distinct thing, and something besides or beyond a distinct degree of virtuous meditation, it is lost to all sense, and religion, and prudence. Let no man be hasty to eat of the fruits of paradise before his time.

28. And now I shall not need to enumerate the blessed fruits of holy meditation; for it is a grace, that is instrumental to all effects, to the production of all virtues, and the extinction of all vices; and, by consequence, the inhabitation of the Holy Ghost within us is the natural or proper emanation from the frequent exercise of this duty; only it hath something particularly excellent, besides its general influence: for meditation is that part of prayer, which knits the soul to its right object, and confirms and makes actual our intention and devotion. Meditation is the tongue of the soul, and the language of our spirit; and our wandering thoughts in prayer are but the neglects of meditation, and recessions from that duty; and according as we neglect meditation, so are our prayers imperfect; meditation being the soul of prayer, and the intention of our spirit. But, in all other things, meditation is the instrument and conveyance; it habituates our affections to heaven, it hath permanent content, it produces constancy of purpose, despising of things below, inflamed desires of virtue, love of God, self-denial, humility of understanding, and universal correction of our life and manners.

THE PRAYER.

Holy and eternal Jesus, whose whole life and doctrine was a perpetual sermon of holy life, a treasure of wisdom, and a repository of divine materials for meditation; give me grace to understand, diligence and attention to consider, care to lay up, and carefulness to reduce to practice, all those actions, discourses, and pious lessons, and intimations, by which thou didst expressly teach, or tacitly imply, or mysteriously signify, our duty. Let my understanding become as spiritual in its employment and purposes, as it is immaterial in its nature; fill my memory, as a vessel of election, with remembrances and notions highly compunctive, and greatly incentive of all the parts of sanctity. Let thy Holy Spirit dwell in my soul, instructing my knowledge, sanctifying my thoughts, guiding my affections, directing my will in the choice of virtue; that it may be the great employment of my life to meditate in thy law, to study thy preceptive will, to understand even the niceties and circumstantials of my duty; that ignorance may neither occasion a sin, nor become a punishment. Take from me all vanity of spirit, lightness of fancy, curiosity and impertinency of inquiry, illusions of the devil, and fantastic deceptions: let my thoughts be as my religion, plain, honest, pious, simple, prudent, and charitable; of great employment and force to the production of virtues and extermination of vice; but suffering no transportations of sense and vanity, nothing greater than the capacities of my soul, nothing that may minister to any intemperances of spirit; but let me be wholly inebriated with love; and that love wholly spent in doing such actions, as best please thee, in the conditions of my infirmity and the securities of humility, till thou shalt please to draw the curtain, and reveal thy interior beauties, in the kingdom of thine eternal glories: which grant, for thy mercy's sake, O holy and eternal Jesu. Amen.

SECTION VI.

Of the Death of the Holy Innocents, or the Babes of Bethlehem, and the Flight of Jesus into Egypt.

1. All this while Herod waited for the return of the wise men, that they might give directions where the child did lie, and his sword might find him out with a certain and direct execution. But "when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, he was exceeding wroth." For it now began to deserve his trouble, when his purposes, which were most secret, began to be contradicted and diverted with a prevention, as if they were resisted by an all-seeing and almighty Providence. He began to suspect the hand of Heaven was in it; and saw there was nothing for his purposes to be acted, unless he could dissolve the golden chain of predestination. Herod believed the Divine oracles, foretelling that a king should be born in Bethlehem; and yet his ambition had made him so stupid, that he attempted to cancel the decree of Heaven. For, if he did not believe the prophecies, why was he troubled? If he did believe them, how could he possibly hinder that event, which God had foretold himself would certainly bring to pass?

2. And, therefore, since God already had hindered him from the executions of a distinguishing sword, he resolved to send a sword of indiscrimination and confusion; hoping, that if he killed all the babes of Bethlehem, this young king's reign also should soon determine. He, therefore, "sent forth and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men." For this execution was in the beginning of the second year after Christ's nativity, as in all probability we guess;[a] not at the two years' end, as some purpose: because as his malice was subtle, so he intended it should be secure; and though he had been diligent in his inquiry, and was near the time in his computation, yet he, that was never sparing in the lives of others, would now, to secure his kingdom, rather overact his severity for some months, than, by doing execution but just to the tittle of his account, hazard the escaping of the Messias.

[a] Sic ait Glossa ordinaria; sed Onuphrius in Fastis ait hanc cædem biennio post Christum natum contigisse.

3. This execution was sad, cruel, and universal: no abatements made for the dire shriekings of the mothers, no tender-hearted soldier was employed, no hard-hearted person was softened by the weeping eyes and pity-begging looks of those mothers, that wondered how it was possible any person should hurt their pretty sucklings; no connivances there, no protections, or friendships, or consideration, or indulgences; but Herod caused, that his own child, which was at nurse in the coasts of Bethlehem, should bleed to death: which made Augustus Cæsar to say, that, "in Herod's house, it were better to be a hog than a child;"[b] because the custom of the nation did secure a hog from Herod's knife, but no religion could secure his child. The sword, being thus made sharp by Herod's commission, killed fourteen thousand pretty babes; as the Greeks, in their calendar, and the Abyssines of Ethiopia, do commemorate in their offices of liturgy. For Herod, crafty and malicious, that is, perfectly tyrant,[c] had caused all the children to be gathered together; which the credulous mothers (supposing it had been to take account of their age and number, in order to some taxing) hindered not, but unwittingly suffered themselves and their babes to be betrayed to an irremediable butchery.

4. "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, Lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning; Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted." All the synonymas of sadness were little enough to express this great weeping, when fourteen thousand mothers, in one day, saw their pretty babes pouring forth their blood into that bosom, whence, not long before, they had sucked milk; and, instead of those pretty smiles which used to entertain the fancy and dear affections of their mothers, nothing but affrighting shrieks, and then ghastly looks. The mourning was great, like "the mourning in the valley of Hinnom, and there was no comforter;" their sorrow was too big to be cured, till it should lie down alone, and rest with its own weariness.

5. But the malice of Herod went also into the hill country; and hearing, that of John, the son of Zacharias, great things were spoken, by which he was designed to a great ministry about this young prince, he attempted in him also to rescind the prophecies, and sent a messenger of death towards him; but the mother's care had been early with him, and sent him into desert places, where he continued till the time appointed "of his manifestation unto Israel." But, as the children of Bethlehem died in the place of Christ, so did the father of the Baptist die for his child. For "Herod slew Zacharias between the temple and the altar," because he refused to betray his son to the fury of that rabid bear.[d] Though some persons, very eminent amongst the stars of the primitive church, report a tradition,[e] that a place being separated in the temple for virgins, Zacharias suffered the mother of our Lord to abide there after the birth of her holy Son, affirming her still to be a virgin; and that for this reason, not Herod, but the scribes and Pharisees, did kill Zacharias.

6. Tertullian reports,[f] that the blood of Zacharias had so besmeared the stones of the pavement, which was the altar, on which the good old priest was sacrificed, that no art or industry could wash the tincture out, the dye and guilt being both indelible; as if, because God did intend to exact of that nation "all the blood of righteous persons, from Abel to Zacharias," who was the last of the martyrs of the synagogue, he would leave a character of their guilt in their eyes, to upbraid their irreligion, cruelty, and infidelity. Some there are, who affirm these words of our blessed Saviour not to relate to any Zacharias, who had been already slain; but to be a prophecy of the last of all the martyrs of the Jews, who should be slain immediately before the destruction of the last temple, and the dissolution of the nation. Certain it is, that such a Zacharias, the son of Baruch, (if we may believe Josephus,[g]) was slain in the middle of the temple, a little before it was destroyed; and it is agreeable to the nature of the prophecy and reproof here made by our blessed Saviour, that, (from Abel to Zacharias,) should take in "all the righteous blood" from first to last, till the iniquity was complete; and it is not imaginable, that the blood of our blessed Lord, and of St. James their bishop, (for whose death, many of themselves thought, God destroyed their city,) should be left out of the account, which yet would certainly be left out, if any other Zacharias should be meant, than he whom they last slew: and in proportion to this, Cyprian de Valera expounds that, which we read in the past tense, to signify the future, "ye slew," i. e. "shall slay;" according to the style often used by prophets, and as the aorist of an uncertain signification will bear. But the first great instance of the Divine vengeance for these executions, was upon Herod, who, in very few years after, was smitten of God with so many plagues and tortures, that himself alone seemed like an hospital of the incurabili: for he was tormented with a soft, slow fire, like that of burning iron or the cinders of yew, in his body; in his bowels, with intolerable colics and ulcers; in his natural parts, with worms; in his feet, with gout; in his nerves, with convulsions, difficulty of breathing; and out of divers parts of his body issued out so impure and ulcerous a steam, that the loathsomeness, pain, and indignation, made him once to snatch a knife, with purpose to have killed himself; but that he was prevented by a nephew of his, that stood there in his attendance.

7. But as the flesh of beasts grows callous by

[b] Macrob. Saturnal. lib. ii. c. 4.

[c] Qualis apud Lucianum describitur Tyrannicid. Ἐκεῖνος ἦν ὁ τὴν φρουρὰν κρατύνων, ὁ τοὺς τυραννουμένους ἐκκόπτων, ὁ τοὺς ἐπιβουλεύοντας φοβῶν, ὁ τοὺς ἐφήβους ἀνασπῶν, ὁ ἐνυβρίζων τοῖς γάμοις· ἐκείνῳ αἱ παρθένοι ἀνήγοντο· καὶ εἴ τίνες σφαγαὶ, καὶ εἴ τίνες φυγαὶ, καὶ χρημάτων ἀφαιρέσεις, καὶ βάσανοι, καὶ ὕβρεις, &c. —BIPONT. vol. iv. p. 311.

[d] Sic Chrysost. et Petrus Martyr. episc. Alexandr. Niceph. et Cedrenus.

[e] Sic aiunt Origen. tract. 23. in Evang. Matt. S. Basil. Homil. de Humana Christi Generatione. Nyssen. in Natali Christi. Cyril. adv. Anthropomorphitas.

[f] In Scorpiaco, cap. 8.

[g] Lib. iv.

stripes and the pressure of the yoke; so did the heart of Herod, by the loads of Divine vengeance. God began his hell here; and the pains of hell never made any man less impious: for Herod, perceiving that he must now die,[h] first put to death his son Antipater, under pretence that he would have poisoned him; and that the last scene of his life might, for pure malice and exalted spite, outdo all the rest, because he believed the Jewish nation would rejoice at his death, he assembled all the nobles of the people, and put them in prison, giving in charge to his sister Salome, that, when he was expiring his last, all the nobility should be slain, that his death might be lamented with a perfect and universal sorrow.

8. But God, that brings to nought the counsels of wicked princes, turned the design against the intendment of Herod; for when he was dead, and could not call his sister to account for disobeying his most bloody and unrighteous commands, she released all the imprisoned and despairing gentlemen, and made the day of her brother's death a perfect jubilee, a day of joy, such as was that when the nation was delivered from the violence of Haman, in the days of Purim.

9. And, all this while, God had provided a sanctuary for the holy child Jesus. For God, seeing the secret purposes of blood which Herod had, sent his angel,[i] "who appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young Child and his mother, and fly into Egypt, and be thou there, until I bring thee word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy him. Then he arose, and took the young Child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt." And they made their first abode in Hermopolis,[k] in the country of Thebais; whither, when they first arrived, the child Jesus, being by design or providence carried into a temple, all the statues of the idol-gods fell down, like Dagon at the presence of the ark, and suffered their timely and just dissolution and dishonour, according to the prophecy of Isaiah: "Behold, the Lord shall come into Egypt, and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence."[l] And in the life of the prophet Jeremy, written by Epiphanius, it is reported, "that he told the Egyptian priests, that then their idols should be broken in pieces, when a holy virgin, with her child, should enter into their country:" which prophecy possibly might be the cause, that the Egyptians did, besides their vanities, worship also an infant in a manger, and a virgin in her bed.

10. From Hermopolis to Maturea went these holy pilgrims, in pursuance of their safety and provisions; where, it was reported, they dwelt in a garden of balsam, till Joseph, being, at the end of seven years, (as it is commonly believed,) ascertained by an angel of the death of Herod, and commanded to return to the land of Israel, he was obedient to the heavenly vision, and returned. But hearing that Archelaus did reign in the place of his father, and knowing that the cruelty and ambition of Herod was hereditary, or entailed upon Archelaus, being also warned to turn aside into the parts of Galilee, which was of a distinct jurisdiction, governed indeed by one of Herod's sons, but not by Archelaus, thither he diverted; and there that holy family remained in the city of Nazareth, whence the holy Child had the appellative of a Nazarene.

[h] Δειναὶ γὰρ καὶ κοῖται ἀποιχομένοιο λέοντος.
[i] Matt. ii. 13.

Ad SECTION VI.

Considerations upon the Death of the Innocents, and the Flight of the Holy Jesus into Egypt.

1. HEROD, having called the wise men, and received information of their design, and the circumstances of the Child, pretended religion too, and desired them to bring him word when they had found the Babe, "that he might come and worship him;" meaning to make a sacrifice of him to whom he should pay his adoration; and, instead of investing the young Prince with a royal purple, he would have stained his swaddling-bands with his blood. It is ever dangerous, when a wicked prince pretends religion; his design is then foulest, by how much it needs to put on a fairer outside; but it was an early policy in the world, and it concerned men's interests, to seem religious, when they thought that to be so was an abatement of great designs. When Jezebel designed the robbing and destroying Naboth, she sent to the elders to proclaim a fast; for the external and visible remonstrances of religion leave in the spirits of men a great reputation of the seeming person, and therefore they will not rush into a furious sentence against his actions, at least not judge them with prejudice against the man, towards whom they are so fairly prepared, but do some violence to their own understanding, and either disbelieve their own reason, or excuse the fact, or think it but an error, or a less crime, or the incidences of humanity; or, however, are so long in decreeing against him, whom they think to be religious, that the rumour is abated, or the stream of indignation is diverted by other laborious arts, intervening before our zeal is kindled; and so the person is unjudged, or, at least, the design secured.

2. But in this, human policy was exceedingly infatuated: and though Herod had trusted his design to no keeper but himself, and had pretended fair, having religion for the word, and "called the wise men privately," and instructed them with no employment but a civil request, an account of the success of their journey, which they had no reason, or desire, to conceal; yet his heart was opened to the eye of Heaven, and the sun was not more visible, than his dark purpose was to God; and it succeeded accordingly: the Child was sent away, the wise men warned not to return, Herod was mocked and enraged; and so his craft became foolish and vain: and so are all counsels intended against God, or any thing, of which he himself hath undertaken the pro-

[k] Euseb. de Demonstr. c. 20. S. Athanas. lib. de Incarnat. Verbi. Palladius in Vita S. Apollon.
[l] Isa. xix. 1. Dorotheus in Synopsi. Pallad. in Vita Apollon.

tection. For, although we understand not the reasons of security, because we see not that admirable concentring of infinite things in the Divine Providence, whereby God brings his purposes to act by ways unlooked for, and sometimes contradictory; yet the public and perpetual experience of the world hath given continual demonstrations, that all evil counsels have come to nought; that the succeeding of an impious design is no argument that the man is prosperous; that the curse is then surest, when his fortune spreads the largest; that the contradiction and impossibilities of deliverance to pious persons are but an opportunity and engagement for God to do wonders, and to glorify his power, and to exalt his mercy, by the instances of miraculous or extraordinary events. And as the afflictions, happening to good men, are alleviated by the support of God's good Spirit; and enduring them here are but consignations to an honourable amends hereafter; so the succeeding prosperities of fortunate impiety, when they meet with punishment in the next, or in the third age, or in the deletion of a people five ages after, are the greatest arguments of God's providence, who keeps wrath in store, and forgets not to "do judgment for all them that are oppressed with wrong." It was laid up with God, and was perpetually in his eye, being the matter of a lasting, durable, and unremitted anger.

3. But God had care of the holy Child; he sent his angel to warn Joseph, with the Babe and his mother, to fly into Egypt. Joseph and Mary instantly arise; and without inquiry, how they shall live there, or when they shall return, or how be secured, or what accommodations they shall have in their journey, at the same hour of the night, begin the pilgrimage with the cheerfulness of obedience, and the securities of faith, and the confidence of hope, and the joys of love, knowing themselves to be recompensed for all the trouble they could endure; that they were instruments of the safety of the holy Jesus; that they then were serving God; that they were encircled with the securities of the Divine Providence: and, in these dispositions, all places were alike; for every region was a paradise, where they were in company with Jesus. And, indeed, that man wants many degrees of faith and prudence, who is solicitous for the support of his necessities, when he is doing the commandment of God.[a] If he commands thee to offer a sacrifice, himself will provide a lamb, or enable thee to find out one; and he would remove thee into a state of separation, where thy body needs no supplies of provision, if he meant thou shouldest serve him without provisions. He will certainly take away thy need, or satisfy it;[b] he will feed thee himself, as he did the Israelites; or take away thy hunger, as he did to Moses; or send ravens to feed thee, as he did to Elias; or make charitable people minister to thee, as the widow to Elisha; or give thee his own portion, as he maintained the Levites; or make thine enemies to pity thee, as the Assyrians did the captive Jews. For whatsoever the world hath, and whatsoever can be conveyed by wonder or by providence, all that is thy security for provisions, so long as thou doest the work of God. And remember, that the assurance of blessing, and health, and salvation, is not made by doing what we list, or being where we desire, but by doing God's will, and being in the place of his appointment. We may be safe in Egypt, if we be there in obedience to God; and we may perish among the babes of Bethlehem, if we be there by our own election.

4. Joseph and Mary did not argue against the angel's message, because they had a confidence of their charge, who, with the breath of his mouth, could have destroyed Herod, though he had been abetted with all the legions, marching under the Roman eagles; but they, like the two cherubims about the propitiatory, took the Child between them, and fled, giving way to the fury of persecution, which possibly, when the materials were withdrawn, might expire, and die like fire, which else would rage for ever. Jesus fled, undertook a sad journey, in which the roughness of the ways, his own tenderness, the youth of his mother, the old age of his supposed father, the smallness of their viaticum and accommodation for their voyage, the no-kindred they were to go to, hopeless of comforts and exterior supplies, were so many circumstances of poverty, and lesser strokes of the persecution; things, that himself did choose to demonstrate the verity of his nature, the infirmity of his person, the humility of his spirit, the austerity of his undertaking, the burden of his charge; and by which he did teach us the same virtues he then expressed, and also consigned this permission to all his disciples, in future ages, that they also may fly from their persecutors, when the case is so, that their work is not done; that is, they may glorify God with their lives, more than with their death. And of this they are ascertained by the arguments of prudent account: for sometimes we are called to glorify God by dying, and the interest of the church and the faith of many may be concerned in it; then we must abide by it. In other cases it is true, that Demosthenes said, in apology for his own escaping from a lost field, "A man that runs away, may fight again."[c] And St. Paul made use of a guard of soldiers, to rescue him from the treachery of the Jewish rulers; and of a basket, to escape from the inquisition of the governor of Damascus; and the primitive christians, of grots and subterraneous retirements; and St. Athanasius, of a fair lady's house; and others, of deserts and graves; as knowing it was no shame to fly, when their Master himself had fled, that his time and his work might be fulfilled; and, when it was, he then laid his life down.

5. It is hard to set down particular rules, that may indefinitely guide all persons, in the stating of their own case; because all things, that depend upon circumstances, are alterable unto infinite. But as God's glory and the good of the church are the great considerations to be carried before us all the way, and in proportions to them we are to determine

[a] ——— τοὺς θεοὺς ἔχων τις ἂν φίλους, ἀρίστην μαντικὴν ἔχοι δόμοις.—Eurip. Helenâ. 766.

[b] Heb. xiii. 5, 6.

[c] Ἀνὴρ ὁ φεύγων καὶ πάλιν μαχήσεται.

and judge our questions; so also our infirmities are allowable in the scrutiny: for I doubt not, but God intended it a mercy, and a compliance with human weakness, when he gave us this permission, as well as it was a design to secure the opportunities of his service, and the consummation of his own work by us. And since our fears, and the incommodities of flight, and the sadness of exile, and the insecurities and inconveniences of a strange and new abode, are part of the persecution; provided that God's glory be not certainly and apparently neglected, nor the church evidently scandalized by our flight; all interpretations of the question in favour of ourselves, and the declension of that part, which may tempt us to apostasy, or hazard our confidence, and the choosing the lesser part of the persecution, is not against the rule of faith, and always hath in it less glory, but oftentimes more security.

6. But thus far Herod's ambition transported him, even to resolutions of murder of the highest person, the most glorious and the most innocent upon earth; and it represents that passion to be the most troublesome and vexatious thing that can afflict the sons of men. Virtue hath not half so much trouble in it; it sleeps quietly, without startings and affrighting fancies; it looks cheerfully; smiles with much serenity; and, though it laughs not often, yet it is ever delightful in the apprehensions of some faculty; it fears no man, nor no thing, nor is it discomposed; and hath no concernments in the great alterations of the world, and entertains death like a friend, and reckons the issues of it as the greatest of its hopes: but ambition is full of distractions; it teems with stratagems, as Rebecca with struggling twins; and is swelled with expectation, as with a tympany; and sleeps sometimes, as the wind in a storm, still and quiet for a minute, that it may burst out into an impetuous blast, till the cordage of his heart-strings crack; fears, when none is nigh; and prevents things, which never had intention; and falls under the inevitability of such accidents, which either could not be foreseen, or not prevented. It is an infinite labour to make a man's self miserable; and the utmost acquist is so goodly a purchase, that he makes his days full of sorrow, to enjoy the troubles of a three years' reign; for Herod lived but three years, or five at the most, after the flight of Jesus into Egypt. And therefore there is no greater unreasonableness in the world, than in the designs of ambition: for it makes the present certainly miserable, unsatisfied, troublesome, and discontent, for the uncertain acquist of an honour, which nothing can secure; and, besides a thousand possibilities of miscarrying, it relies upon no greater certainty than our life; and, when we are dead, all the world sees who was the fool. But it is a strange caitiveness and baseness of disposition of men, so furiously and unsatiably to run after perishing and uncertain interests, in defiance of all the reason and religion of the world; and yet to have no appetite to such excellencies, which satisfy reason, and content the spirit, and create great hopes, and ennoble our expectation, and are advantages to communities of men and public societies, and which all wise men teach, and all religion commands.

7. And it is not amiss to observe, how Herod vexed himself extremely upon a mistake.[d] The child Jesus was born a King, but it was a King of all the world; not confined within the limits of a province, like the weaker beauties of a torch, to shine in one room; but, like the sun, his empire was over all the world; and if Herod would have become but his tributary, and paid him the acknowledgments of his Lord, he should have had better conditions than under Cæsar, and yet have been as absolute in his own Jewry as he was before:[e] "His kingdom was not of this world;" and he, that gives heavenly kingdoms to all his servants, would not have stooped to have taken up Herod's petty coronet. But as it is a very vanity which ambition seeks, so it is a shadow, that disturbs and discomposes all its motions and apprehensions.

8. And the same mistake caused calamities to descend upon the church; for some of the persecutions commenced upon pretence christianity was an enemy to the government: but the pretence was infinitely unreasonable, and therefore had the fate of senseless allegations, it disbanded presently; for no external accident did so incorporate the excellency of Christ's religion into the hearts of men, as the innocency of the men, their inoffensive deportment, the modesty of their designs, their great humility and obedience, a life expressly in enmity and contestation against secular ambition. And it is to be feared, that the mingling human interests with religion, will deface the image Christ hath stamped upon it. Certain it is, the metal is much abated by so impure alloy, while the christian prince serves his end of ambition, and bears arms upon his neighbour's country, for the service of religion, making Christ's kingdom to invade Herod's rights: and, in the state ecclesiastical, secular interests have so deep a portion, that there are snares laid to tempt a persecution, and men are invited to sacrilege,[f] while the revenues of a church are a fair fortune for a prince. I make no scruple to find fault with painters, that picture the poor saints with rich garments; for though they deserved better, yet they had but poor ones: and some have been tempted to cheat the saint, not out of ill-will to his sanctity, but love to his shrine, and to the beauty of the clothes, with which some imprudent persons have, of old time, dressed their images. So it is in the fate of the church; persecution and the robes of Christ were

[d] Dubia pro certis solent timere reges.
SENEC. Œdip. 700.

[e] Hostis Herodes impie,
Christum venire quid times?
Non auferet terrestria,
Qui regna dat cœlestia.
Qui sceptra duro sævus imperio regit,
Timet timentes, metus in authorem cadit.
SENEC. Œdip. 705.

[f] Καὶ ἡ τῶν προσφερομένων πολυτέλεια τιμὴ εἰς Θεὸν οὐ γίνεται, εἰ μὴ μετὰ τοῦ ἐνθέου φρονήματος προσάγοιτο. δῶρα γὰρ καὶ ξυηπολίαι ἀφρόνων, πυρὸς τροφή· καὶ ἀναθήματα, ἱεροσύλοις χορηγία· τὸ δὲ ἔνθεον φρόνημα, διαρκῶς ἡδρασμένον, συνάπτει Θεῷ.—HIEROCL.

her portion and her clothing; and when she is dressed up in gaudy fortunes, it is no more than she deserves; but yet sometimes it is occasion, that the devil cheats her of her holiness, and the men of the world sacrilegiously cheat her of her riches; and then, when God hath reduced her to that poverty, he first promised and intended to her, the persecution ceases, and sanctity returns, and God curses the sacrilege, and stirs up men's minds to religious donatives; and all is well, till she grows rich again. And if it be dangerous in any man to be rich, and discomposes his steps in his journey to eternity; it is not then so proportionable to the analogy of Christ's poverty, and the inheritance of the church, to be sedulous in acquiring great temporalities, and putting princes in jealousy, and states into care for securities, lest all the temporal should run into ecclesiastical possession.

9. If the church have, by the active piety of a credulous, a pious, and less observant age, been endowed with great possessions, she hath rules enough, and poor enough, and necessities enough, to dispend what she hath with advantages to religion: but then all she gets by it is, the trouble of an unthankful, a suspected, and unsatisfying dispensation; and the church is made, by evil persons, a scene of ambition and stratagem;[g] and to get a German bishoprick is to be a prince; and to defend with niceness and suits of law every custom or lesser rite, even to the breach of charity and the scandal of religion, is called a duty: and every single person is bound to forgive injuries, and to quit his right rather than his charity; but if it is not a duty in the church also, in them whose life should be excellent to the degree of example, I would fain know, if there be not greater care taken to secure the ecclesiastical revenue, than the public charity and the honour of religion in the strict piety of the clergy; for as the not engaging in suits may occasion bold people to wrong the church, so the necessity of engaging is occasion of losing charity, and of great scandal. I find not fault with a free revenue of the church; it is, in some sense, necessary to governors, and to preserve the consequents of their authority: but I represent, that such things are occasion of much mischief to the church, and less holiness; and, in all cases, respect should be had to the design of christianity, to the prophecies of Jesus, to the promised lot of the church, to the dangers of riches, to the excellencies, and advantages, and rewards of poverty; and if the church have enough to perform all her duties and obligations cheerfully, let her, of all societies, be soonest content. If she have plenty, let her use it temperately and charitably; if she have not, let her not be querulous and troublesome. But however it would be thought upon, that though, in judging the quantum of the church's portion, the world thinks every thing too much, yet we must be careful we do not judge every thing too little; and if our fortune be safe between envy and contempt, it is much mercy. If it be despicable, it is safe for ecclesiastics, though it may be accidentally inconvenient or less profitable to others; but if it be great, public experience hath made remonstrance, that it mingles with the world, and dirties those fingers, which are instrumental in consecration and the more solemn rites of christianity.

10. Jesus fled from the persecution; as he did not stand it out, so he did not stand out against it. He was careful to transmit no precedent or encouragement of resisting tyrannous princes, when they offer violence to religion and our lives. He would not stand disputing for privileges, nor calling in auxiliaries from the Lord of hosts, who could have spared him many legions of angels, every single spirit being able to have defeated all Herod's power; but he knew, it was a hard lesson to learn patience, and all the excuses in the world would be sought out to discourage such a doctrine, by which we are taught to die, or lose all we have, or suffer inconveniences, at the will of a tyrant; we need no authentic examples, much less doctrines, to invite men to war, from which we see christian princes cannot be restrained with the engagements and peaceful theorems of an excellent and a holy religion, nor subjects kept from rebelling by the interests of all religions in the world, nor by the necessities and reasonableness of obedience, nor the endearments of all public societies of men; one word, or an intimation from Christ, would have sounded an alarm, and put us into postures of defence, when all Christ's excellent sermons, and rare exemplar actions, cannot tie our hands. But it is strange now, that, of all men in the world, christians should be such fighting people, or that christian subjects should lift up a thought against a christian prince, when they had no intimation of encouragement from their Master, but many from him to endear obedience, and humility, and patience, and charity; and these four make up the whole analogy, and represent the chief design and meaning of christianity, in its moral constitution.

11. But Jesus, when himself was safe, could also have secured the poor babes of Bethlehem, with thousands of diversions and avocations of Herod's purposes, or by discovering his own escape in some safe manner, not unknown to the Divine wisdom; but yet it did not so please God. He is Lord of his creatures, and hath absolute dominion over our lives, and he had an end of glory to serve upon these babes, and an end of justice upon Herod: and to the children he made such compensation, that they had no reason to complain, that they were so soon made stars, when they shone in their little orbs and participations of eternity: for so the sense of the church[h] hath been, that they having died the death of martyrs, though incapable of making

[g] Vide quæ dixit Ammian. Marcell. lib. xvii.; et Epistolas S. Gregorii M. lib. iv. ep. 32, 34, 36; et lib. vi. ep. 30; lib. vii. indict. 1, ep. 30; et Concil. Africanum, quo monitus est Cœlestinus papa, Ne fumosum typhum seculi in ecclesiam, quæ lucem simplicitatis et humilitatis diem Deum videre cupientibus præfert, videamur inducere.

[h] Ætas necdum habilis ad pugnam, idonea exstitit ad coronam; et ut appareret innocentes esse qui propter Christum necantur, infantia innocens occisa est.—S. CYPRIAN. Athenagoras dixit infantes resurrecturos, sed non venturos in judicium.

the choice, God supplied the defects of their will by his own entertainment of the thing; that as the misery and their death, so also their glorification, might have the same author in the same manner of causality, even by a peremptory and unconditioned determination in these particulars. This sense is pious, and nothing unreasonable, considering that all circumstances of the thing make the case particular; but the immature death of other infants is a sadder story: for though I have no warrant or thought, that it is ill with them after death, and, in what manner or degree of well-being it is, there is no revelation; yet I am not of opinion, that the securing of so low a condition as theirs, in all reason, is like to be, will make recompence; or is an equal blessing with the possibilities of such an eternity, as is proposed to them, who, in the use of reason and a holy life, glorify God with a free obedience: and if it were otherwise, it were no blessing to live till the use of reason, and fools and babes were in the best, because in the securest, condition, and certain expectation of equal glories.

12. As soon as Herod was dead, (for the Divine vengeance waited his own time for his arrest,) the angel presently brought Joseph word. The holy family was full of content and indifferency, not solicitous for return, not distrustful of the Divine Providence, full of poverty, and sanctity, and content, waiting God's time, at the return of which God delayed not to recall them from exile: "out of Egypt he called his Son," and directed Joseph's fear and course, that he should divert to a place in the jurisdiction of Philip, where the heir of Herod's cruelty, Archelaus, had nothing to do. And this very series of providence and care God expresses to all his sons by adoption; and will determine the time, and set bounds to every persecution, and punish the instruments, and ease our pains, and refresh our sorrows, and give quietness to our fears, and deliverance from our troubles, and sanctify it all, and give a crown at last, and all in his good time, if we wait the coming of the angel, and in the mean time do our duty with care, and sustain our temporals with indifferency: and, in all our troubles and displeasing accidents, we may call to mind, that God, by his holy and most reasonable providence, hath so ordered it, that the spiritual advantages we may receive from the holy use of such incommodities, are of great recompence and interest; and that, in such accidents, the holy Jesus, having gone before us in precedent, does go along with us by love and fair assistances; and that makes the present condition infinitely more eligible than the greatest splendour of secular fortune.

THE PRAYER.

O blessed and eternal God, who didst suffer thy holy Son to fly from the violence of an enraged prince, and didst choose to defend him in the ways of his infirmity by hiding himself, and a voluntary exile; be thou a defence to all thy faithful people, whenever persecution arises against them; send them the ministry of angels to direct them into ways of security, and let thy Holy Spirit guide them in the paths of sanctity, and let thy providence continue in custody over their persons, till the times of refreshment and the day of redemption shall return. Give, O Lord, to thy whole church sanctity and zeal, and the confidences of a holy faith, boldness of confession, humility, content, and resignation of spirit, generous contempt of the world, and unmingled desires of thy glory and the edification of thy elect; that no secular interests disturb her duty, or discompose her charity, or depress her hopes, or, in any unequal degree, possess her affections, and pollute her spirit: but preserve her from the snares of the world and the devil, from the rapine and greedy desires of sacrilegious persons; and, in all conditions, whether of affluence or want, may she still promote the interests of religion: that, when plenteousness is within her palaces, and peace in her walls, that condition may then be best for her; and when she is made as naked as Jesus to his passion, then poverty may be best for her: that, in all estates, she may glorify thee; and, in all accidents and changes, thou mayest sanctify and bless her, and at last bring her to the eternal riches and abundance of glory, where no persecution shall disturb her rest. Grant this for sweet Jesus' sake, who suffered exile and hard journeys, and all the inconveniences of a friendless person, in a strange province; to whom, with thee and the eternal Spirit, be glory for ever, and blessing in all generations of the world, and for ever and ever. Amen.

SECTION VII.

Of the younger Years of Jesus, and his Disputation with the Doctors in the Temple.

1. From the return of this holy family to Judea, and their habitation in Nazareth, till the blessed child Jesus was twelve years of age, we have nothing transmitted to us out of any authentic record; but that they went to Jerusalem, every year, at the feast of the Passover. And when Jesus was twelve years old, and was in the holy city, attending upon the paschal rites and solemn sacrifices of the law, his parents, having fulfilled their days of festivity, went homeward, supposing the Child had been in the caravan, among his friends; and so they erred for the space of a whole day's journey; "and when they sought him, and found him not, they returned to Jerusalem," full of fears and sorrow.

2. No fancy can imagine the doubts, the apprehensions, the possibilities of mischief, and the tremblings of heart, which the holy virgin mother felt thronging about her fancy and understanding, but such a person, who hath been tempted to the danger of a violent fear and transportation, by apprehension of the loss of a hope greater than a miracle; her

discourses with herself could have nothing of distrust, but much of sadness and wonder; and the indetermination of her thoughts was a trouble great as the passion of her love. Possibly an angel might have carried him, she knew not whither; or, it may be, the son of Herod had gotten the prey, which his cruel father missed; or he was sick, or detained out of curiosity and wonder, or any thing, but what was right. And by this time she was come to Jerusalem; and having spent three days in her sad and holy pursuit of her lost jewel, despairing of the prosperous event of any human diligence, as, in all other cases, she had accustomed, she made her address to God; and entering into the temple to pray, God, that knew her desires, prevented her with the blessings of goodness; and there her sorrow was changed into joy and wonder; for there she found her holy Son, "sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions."

3. "And, when they saw him, they were amazed," and so were "all that heard him, at his understanding and answers;" beyond his education, beyond his experience, beyond his years, and even beyond the common spirits of the best men, discoursing up to the height of a prophet, with the clearness of an angel, and the infallibility of inspiration: for here it was verified, in the highest and most literal signification, that, "out of the mouths of babes God had ordained strength;" but this was the strength of argument, and science of the highest mysteries of religion and secret philosophy.

4. Glad were the parents of the Child to find him illustrated with a miracle, concerning which, when he had given them such an account, which they understood not, but yet Mary laid up in her heart, as that this was part of his employment and his Father's business, "he returned with them to Nazareth, and was subject to his parents;" where he lived in all holiness and humility, showing great signs of wisdom, endearing himself to all that beheld his conversation; did nothing less than might become the great expectation, which his miraculous birth had created of him; for "he increased in wisdom and stature, and favour with God and man," still growing in proportion to his great beginnings to a miraculous excellency of grace, sweetness of demeanour, and excellency of understanding.

5. They that love to serve God in hard questions, use to dispute, whether Christ did, truly, or in appearance only, increase in wisdom. For being personally united to the Word, and being the eternal wisdom of the Father, it seemed to them, that a plenitude of wisdom was as natural to the whole person, as to the Divine nature. But others, fixing their belief upon the words of the story, which equally affirms Christ as properly to have "increased in favour with God as with man, in wisdom as in stature," they apprehend no inconvenience in affirming it to belong to the verity of human nature, to have degrees of understanding as well as of other perfections: and, although the humanity of Christ made up the same person with the Divinity, yet they think the Divinity still to be free, even in those communications which were imparted to his inferior nature; and the Godhead might as well suspend the emanation of all the treasures of wisdom upon the humanity for a time, as he did the beatifical vision, which most certainly was not imparted in the interval of his sad and dolorous passion. But, whether it were truly or in appearance, in habit or in exercise of act, by increase of notion or experience, it is certain the promotions of the holy Child were great, admirable, and as full of wonder as of sanctity, and sufficient to entertain the hopes and expectations of Israel with preparations and dispositions, as to satisfy their wonder for the present, so to accept him at the time of his publication; they having no reason to be scandalized at the smallness, improbability, and indifferency, of his first beginnings.

6. But the holy Child had also an employment, which he undertook in obedience to his supposed father, for exercise and example of humility, and for the support of that holy family, which was dear in the eyes of God, but not very splendid by the opulency of a free and indulgent fortune. He wrought in the trade of a carpenter; and when Joseph died, which happened before the manifestation of Jesus unto Israel, he wrought alone, and was no more called the carpenter's son, but the carpenter himself. "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary;"[i] said his offended countrymen. And in this condition the blessed Jesus did abide, till he was thirty years old; for he, that came to fulfil the law, would not suffer one tittle of it to pass unaccomplished; for, by the law of the nation and custom of the religion, no priest was to officiate, or prophet was to preach, before he was thirty years of age.

Ad SECTION VII.

Considerations upon the Disputation of Jesus with the Doctors in the Temple.

1. JOSEPH and Mary, being returned unto Nazareth, were sedulous to enjoy the privileges of their country, the opportunities of religion, the public address to God, in the rites of festivals and solemnities of the temple: they had been long grieved with the impurities and idol rites, which they, with sorrow, had observed to be done in Egypt; and, being deprived of the blessings of those holy societies and employments they used to enjoy in Palestine, at their return came to the offices of their religion with appetites of fire, and keen as the evening wolf; and all the joys, which they should have received in respersion and distinct emanations, if they had kept their anniversaries at Jerusalem, all that united they received in the duplication of their joys at their return, and in the fulfilling themselves with the refection and holy viands of religion. For so God uses to satisfy the longings of holy people, when a persecution has shut up the beautiful gates of the temple, or denied to them opportunities of access: although God hears the prayers they make with their windows towards Jerusalem, with their hearts

[i] Mark vi. 3.

opened with desires of the public communions, and sends them a prophet with a private meal, as Habakkuk came to Daniel; yet he fills their hearts, when the year of jubilee returns, and the people sing "In convertendo," the song of joy for their redemption. For as, of all sorrows, the deprivations and eclipses of religion are the saddest, and of the worst and most inconvenient consequence; so, in proportion, are the joys of spiritual plenty and religious returns; the communion of saints being like the primitive corban, a repository to feed all the needs of the church, or like a taper joined to a torch, itself is kindled, and increases the other's flames.

2. They failed not to go to Jerusalem: for all those holy prayers and ravishments of love, those excellent meditations and intercourses with God, their private readings and discourses, were but entertainments and satisfaction of their necessities, they lived with them during their retirements; but it was a feast when they went to Jerusalem, and the freer and more indulgent refection of the Spirit; for, in public solemnities, God opens his treasures, and pours out his grace, more abundantly. Private devotions, and secret offices of religion, are like refreshing of a garden with the distilling and petty drops of a water-pot; but addresses to the temple, and serving God in the public communion of saints, is like rain from heaven, where the offices are described by a public spirit, heightened by the greater portions of assistance, and receive advantages by the adunations and symbols of charity, and increment by their distinct title to promises appropriate even to their assembling, and mutual support, by the piety of example, by the communication of counsels, by the awfulness of public observation, and the engagements of holy customs.[a] For religion is a public virtue; it is the ligature of souls, and the great instrument of the conservation of bodies politic; and is united in a common object, the God of all the world, and is managed by public ministries, by sacrifice, adoration, and prayer, in which, with variety of circumstances indeed, but with infinite consent and union of design, all the sons of Adam are taught to worship God; and it is a publication of God's honour, its very purpose being to declare to all the world, how great things God hath done for us, whether in public donatives or private missives; so that the very design, temper, and constitution of religion, is to be a public address to God: and although God is present in closets, and there also distils his blessings in small rain; yet to the societies of religion and publication of worship, as we are invited by the great blessings and advantages of communion, so also we are, in some proportions, more straitly limited by the analogy and exigence of the duty.[b] It is a persecution, when we are forced from public worshippings; no man can hinder our private addresses to God; every man can build a chapel in his breast, and himself be the priest, and his heart the sacrifice, and every foot of glebe he treads on be the altar; and this no tyrant can prevent. If, then, there can be persecution in the offices of religion, it is the prohibition of public profession and communions; and therefore he, that denies to himself the opportunities of public rites and conventions, is his own persecutor.

3. But when Jesus was "twelve years old," and his parents had finished their offices, and returned filled with the pleasures of religion, they missed the Child, and "sought him amongst their kindred," but there "they found him not;" for whoever seeks Jesus, must seek him in the offices of religion, in the temple, not amongst the engagements and pursuit of worldly interests: "I forgat also mine own father's house," said David, the father of this holy Child; and so must we, when we run in an inquiry after the Son of David. But our relinquishing must not be a dereliction of duty, but of engagement: our affections toward kindred must always be with charity, and according to the endearments of our relation, but without immersion, and such adherences, as either contradict or lessen our duty towards God.

4. It was a sad effect of their pious journey, to lose the joy of their family, and the hopes of all the world: but it often happens, that, after spiritual employments, God seems to absent himself, and withdraw the sensible effects of his presence, that we may seek him with the same diligence, and care, and holy fears, with which the holy virgin mother sought the blessed Jesus. And it is a design of great mercy in God, to take off the light from the eyes of a holy person, that he may not be abused with complacencies, and too confident opinions and reflections, upon his fair performances. For we usually judge of the well or ill of our devotions and services, by what we feel; and we think God rewards every thing in the present, and by proportion to our own expectations; and if we feel a present rejoicing of spirit, all is well with us; the smoke of the sacrifice ascended right in a holy cloud: but if we feel nothing of comfort, then we count it a prodigy and ominous, and we suspect ourselves; and most commonly we have reason. Such irradiations of cheerfulness are always welcome; but it is not always anger that takes them away; the cloud removed from before the camp of Israel, and stood before the host of Pharaoh; but this was a design of ruin to the Egyptians, and of security to Israel: and, if those bright angels, that go with us to direct our journeys, remove out of our sight, and stand behind us, it is not always an argument, that the anger of the Lord is gone out against us; but such decays of sense and clouds of spirit are excellent conservators of humility, and restrain those intemperances and vainer thoughts, which we are prompted to, in the gaiety of our spirits.

5. But we often give God cause to remove, and,

[a] Habet semper privilegium suum, ut sacratius fiat quod publicâ lege celebratur, quàm quod privatà institutione dependitur.—LEO de Jejun. 7. Mensis. Publica præferenda sunt privatis, et tunc est efficacior sanctiorque devotio, quando in operibus pietatis totius ecclesiæ unus est animus et unus sensus.—Idem, Serm. 4.

[b] Heb. x. 25.

for a while, to absent himself: and his doing of it sometimes, upon the just provocations of our demerits, makes us, at other times, with good reason, to suspect ourselves, even in our best actions. But sometimes we are vain, or remiss; or pride invades us in the darkness and incuriousness of our spirits; and we have a secret sin, which God would have us to inquire after; and, when we suspect every thing, and condemn ourselves with strictest and most angry sentence, then, it may be, God will, with a ray of light, break through the cloud; if not, it is nothing the worse for us: for, although the visible remonstrance and face of things, in all the absences and withdrawings of Jesus, be the same, yet, if a sin be the cause of it, the withdrawing is a taking away his favour and his love; but, if God does it to secure thy piety, and to inflame thy desires, or to prevent a crime, then he withdraws a gift only, nothing of his love, and yet the darkness of the spirit and sadness seem equal. It is hard, in these cases, to discover the cause, as it is nice to judge the condition, of the effect; and therefore it is prudent to ascertain our condition, by improving our care and our religion; and, in all accidents, to make no judgment concerning God's favour by what we feel, but by what we do.

6. When the holy Virgin, with much religion and sadness, had sought her joy, at last she "found him, disputing among the doctors, hearing them, and asking them questions;" and besides, that he now first opened a fontinel, and there sprang out an excellent rivulet from his abyss of wisdom, he consigned this truth to his disciples: That they, who mean to be doctors and teach others, must, in their first accesses and degrees of discipline, learn of those, whom God and public order hath set over us, in the mysteries of religion.

THE PRAYER.

Blessed and most holy Jesus, fountain of grace and comfort, treasure of wisdom and spiritual emanations, be pleased to abide with me for ever, by the inhabitation of thy interior assistances and refreshments; and give me a corresponding love, acceptable and unstained purity, care, and watchfulness over my ways, that I may never, by provoking thee to anger, cause thee to remove thy dwelling, or draw a cloud before thy holy face: but if thou art pleased, upon a design of charity or trial, to cover my eyes, that I may not behold the bright rays of thy favour, nor be refreshed with spiritual comforts; let thy love support my spirit by ways insensible; and, in all my needs, give me such a portion, as may be instrumental and incentive to performance of my duty: and, in all accidents, let me continue to seek thee by prayers and humiliation, and frequent desires, and the strictness of a holy life; that I may follow thy example, pursue thy footsteps, be supported by thy strength, guided by thy hand, enlightened by thy favour, and may, at last, after a persevering holiness and an unwearied industry, dwell with thee in the regions of light and eternal glory, where there shall be no fears of parting from the habitations of felicity, and the union and fruition of thy presence, O blessed and most holy Jesus. Amen.

SECTION VIII.

Of the Preaching of John the Baptist, preparative to the Manifestation of Jesus.

WHEN Herod had drunk so great a draught of blood at Bethlehem, and sought for more from the hill country, Elizabeth carried her son into the wilderness, there, in the desert places and recesses, to hide him from the fury of that beast, where she attended him with as much care and tenderness, as the affections and fears of a mother could express, in the permission of those fruitless solitudes. The child was about eighteen months old, when he first fled to sanctuary;[a] but, after forty days, his mother died; and his father Zacharias, at the time of his ministration, which happened about this time, was killed in the court of the temple; so that the child was exposed to all the dangers and infelicities of an orphan, in a place of solitariness and discomfort, in a time when a bloody king endeavoured his destruction. But, "when his father and mother were taken from him, the Lord took him up." For, according to the tradition of the Greeks,[b] God deputed an angel to be his nourisher and guardian, as he had formerly done to Ishmael,[c] who dwelt in the wilderness; and to Elias,[d] when he fled from the rage of Ahab; so to this child, who came in the spirit of Elias, to make demonstration, that there can be no want, where God undertakes the care and provision.

2. The entertainment, that St. John's proveditóre, the angel, gave him, was such as the wilderness did afford, and such as might dispose him to a life of austerity; for there he continued spending his time in meditations, contemplation, prayer, affections and colloquies with God, eating flies and wild honey, not clothed in soft, but a hairy garment,[e] and a leathern girdle, till he was thirty years of age. And then, "being the fifteenth year of Tiberius, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, the word of God came unto John in the wilderness. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching" and baptizing.

3. This John, according to the prophecies of him, and designation of his person by the Holy Ghost, was the forerunner of Christ, sent to dispose the people for his entertainment, and "prepare his ways;" and therefore it was necessary his person should be so extraordinary and full of sanctity, and

[a] Niceph. lib. i. c. 14.
[b] S. Chrys. Hom. de Nativ. S. Jo. Baptistæ.
[c] Gen. xxi. 17. [d] 1 Kings xix. 5.

[e] Vestis erat curvi setis conserta cameli,
Contrà luxuriem molles duraret ut artus,
Arceretque graves compuncto corpore somnos.—PAULIN.

so clarified by great concurrences and wonder in the circumstances of his life, as might gain credit and reputation to the testimony he was to give concerning his Lord, the Saviour of the world. And so it happened.

4. For as the Baptist, while he was in the wilderness, became the pattern of solitary and contemplative life, a school of virtue, and example of sanctity and singular austerity; so, at his emigration from the places of his retirement, he seemed, what indeed he was, a rare and excellent personage: and the wonders, which were great, at his birth, the prediction of his conception by an angel, which never had before happened but in the persons of Isaac and Samson, the contempt of the world, which he bore about him, his mortified countenance and deportment, his austere and eremitical life, his vehement spirit and excellent zeal in preaching, created so great opinions of him among the people, that all held him for a prophet in his office, for a heavenly person in his own particular, and a rare example of sanctity and holy life to all others: and all this being made solemn and ceremonious by his baptism, he prevailed so, that he made excellent and apt preparations for the Lord's appearing; for "there went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the regions round about Jordan, and were baptized of him, confessing their sins."

5. The Baptist having, by so heavenly means, won upon the affections of all men, his sermons and his testimony concerning Christ were the more likely to be prevalent and accepted; and the sum of them was "repentance and dereliction of sins," and "bringing forth the fruits of good life;" in the promoting of which doctrine, he was a severe reprehender of the Pharisees and Sadducees; he exhorted the people to works of mercy; the publicans to do justice and to decline oppression; the soldiers to abstain from plundering, and doing violence or rapine: and publishing, that "he was not the Christ; that he only baptized with water, but the Messias should baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire;" he finally denounced judgment and great severities to all the world of impenitents, even abscission and fire unquenchable. And from this time forward, viz. "From the days of John the Baptist, the kingdom of heaven suffered violence, and the violent take it by force." For now the gospel began to dawn, and John was like the morning star, or the blushings springing from the windows of the east, foretelling the approach of the Sun of righteousness: and as St. John Baptist laid the first rough, hard, and unhewn stone of this building in mortification, self-denial, and doing violence to our natural affections; so it was continued by the Master-builder himself, who propounded the glories of the crown of the heavenly kingdom to them only who should climb the cross to reach it. Now it was, that multitudes should throng, and crowd to enter in at the strait gate, and press into the kingdom; and the younger brothers should snatch the inheritance from the elder, the unlikely from the more likely, the gentiles from the Jews, the strangers from the natives, the publicans and harlots from the scribes and Pharisees, who, like violent persons, shall, by their importunity, obedience, watchfulness, and diligence, snatch the kingdom from them, to whom it was first offered; and "Jacob shall be loved, and Esau rejected."

Ad SECTION VIII.

Considerations upon the Preaching of John the Baptist.

1. FROM the disputation of Jesus with the doctors to the time of his manifestation to Israel, which was eighteen years, the holy Child dwelt in Nazareth, in great obedience to his parents, in exemplar modesty, singular humility; working with his hands in his supposed father's trade, for the support of his own and his mother's necessities, and that he might bear the curse of Adam, that, "in the sweat of his brows he should eat his bread:" all the while, "he increased in favour with God and man," sending forth excellent testimonies of a rare spirit and a wise understanding in the temperate instances of such a conversation, to which his humility and great obedience had engaged him. But, all this while, the stream ran under ground: and though little bubblings were discerned in all the course, and all the way men looked upon him as upon an excellent person, diligent in his calling, wise and humble, temperate and just, pious and rarely tempered; yet, at the manifestation of John the Baptist, he brake forth like the stream from the bowels of the earth, or the sun from a cloud, and gave us a precedent, that we should not show our lights to minister to vanity, but then only, when God, and public order, and just dispositions of men, call for a manifestation: and yet the ages of men have been so forward in prophetical ministries, and to undertake ecclesiastical employment, that the viciousness, and indiscretions, and scandals, the church of God feels as great burdens upon the tenderness of her spirit, are, in great part, owing to the neglect of this instance of the prudence and modesty of the holy Jesus.

2. But now the time appointed was come; the Baptist comes forth upon the theatre of Palestine, a forerunner of the office and publication of Jesus, and, by the great reputation of his sanctity, prevailed upon the affections and judgment of the people, who, with much ease, believed his doctrine, when they had reason to approve his life; for the good example of the preacher is always the most prevailing homily, his life is his best sermon. He, that will raise affections in his auditory, must affect their eyes; for we seldom see the people weep, if the orator laughs loud and loosely: and there is no reason to think, that his discourse should work more with me than himself. If his arguments be fair and specious, I shall think them fallacies, while they have not faith with him; and what necessity for me to be temperate, when he that tells

me so, sees no such need, but hopes to go to heaven without it? or, if the duty be necessary, I shall learn the definition of temperance, and the latitudes of my permission, and the bounds of lawful and unlawful, by the exposition of his practice: if he binds a burden upon my shoulders, it is but reason I should look for him to bear his portion too. "Good works convince more than miracles;" [a] and the power of ejecting devils is not so great probation, that christian religion came from God, as is the holiness of the doctrine, and its efficacy and productions upon the hearty professors of the institution. St. Pachomius, when he wore the military girdle under Constantine the emperor, came to a city of christians, who, having heard that the army, in which he then marched, was almost starved for want of necessary provisions, of their own charity relieved them speedily and freely. He, wondering at their so free and cheerful dispensation, inquired what kind of people these were, whom he saw so bountiful. It was answered, they were christians, whose profession it is to hurt no man, and to do good to every man. The pleased soldier was convinced of the excellency of that religion, which brought forth men so good and so pious, and loved the mother for the children's sake; threw away his girdle, and became christian, and religious, and a saint. And it was Tertullian's great argument in behalf of christians, "See how they love one another, how every man is ready to die for his brother:" it was a living argument, and a sensible demonstration, of the purity of the fountain, from whence such limpid waters did derive. But so John the Baptist made himself a fit instrument of preparation; and so must all the christian clergy be fitted for the dissemination of the gospel of Jesus.

3. The Baptist had, till this time, that is, about thirty years, lived in the wilderness under the discipline of the Holy Ghost, under the tuition of angels, in conversation with God, in great mortification and disaffections to the world, his garments rugged and uneasy, his meat plain, necessary, and without variety, his employment prayers and devotion, his company wild beasts, in ordinary, in extraordinary, messengers from heaven; and all this, not undertaken of necessity to subdue a bold lust, or to punish a loud crime, but to become more holy and pure from the lesser stains and insinuations of too free infirmities, and to prepare himself for the great ministry of serving the holy Jesus in his publication. Thirty years he lived in great austerity; and it was a rare patience and exemplar mortification: we use not to be so pertinacious in any pious resolutions, but our purposes disband upon the sense of the first violence; we are free and confident of resolving to fast, when our bellies are full;[b] but, when we are called upon by the first necessities of nature, our zeal is cool, and dissoluble into air, upon the first temptation; and we are not upheld in the violences of a short austerity without faintings and repentances to be repented of, and "inquirings after the vow is past," and searching for excuses and desires to reconcile our nature and our conscience; unless our necessity be great, and our sin clamorous, and our conscience laden, and no peace to be had without it; and it is well, if upon any reasonable grounds, we can be brought to suffer contradictions of nature, for the advantages of grace. But it would be remembered, that the Baptist did more upon a less necessity; and, possibly, the greatness of the example may entice us on a little farther than the customs of the world, or our own indevotions, would engage us.

4. But, after the expiration of a definite time, John came forth from his solitude, and served God in societies. He served God, and the content of his own spirit, by his conversing with angels, and dialogues with God, so long as he was in the wilderness; and it might be some trouble to him to mingle with the impurities of men, amongst whom he was sure to observe such recesses from perfection, such violation of all things sacred, so great despite done to all ministries of religion, that to him, who had no experience or neighbourhood of actions criminal, it must needs be to his sublimed and clarified spirit more punitive and afflictive, than his hairen shirt and his ascetic diet was to his body; but now himself, that tried both, was best able to judge, which state of life was of greatest advantage and perfection.

5. "In his solitude he did breathe more pure inspiration; heaven was more open, God was more familiar," [c] and frequent in his visitations. In the wilderness his company was angels, his employment meditations and prayer, his temptations simple and from within, from the impotent and lesser rebellions of a mortified body, his occasions of sin as few as his examples, his condition such, that, if his soul were at all busy, his life could not easily be other than the life of angels; for his work and recreation, and his visits, and his retirements, could be nothing but the variety and differing circumstances of his piety: his inclinations to society made it necessary for him to repeat his addresses to God; for his being a sociable creature, and yet in solitude, made that his conversing with God, and being partaker of Divine communications, should be the satisfaction of his natural desires, and the supply of his singularity and retirement; the discomforts of which made it natural for him to seek out for some refreshment, and, therefore, to go to heaven for it, he having rejected the solaces of the world already. And all this, besides the innocencies of his silence,[d] which is very great, and to be judged of in proportion to the infinite extravagancies of our language, there being no greater perfection here to be expected,[e] than "not to offend in our tongue." "It was solitude and retirement in which Jesus kept his vigils; the desert

[a] S. Chrys. Orat. de S. Babyla.

[b] Satiatis et expletis jucundius est carere quàm frui.—CICERO de Senect. c. 47.

[c] In solitudine aër purior, cœlum apertius, familiarior Deus.—ORIG.

[d] Πολλοῖς γὰρ ἀνθρώποισι φάρμακον κακῶν σιγὴ, μάλιστα δ' ἐστὶ σώφρονος τρόπου σημεῖον.—CARCINUS.

[e] James iii. Petrus Cellensis, lib. iv. ep. 12.

places heard him pray; in a privacy he was born; in the wilderness he fed his thousands; upon a mountain apart he was transfigured; upon a mountain he died; and from a mountain he ascended to his Father:" in which retirements his devotion certainly did receive the advantage of convenient circumstances, and himself in such dispositions twice had the opportunities of glory.

6. And yet, after all these excellencies, the Spirit of God called the Baptist forth to a more excellent ministry: for, in solitude, pious persons might go to heaven by the way of prayers and devotion; but, in society, they might go to heaven by the way of mercy, and charity, and dispensations to others. In solitude, there are fewer occasions of vices, but there is also the exercise of fewer virtues; and the temptations, though they be not from many objects, yet are, in some circumstances, more dangerous; not only because the worst of evils, spiritual pride,[f] does seldom miss to creep upon those goodly oaks, like ivy, and suck their heart out, and a great mortifier without some complacencies in himself, or affectations or opinions, or something of singularity, is almost as unusual as virgin purity and unstained thoughts in the bordelli; (St. Hierom had tried it, and found it so by experience, and he it was that said so;) but also, because whatsoever temptation does invade such retired persons, they have privacies enough to act it in,[g] and no eyes upon them but the eye of Heaven, no shame to encounter withal, no fears of being discovered: and we know by experience, that a witness of our conversation is a great restraint to the inordination of our actions. Men seek out darknesses and secrecies to commit a sin; "and the evil, that no man sees, no man reproves; and that makes the temptation bold and confident, and the iniquity easy and ready:" so that, as they have not so many tempters as they have abroad, so neither have they so many restraints; their vices are not so many, but they are more dangerous in themselves, and to the world safe and opportune. And as they communicate less with the world, so they do less charity, and fewer offices of mercy: no sermons there but when solitude is made popular, and the city removes into the wilderness; no comforts of a public religion, or visible remonstrances of the communion of saints; and of all the kinds of spiritual mercy, only one can there properly be exercised; and, of the corporal, none at all. And this is true in lives and institutions of less retirement, in proportion to the degree of the solitude: and, therefore, church-story reports of divers very holy persons, who left their wildernesses and sweetnesses of devotion in their retirement, to serve God in public by the ways of charity and exterior offices. Thus St. Antony and Acepsamas came forth to encourage the fainting people to contend to death for the crown of martyrdom;[h] and Aphraates, in the time of Valens, the Arian emperor, came abroad to assist the church, in the suppressing the flames kindled by the Arian faction. And, upon this ground, they that are the greatest admirers of eremitical life, call the episcopal function "the state of perfection," and a degree of ministerial and honorary excellence beyond the pieties and contemplations of solitude, because of the advantages of gaining souls, and religious conversation, and going to God by doing good to others.

7. John the Baptist united both these lives; and our blessed Saviour, who is the great precedent of sanctity and prudence, hath determined this question in his own instance; for he lived a life common, sociable, humane, charitable, and public; and yet, for the opportunities of especial devotion, retired to prayer and contemplation, but came forth speedily; for the devil never set upon him but in the wilderness, and by the advantage of retirement. For as God hath many, so the devil hath some, opportunities of doing his work in our solitariness. But Jesus reconciled both; and so did John the Baptist, in several degrees and manners:[i] and from both we are taught, that solitude is a good school, and the world is the best theatre; the institution is best there, but the practice here; the wilderness hath the advantage of discipline, and society opportunities of perfection; privacy is the best for devotion, and the public for charity. In both, God hath many saints and servants; and from both, the devil hath had some.

8. His sermon was an exhortation to repentance and a holy life: he gave particular schedules of duty to several states of persons; sharply reproved the Pharisees for their hypocrisy and impiety; it being worse in them, because contrary to their rule, their profession, and institution; gently guided others into the ways of righteousness, calling them "the straight ways of the Lord," that is, the direct and shortest way to the kingdom; for of all lines the straight is the shortest, and as every angle is a turning out of the way, so every sin is an obliquity, and interrupts the journey. By such discourses, and a baptism, he disposed the spirits of men for the entertaining the Messias, and the homilies of the gospel. For John's doctrine was to the sermons of Jesus, as a preface to a discourse; and his baptism was to the new institution and discipline of the kingdom, as the vigils to a holy day; of the same kind, in a less degree. But the whole economy of it represents to us, that repentance is the first intromission into the sanctities of christian religion. The Lord treads upon no paths, that are not hallowed and made smooth by the sorrows and cares of contrition, and the impedi-

[f] In solitudine citò obrepit superbia. Ep. 4.

[g] Non minorem flagitiis occasionem secreta præbuerint.—QUINT.

Maxima pars peccatorum tollitur, si peccaturis testis assistat.—SENEC.

Malum quod nemo videt, nemo arguit; ubi non timetur reprehensor, securiùs accedit tentator et liberiùs perpetratur iniquitas.—S BERN.

[h] Euseb. Hist. lib. vi. c. 3. Theod. lib. iv. c. 23, 24. Nihil est illi principi Deo, qui omnem hunc mundum regit, quod quidem in terris fiat acceptius, quàm concilia cœtusque hominum jure sociati, quæ civitates appellantur.—CICER. Somn. Scipion. c. 4.

[i] Ὁ Ἰωάννης φιλέρημος, ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἥμερος καὶ τιθασσὸς καὶ ἀγελαῖος

ments of sin cleared by dereliction and the succeeding fruits of emendation. But as it related to the Jews, his baptism did signify, by a cognation to their usual rites and ceremonies of ablution, and washing gentile proselytes, that the Jews had so far receded from their duty and that holiness, which God required of them by the law, that they were in the state of strangers, no better than heathens; and, therefore, were to be treated, as themselves received gentile proselytes, by a baptism and a new state of life, before they could be fit for the reception of the Messias, or be admitted to his kingdom.

9. It was an excellent sweetness of religion, that had entirely possessed the soul of the Baptist, that in so great reputation of sanctity, so mighty concourse of people, such great multitudes of disciples and confidents, and such throngs of admirers, he was humble without mixtures of vanity, and confirmed in his temper and piety against the strength of the most impetuous temptation. And he was tried to some purpose: for when he was tempted to confess himself to be the Christ, he refused it; or to be Elias, or to be accounted "that prophet," he refused all such great appellatives, and confessed himself only to be "a voice," the lowest of entities, whose being depends upon the speaker, just as himself did upon the pleasure of God, receiving form, and publication, and employment, wholly by the will of his Lord, in order to the manifestation of "the Word eternal." It were well, that the spirits of men would not arrogate more than their own, though they did not lessen their own just dues. It may concern some end of piety or prudence, that our reputation be preserved by all just means; but never, that we assume the dues of others, or grow vain by the spoils of an undeserved dignity. Honours are the rewards of virtue, or engagement upon offices of trouble and public use; but then they must suppose a preceding worth, or a fair employment. But he that is a plagiary of others' titles or offices, and dresses himself with their beauties, hath no more solid worth or reputation, than he should have nutriment, if he ate only with their mouth, and slept their slumbers, himself being open and unbound in all the regions of his senses.

THE PRAYER.

O holy and most glorious God, who, before the publication of thy eternal Son, the Prince of Peace, didst send thy servant, John Baptist, by the examples of mortification, and the rude austerities of a penitential life, and by the sermons of penance, to remove all the impediments of sin, that the ways of his Lord and ours might be made clear, ready, and expedite; be pleased to let thy Holy Spirit lead me in the straight paths of sanctity, without deflections to either hand, and without the interruption of deadly sin; that I may, with facility, zeal, assiduity, and a persevering diligence, walk in the ways of the Lord. Be pleased, that the axe may be laid to the root of sin, that the whole body of it may be cut down in me; that no fruit of Sodom may grow up to thy displeasure. Thoroughly purge the floor and granary of my heart with thy fan, with the breath of thy Diviner Spirit, that it may be a holy repository of graces, and full of benediction and sanctity; that when our Lord shall come, I may at all times be prepared for the entertainment of so divine a guest, apt to lodge him and to feast him, that he may for ever delight to dwell with me. And make me also to dwell with him, sometimes retiring into his recesses and private rooms, by contemplation, and admiring of his beauties, and beholding the secrets of his kingdom; and, at all other times, walking in the courts of the Lord's house, by the diligences and labours of repentance and an holy life, till thou shalt please to call me to a nearer communication of thy excellencies: which then grant, when, by thy gracious assistances, I shall have done thy works, and glorified thy holy name, by the strict and never-failing purposes and proportionable endeavours of religion and holiness, through the merits and mercies of Jesus Christ. Amen.

DISCOURSE IV.

Of Mortification and Corporal Austerities.

1. "From the days of John the Baptist, the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force," said our blessed Saviour. For now that the new covenant was to be made with man, repentance, which is so great a part of it, being, in very many actions, a punitive duty, afflictive and vindicative, "from the days of the Baptist," (who first, by office and solemnity of design, published this doctrine,) violence was done to the inclinations and dispositions of man, and by such violences we were to be possessed of the kingdom. And his example was the best commentary upon his text: he did violence to himself; he lived a life, in which the rudenesses of camel's hair, and the lowest nutriment of flies and honey of the desert, his life of singularity, his retirement from the sweetnesses of society, his resisting the greatest of temptations, and despising to assume false honours, were instances of that violence, and explications of the doctrine of self-denial and mortification, which are the pedestal of the cross, and the supporters of christianity, as it distinguishes from all laws, religions, and institutions of the world.

2. Mortification is the one half of christianity; it is a dying to the world; it is a denying of the will and all its natural desires: "An abstinence from pleasure and sensual complacencies, that the flesh being subdued to the Spirit, both may join in the service of God, and in the offices of holy religion."[a] It consists in actions of severity and renunciation; it refuses to give entertainment to any vanity, nor uses a freer license in things lawful, lest

[a] Τὴν ἐπὶ καθαιρέσει τοῦ φρονήματος σαρκὸς πρὸς τὸν τῆς εὐσεβείας σκοπὸν ἐπιτηδευομένην ἀποχὴν τῶν ἡδέων.—S. Basil.

it be tempted to things unlawful; it kills the lusts of the flesh by taking away its fuel and incentives, and by using to contradict its appetite, does inure it, with more facility, to obey the superior faculties: and, in effect, it is nothing but a great care we sin not, and a prudent and severe using such remedies and instruments, which in nature and grace are made apt for the production of our purposes. And it consists in interior and exterior offices; these being but instruments of the interior, as the body is organical or instrumental to the soul, and no part of the duty itself, but as they are advantages to the end, the mortification of the spirit; which by whatsoever means we have once acquired and do continue, we are disobliged from all other exterior severities, unless by accident they come to be obligatory, and from some other cause.

3. Mortification of the will or the spirit of man, that is the duty; that the will of man may humbly obey God, and absolutely rule its inferior faculties; that the inordinations of our natural desires, begun by Adam's sin, and continued and increased by our continuing evil customs, may be again placed in the right order; that, since many of the Divine precepts are restraints upon our natural desires, we should so deny those appetites, that covet after natur l satisfactions, that they may not serve themselves by disserving God. For therefore our own wills are our greatest dangers and our greatest enemies; because they tend to courses contradictory to God. God commands us to be humble; our own desires are to be great, considerable, and high; and we are never secure enough from contempt, unless we can place our neighbours at our feet: here, therefore, we must deny our will, and appetites of greatness, for the purchase of humility. God commands temperance and chastity; our desires and natural promptness break the band asunder, and entertain dissolutions to the licentiousness of Apicius, or the wantonness of a Mahometan paradise, sacrificing meat and drink-offerings to our appetites, as if our stomachs were the temples of Bel, and making women and the opportunities of lust to be our dwelling, and our employment, even beyond the common loosenesses of entertainment: here, therefore, we must deny our own wills, our appetites of gluttony and drunkenness, and our prurient beastly inclinations, for the purchase of temperance and chastity. And every other virtue is, either directly or by accident, a certain instance of this great duty, which is, like a catholicon, purgative of all distemperatures, and is the best preparative and disposition to prayer in the world.

4. For it is a sad consideration, and of secret reason, that since prayer, of all duties, is certainly the sweetest and the easiest, it having in it no difficulty or vexatious labour, no weariness of bones, no dimness of eyes or hollow cheeks is directly consequent to it, no natural desires of contradictory quality, nothing of disease, but much of comfort, and more of hope in it; yet we are infinitely averse from it, weary of its length, glad of an occasion to pretermit our offices; and yet there is no visible cause of such indisposition, nothing in the nature of the thing, nor in the circumstances necessarily appendant to the duty. Something is amiss in us, and it wanted a name, till the Spirit of God, by enjoining us the duty of mortification, hath taught us to know, that immortification of spirit is the cause of all our secret and spiritual indispositions: we are so incorporated to the desires of sensual objects, that we feel no relish or gust of the spiritual. It is as if a lion should eat hay, or an ox venison; there is no proportion between the object and the appetite, till, by mortification of our first desires, our wills are made spiritual, and our apprehensions supernatural and clarified. For as a cook told Dionysius the tyrant, the black broth of Lacedæmon would not do well at Syracuse, unless it be tasted by a Spartan's palate; so neither can the excellencies of heaven be discerned, but by a spirit disrelishing the sottish appetites of the world, and accustomed to diviner banquets. And this was mystically signified by the two altars in Solomon's temple; in the outer court whereof beasts were sacrificed, in the inner court an altar of incense: the first representing mortification or slaying of our beastly appetites; the second, the offering up our prayers, which are not likely to become a pleasant offertory, unless our impurities be removed by the atonement made by the first sacrifices: without our spirit be mortified, we neither can love to pray, nor can God love to hear us.

5. But there are three steps to ascend to this altar. The first is, to abstain from satisfying our carnal desires in the instances of sin; and although the furnace flames with vehement emissions at some times, yet to "walk in the midst of the burning without being consumed," like the children of the captivity: that is the duty even of the most imperfect, and is commonly the condition of those good persons, whose interest in secular employments speaks fair, and solicits often, and tempts highly; yet they manage their affairs with habitual justice, and a constant charity, and are temperate in their daily meals, chaste in the solaces of marriage, and pure in their spirits, unmingled with sordid affections in the midst of their possessions and enjoyments. These men are in the world, but they are strangers here: they have a city, but "not an abiding one;"[b] they are proselytes of the house, but have made no covenant with the world. For though they desire with secular desires, yet it is but for necessaries, and then they are content;[c] they use the creatures with freedom and modesty, but never to intemperance and transgression; so that their hands are below, tied there by the necessities of their life; but their hearts are above,[d] lifted up by the abstractions of this first degree of mortification. And this is the first and nicest distinction between a man of the world and a man of God; for this state is a denying our affections nothing but the sin; it enjoys as much of the world, as may be consistent with the possibilities of heaven. A little less than this is the state of immortification, and "a being in the flesh," which, saith the apostle, "cannot inherit

[b] Heb. xiii. 14.

[c] 1 Tim. vi. 8.

[d] 2 Cor. v. 6.

the kingdom of God." The flesh must first be separated, and the adherences pared off from the skin, before the parchment be fit to make a schedule for use, or to transmit a record. Whatsoever, in the sense of the Scripture, is flesh, or an enemy to the Spirit, if it be not rescinded and mortified, makes, that the laws of God cannot be written in our hearts. This is the doctrine St. Paul taught the church: "for if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."[e] This first mortification is the way of life, if it continues; but its continuance is not secured, till we are advanced towards life by one degree more of this death. For this condition is a state of a daily and dangerous warfare; and many inroads are made by sin, and many times hurt is done, and booty carried off: for he that is but thus far mortified, although his dwelling be within the kingdom of grace, yet it is in the borders of it, and hath a dangerous neighbourhood. If we mean to be safe, we must remove into the heart of the land, or carry the war farther off.

6. Secondly: We must not only be strangers here, but we must be dead too, "dead unto the world:" that is, we must not only deny our vices, but our passions; not only contradict the direct immediate persuasion to a sin, but also cross the inclination to it.[f] So long as our appetites are high and full, we shall never have peace or safety, but the dangers and insecurities of a full war and a potent enemy; we are always disputing the question, ever struggling for life: but when our passions are killed, when our desires are little and low, then grace reigns, then "our life is hid with Christ in God;" then we have fewer interruptions in the way of righteousness; then we are not so apt to be surprised by sudden eruptions and transportation of passions, and our piety itself is more prudent and reasonable, chosen with a freer election, discerned with clearer understanding, hath more in it of judgment than of fancy, and is more spiritual and angelical. He that is apt to be angry, though he be habitually careful, and full of observation that he sin not, may, at some time or other, be surprised, when his guards are undiligent, and without actual expectation of an enemy: but if his anger be dead in him, and the inclination lessened to the indifference and gentleness of a child, the man dwells safe, because of the impotency of his enemy, or that he is reduced to obedience, or hath taken conditions of peace. He that hath refused to consent to actions of uncleanness, to which he was strongly tempted, hath won a victory by fine force; God hath blessed him well. But an opportunity may betray him instantly, and the sin may be in upon him unawares; unless also his desires be killed, he is betrayed by a party within. David was a holy person, but he was surprised by the sight of Bathsheba; for his freer use of permitted beds had kept the fire alive, which was apt to be put into a flame, when so fair a beauty reflected through his eyes. But Joseph was a virgin, and kept under all his inclinations to looser thoughts; opportunity, and command, and violence, and beauty, did make no breach upon his spirit.

7. He that is in the first state of pilgrimage, does not mutiny against his superiors, nor publish their faults, nor envy their dignities; but he that is dead to the world, sees no fault that they have; and when he hears an objection, he buries it in excuse, and rejoices in the dignity of their persons. Every degree of mortification endures reproof without murmur; but he that is quite dead to the world, and to his own will, feels no regret against it, and hath no secret thoughts of trouble and unwillingness to the suffering, save only that he is sorry he deserved it. "For so a dead body resists not your violence, changes not its posture you placed it in, strikes not its striker, is not moved by your words, nor provoked by your scorn, nor is troubled when you shrink with horror at the sight of it; only it will hold the head downward in all its situations, unless it be hindered by violence:" and a mortified spirit is such, without indignation against scorn, without revenge against injuries, without murmuring at low offices, not impatient in troubles, indifferent in all accidents, neither transported with joy, nor depressed with sorrow, and is humble in all his thoughts. And thus, "he that is dead," saith the apostle, "is justified from sins."[g] And this is properly a state of life, in which, by the grace of Jesus, we are restored to a condition of order and interior beauty in our faculties; our actions are made moderate and humane, our spirits are even, and our understandings undisturbed.

8. For passions of the sensitive soul are like an exhalation, hot and dry, borne up from the earth upon the wings of a cloud, and detained by violence out of its place, causing thunders, and making eruptions into lightning and sudden fires. There is a tempest in the soul of a passionate man; and though every wind does not shake the earth, nor rend trees up by the roots, yet we call it violent and ill weather, if it only makes a noise and is harmless. And it is an inordination in the spirit of a man, when his passions are tumultuous and mighty; though they do not determine directly upon a sin, they discompose his peace, and disturb his spirit, and make it like troubled waters, in which no man can see his own figure and just proportions; and therefore, by being less a man, he cannot be so much a christian, in the midst of so great indispositions. For although the cause may hallow the passion, (and if a man be very angry for God's cause, it is zeal, not fury,) yet the cause cannot secure the person from violence, transportation, and inconvenience. When Elisha was consulted by three kings concerning the success of their present expedition,[h] he grew so angry against idolatrous Joram, and was carried on to so great degrees of disturbance, that when, for Jehoshaphat's sake, he was content to inquire of the Lord, he called for a minstrel, who, by his harmony, might recompose his disunited and troubled

[e] Rom. viii. 13.

[f] O quàm contempta res est homo, nisi super humana se erexerit!—SEN.

[g] Rom. vi. 7.

[h] 2 Kings iii. 13, 14, 15.

spirit, that so he might be apter for divination. And sometimes this zeal goes besides the intentions of the man, and beyond the degrees of prudent or lawful; and engages in a sin, though at first it was zeal for religion. For so it happened in Moses, "at the waters of Massah and Meribah, he spake foolishly;" and yet it was when he was zealous for God, and extremely careful of the people's interest. For his passion, he was hindered from entering into the land of promise. And we also, if we be not moderate and well-tempered, even in our passions for God, may, like Moses, break the tables of the law, and throw them out of our hands, with zeal to have them preserved; for passion violently snatches at the conclusion, but is inconsiderate and incurious concerning the premises. The sum and purpose of this discourse, is that saying of our blessed Saviour, "He that will be my disciple must deny himself;" [i] that is, not only desires that are sinful, but desires that are his own, pursuances of his own affections, and violent motions, though to things not evil, or in themselves contagious.

9. Thirdly: And yet there is a degree of mortification of spirit beyond this: for the condition of our security may require, that we not only deny to act our temptations, or to please our natural desires, but also to seek opportunities of doing displeasure to our affections, and violence to our inclinations; and not only to be indifferent, but to choose a contradiction and a denial to our strongest appetites, to rejoice in a trouble: and this was the spirit of St. Paul,—"I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulations;" [k] and, "We glory in it." [l] Which joy consists not in any sensitive pleasure any man can take in afflictions and adverse accidents, but in a despising the present inconveniences, and looking through the cloud unto those great felicities, and graces, and consignations to glory, which are the effects of the cross: "Knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed;" [m] that was the incentive of St. Paul's joy. And therefore, as it may consist with any degree of mortification to pray for the taking away of the cross, upon condition it may consist with God's glory and our ghostly profit; so it is properly an act of this virtue, to pray for the cross, or to meet it, if we understand it may be for the interest of the spirit. And thus St. Basil prayed to God to remove his violent pains of headach; but when God heard him, and took away his pain, and lust came in the place of it, he prayed to God to restore him his headach again: that cross was gain and joy, when the removal of it was so full of danger and temptation. And this the masters of spiritual life call "being crucified with Christ;" because, as Christ chose the death, and desired it by the appetites of the spirit, though his flesh smarted under it, and groaned and died with the burden; so do all that are thus mortified: they place misfortunes and sadness amongst things eligible, and set them before the eyes of their desire, although the flesh and the desires of sense are factious and bold against such sufferings.

10. Of these three degrees of interior or spiritual mortification, the first is duty, the second is counsel, and the third is perfection. We sin if we have not the first; we are in danger without the second; but without the third we cannot "be perfect, as our heavenly Father is," but shall have more of human infirmities to be ashamed of, than can be excused by the accrescences and condition of our nature. The first is only of absolute necessity; the second is prudent, and of greatest convenience; but the third is excellent and perfect.[n] And it was the consideration of a wise man, that the saints in heaven, who understand the excellent glories and vast differences of state and capacities amongst beatified persons, although they have no envy nor sorrows, yet if they were upon earth, with the same notion and apprehensions they have in heaven, would not for all the world lose any degree of glory, but mortify to the greatest eminence, that their glory may be a derivation of the greatest ray of light; every degree being of compensation glorious,[o] and disproportionably beyond the inconsiderable troubles of the greatest self-denial. God's purpose is, that we abstain from sin; there is no more in the commandment; and therefore we must deny ourselves, so as not to admit a sin, under pain of a certain and eternal curse: but the other degrees of mortification are by accident, so many degrees of virtue; not being enjoined or counselled for themselves, but for the preventing of crimes, and for securities of good life; and, therefore, are parts and offices of christian prudence, which whosoever shall positively reject, is neither much in love with virtue, nor careful of his own safety.

11. Secondly: But mortification hath also some designs upon the body. For the body is the shop and forge of the soul, in which all her designs, which are transient upon external objects, are framed: and it is a good servant, as long as it is kept in obedience and under discipline; but "he that breeds his servant delicately," [p] will find him contumacious and troublesome, bold and confident as his son: and, therefore, St. Paul's practice (as himself gives account of it) was "to keep his body under, and bring it into subjection, lest he should become a cast-away;" [q] for the desires of the body are, in the same things in which themselves are satisfied, so many injuries to the soul; because upon every one of the appetites a restraint is made, and a law placed for sentinel, that if we transgress the bounds fixed by the Divine commandment, it becomes a sin: now it is hard for us to keep them within compass, because they are little more than

[i] Matt. xvi. 24.
[k] 2 Cor. vii. 4.
[l] Rom. v. 3.
[m] Rom. v. 3, 4, 5.
[n] Κάθαρσις μὲν, ἀπὸ τῆς ὑλικῆς ἀλογίας, καὶ τοῦ θνητωδοῦς σώματος· τελειότης δὲ, τῆς οἰκείας εὐζωΐας ἀνάληψις, πρὸς τὴν θείαν ὁμοίωσιν ἐπανάγουσα· ταῦτα δὲ πέφυκεν ἀρετὴ καὶ ἀλήθεια μάλιστα ἀπεργάζεσθαι· ἡ μὲν, τὴν ἀμετρίαν τῶν παθῶν ἐξορίζουσα, ἡ δὲ, τὸ θεῖον εἶδος, εὐφυῶς ἔχουσα, προσκτωμένη· — HIEROCLES in Pythagor.
[o] Tantam gloriam omni horâ negligimus, quanta bona interim facere possemus, si otiosè eam transigimus.—S. BONAVENT.
[p] Prov. xxix. 21.
[q] 1 Cor. ix. 27. Rom. vi. 4. Heb. xii. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 1. and iv. 1.

agents merely natural, and therefore cannot interrupt their act, but covet and desire as much as they can, without suspension or coercion, but what comes from without; which is, therefore, the more troublesome, because all such restraints are against nature, and without sensual pleasure. And, therefore, this is that that St. Paul said, "When we were in the flesh, the passions of sin, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death."[r] For these pleasures of the body draw us as loadstones draw iron, not for love, but for prey and nutriment: it feeds upon the iron, as the bodily pleasures upon the life of the spirit, which is lessened and impaired, according as the gusts of the flesh grow high and sapid.

12. He that feeds a lion must obey him, unless he make his den to be his prison. Our lusts are as wild and as cruel beasts; and, unless they feel the load of fetters and of laws, will grow unruly and troublesome,[s] and increase upon us as we give them food and satisfaction. He that is used to drink high wines, is sick if he hath not his proportion, to what degree soever his custom hath brought his appetite: and to some men temperance becomes certain death, because the inordination of their desires hath introduced a custom, and custom hath increased those appetites, and made them almost natural in their degree: but he that hath been used to hard diet and the pure stream, his refreshments are much within the limits of temperance, and his desires as moderate as his diet. St. Jerom affirms, that to be continent in the state of widowhood, is harder than to keep our virgin pure: and there is reason, that then the appetite should be harder to be restrained, when it hath not been accustomed to be denied, but satisfied in its freer solicitations. When a fontinel is once opened, all the symbolical humours run thither, and issue out; and it is not to be stopped without danger, unless the humour be purged or diverted. So is the satisfaction of an impure desire; it opens the issue, and makes way for the emanation of all impurity; and, unless the desire be mortified, will not be stopped by purposes and easy desires.

13. Since, therefore, the body is the instrument of sins, the fuel and the incentive, our mortification must reach thither also, at least in some degrees, or it will be to small purpose to think of mortifying our spirit in some instances of temptation. In vain does that man think to keep his honour and chastity, that invites his lust to an activeness, by soft beds and high diet, and idleness and opportunity. Make the soul's instrument unapt, and half the work is done. And this is true in all instances of carnality or natural desires, whose scene lies in the lower region of passions, and are acted by the body; but the operation of the cure must be in proportion to the design; as the mortification of the spirit is in several degrees, so the mortification of the body also hath its several parts of prudence, injunction, and necessity. For the prescribing all sorts of mortifications corporal, indefinitely and indiscriminately to all persons, without separation of their ends and distinct capacities, is a snare to men's consciences, makes religion impertinently troublesome, occasions some men to glory in corporal austerity, as if of itself it were an act of piety, and a distinction of the man from the more imperfect persons of the world, and is all the way unreasonable and inartificial.

14. First: Therefore, such whose engagements in the world, or capacities of person, confine them to the lowest and first step of mortification; those who fight only for life and liberty, not for privileges and honour; that are in perpetual contestation and close fightings with sin; it is necessary that their body also be mortified in such a degree, that their desires transport them not beyond the permissions of Divine and human laws.[t] Let such men be strict in the rules of temperance and sobriety, be chaste within the laws of marriage, cherish their body to preserve their health, and their health to serve God, and to do their offices. To these persons, the best instruments of discipline are the strict laws of temperance; denying all transgressions of the appetite, boiling over its margin and proper limits; assiduous prayer, and observation of the public laws of fasting; which are framed so moderate and even, as to be proportionable to the common manner of living of persons secular and encumbered. For though many persons of common employments, and even manner of living, have, in the midst of worldly avocations, undertaken austerities very rude and rigorous, yet it was in order to a higher mortification of spirit; and it is also necessary they should, if either naturally, or habitually, or easily, they suffer violent transportation of passions: for since the occasions of anger and disturbance in the world frequently occur, if such passions be not restrained by greater violence than is competent to the ordinary offices of a moderate piety, the cure is weaker than the humour, and so leaves the work imperfect.

15. Secondly: But this is coincident to the second degree of mortification; for if, either out of desire of a farther step towards perfection, or out of the necessities of nature or evil customs, it be necessary also to subdue our passions, as well as the direct invitations to sins; in both these cases the body must suffer more austerities, even such as directly are contrariant to every passionate disturbance, though it be not ever sinful in the instance. All mortifiers must abstain from every thing that is unlawful; but these, that they may abstain from things unlawful, must also deny to themselves satisfaction in things lawful and pleasant: and this is in a just proportion to the end, the subduing the passions, lest their liberty and boldness become licentious. And we shall easier deny their importunity to sin, when we will not please them in those things in

[r] Rom. vii. 5.

[s] Αἰσχρὸν τῶν μὲν οἰκετῶν ἄρχειν, ταῖς δὲ ἡδοναῖς δουλεύειν. —ISOCR. ad Demonic.

[t] Huic epulæ, vicisse famem; magnique penates,
Summovisse hyemem tecto; pretiosaque vestis,
Hirtam membra super, Romani more Quiritis,
Induxisse togam. De CATONE dixit Lucanus, ii. 384.

Intonsos rigidam in frontem descendere canos
Passus erat, mœstamque genis increscere barbam.
De eodem, ii. 376.

which we may: such in which the fear of God, and the danger of our souls, and the convictions of reason and religion, do not immediately co-operate. And this was the practice of David, when he had thirsted for the water of Bethlehem, and some of his worthies ventured their lives, and brought it; "he refused to drink it, but poured it upon the ground unto the Lord:"[u] that is, it became a drink-offering unto the Lord; an acceptable oblation, in which he sacrificed his desires to God, denying himself the satisfaction of such a desire, which was natural and innocent, save that it was something nice, delicate, and curious. Like this was the act of the fathers, in the mountain Nitria,[x] to one of which a fair cluster of dried grapes being sent, he refused to taste them, lest he should be too sensual and much pleased, but sent them to another, and he to a third; and the same consideration transmitted the present through all their cells, till it came to the first man again; all of them not daring to content their appetite in a thing too much desired, lest the like importunity, in the instance of a sin, should prevail upon them. To these persons, the best instruments of discipline are subtractions, rather than imposition, of austerities; let them be great haters of corporal pleasures, eating for necessity, diet spare and cheap; abridging and making short the opportunities of natural and permitted solaces;[y] refusing exterior comforts; not choosing the most pleasant object; not suffering delight to be the end of eating, and therefore separating delight from it as much as prudently they may; not being too importunate with God to remove his gentler hand of paternal correction, but inuring ourselves to patient suffering, and indifferent acceptation of the cross that God lays upon us, at no hand living delicately, or curiously, or impatiently. And this was the condition of St. Paul, suffering with excellent temper all those persecutions and inconveniences, which the enemies of religion loaded him withal; which he called "bearing the marks of the Lord Jesus in his body,"[z] and "carrying about in his body the dying"[a] or mortification "of the Lord Jesus:" it was in the matter of persecution, which because he bare patiently, and was accustomed to, and he accepted with indifference and renunciation, they were the mortifications and the marks of Jesus; that is, a true conformity to the passion of Christ, and of great effect and interest for the preventing sins by the mortification of his natural desires.

16. Thirdly: But in the pale of the church, there are, and have been, many tall cedars, whose tops have reached to heaven; some there are that choose afflictions of the body, that, by turning the bent and inclination of their affections into sensual displeasures, they may not only cut off all pretensions of temptation, but grow in spiritual graces, and perfections intellectual and beatified. To this purpose they served themselves with the instances of sack-cloth, hard lodging, long fasts, pernoctation in prayers, renunciation of all secular possessions, great and expensive charity, bodily labours to great weariness and affliction, and many other prodigies of voluntary suffering, which Scripture and the ecclesiastical stories do frequently mention. St. Lewis, king of France, wore sackcloth every day, unless sickness hindered; and St. Zenobius, as long as he was a bishop. And when Severus Sulpitius sent a sackcloth to St. Paulinus, bishop of Nola, he returned to him a letter of thanks, and discoursed piously concerning the use of corporal austerities. And that I need not instance, it was so general, that this was, by way of appropriation, called "the garment of the church,"[b] because of the frequent use of such instruments of exterior mortification: and so it was in other instances. St. James neither ate flesh nor drank wine; St. Matthew lived upon acorns, seeds, and herbs; and, amongst the elder christians, some rolled themselves naked in snows, some upon thorns, some on burning coals, some chewed bitter pills and masticated gums, and sipped frequently of horrid potions, and wore iron upon their skin, and bolts upon their legs, and, in witty torments, excelled the cruelty of many of their persecutors, whose rage determined quickly in death, and had certainly less of torment than the tedious afflictions and rude penances of Simeon, surnamed Stylites. But as all great examples have excellencies above the ordinary devotions of good people, so have they some danger and much consideration.

17. First, therefore, I consider, that these bodily and voluntary self-afflictions can only be of use in carnal and natural temptations, of no use in spiritual: for ascetic diet, hard lodging, and severe disciplines, cannot be directly operative upon the spirit, but only by mediation of the body, by abating its extravagancies, by subtracting its maintenance, by lessening its temptations; these may help to preserve the soul chaste or temperate, because the scene of these sins lies in the body, and thence they have their maintenance,[c] and from thence also may receive their abatements. But in actions which are less material, such as pride, and envy, and blasphemy, and impenitence, and all the kinds and degrees of malice, external mortifications do so little co-operate to their cure, that oftentimes they are their greatest inflamers and incentives, and are like cordials given to cure a cold fit of an ague, they do their work, but bring a hot fit in its place: and besides that great mortifiers have been soonest assaulted by the spirit of pride, we find that great fasters are naturally angry and choleric. St. Hierom found it in himself, and Ruffinus felt some of the effects of it. And, therefore, this last part of corporal mortification, and the choosing such afflictions by a voluntary imposition, is at no hand to be ap-

[u] 2 Sam. xxiii. 16.
[x] Apud Pallad. in Histor. Lausiac.
[y] Quantò quisque sibi plura negaverit, à Diis plura feret. HOR. iii. 16, 21.
[z] Gal. vi. 17. [a] 2 Cor. iv. 10.

[b] Deposuerunt seculi byssum, et sumpserunt ecclesiæ vestimentum, quod est cilicium.—RURICIUS, ep. 20. EUSEB. lib. ii. Hist. c. 22. CLEM. ALEX. Pædag. lib. ii. c. 1.
[c] Ἐν πλησμονῇ γὰρ κύπρις· ἐν δὲ τοῖς κακῶς
Πράσσουσιν οὐκ ἔνεστιν ἀφροδίτη βροτοῖς.—ANTIPHAN.

plied in all cases, but in cases of lust only, and intemperance, or natural impatience, or such crimes which dwell in the senses: and then it also would be considered, whether or no rudeness to the body, applied for the obtaining patience, be not a direct temptation to impatience, a provoking the spirit, and a running into that, whither we pray that God would not suffer us to be led. Possibly such austerities, if applied with great caution and wise circumstances, may be an exercise of patience, when the grace is by other means acquired; and he that finds them so, may use them, if he dares trust himself: but as they are dangerous before the grace is obtained, so when it is, they are not necessary. And still it may be inquired, in the case of temptations to lust, whether any such austerities, which can consist with health, will do the work? So long as the body is in health, it will do its offices of nature; if it is not in health, it cannot do all offices of grace, nor many of our calling. And therefore, although they may do some advantages to persons tempted with the lowest sins, yet they will not do it all, nor do it alone, nor are they safe to all dispositions: and where they are useful to these smaller and lower purposes, yet we must be careful to observe that the mortification of the spirit to the greatest and most perfect purposes, is to be set upon by means spiritual, and of immediate efficacy; for they are the lowest operations of the soul, which are moved and produced by actions corporal; the soul may from those become lustful or chaste, cheerful or sad, timorous or confident: but yet even in these the soul receives but some dispositions thence, and more forward inclinations: but nothing from the body can be operative in the begetting or increase of charity, or the love of God, or devotion, or in mortifying spiritual and intellectual vices: and therefore those greater perfections and heights of the soul, such as are designed in this highest degree of mortification, are not apt to be enkindled by corporal austerities. And Nigrinus, in Lucian,[d] finds fault with those philosophers who thought virtue was to be purchased by cutting the skin with whips, binding the nerves, razing the body with iron; but he taught that virtue is to be placed in the mind by actions internal and immaterial, and that from thence remedies are to be derived against perturbations and actions criminal. And this is determined by the apostle in fairest intimation, "Mortify, therefore, your earthly members;"[e] and he instances in carnal crimes, "fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness," which are things may be something abated by corporal mortifications; and that these are, by distinct manner, to be helped from other more spiritual vices, he adds, "But now, therefore, put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication, and lying."[f] To both these sorts of sins, mortification being the general remedy, particular applications are to be made, and it must be only spiritual, or also corporal, in proportion to the nature of the sins:[g] he seems to distinguish the remedy by separation of the nature of the crimes, and possibly also by the differing words of "mortify"[h] applied to the carnal sins, and "put off"[i] to crimes spiritual.

18. Secondly: But in the lesser degrees of mortification, in order to subduing of all passions of the sensitive appetite, and the consequent and symbolical sins,[k] bodily austerities are of good use, if well understood and prudently undertaken. To which purpose I also consider, no acts of corporal austerity or external religion are of themselves to be esteemed holy or acceptable to God, are no where precisely commanded, no instruments of union with Christ, no immediate parts of Divine worship; and therefore, to suffer corporal austerities with thoughts determining upon the external action or imaginations of sanctity inherent in the action, is against the purity, the spirituality, and simplicity of the gospel. And this is the meaning of St. Paul, "It is a good thing that the heart be established with grace, not with meats, which have not profited them which have walked in them;"[l] and, "The kingdom of God consists not in meat and drink, but in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost;"[m] and, "Bodily exercise profiteth little, but godliness is profitable unto all things."[n] Now, if external mortifications are not for themselves, then they are to receive their estimate as they co-operate to the end: whatsoever is a prudent restraint of an extravagant passion, whatsoever is a direct denial of a sin, whatsoever makes provision for the spirit, or withdraws the fuel from the impure fires of carnality, that is an act of mortification; but those austerities which Baal's priests did use, or the Flagellantes, an ignorant faction that went up and down villages whipping themselves, or those which return periodically on a set day of discipline, and using rudenesses to the body by way of ceremony and solemnity, not directed against the actual incursion of a pungent lust, are not within the verge of the grace of mortification. For, unless the temptation to a carnal sin be actually incumbent and pressing upon the soul, pains of infliction and smart do no benefit toward suppressing the habit or inclination: for such sharp disciplines are but short and transient troubles; and although they take away the present fancies of a temptation, yet, unless it be rash and uncharitable, there is no effect remanent upon the body, but that the temptation may speedily return. As is the danger, so must be the application of the remedy. Actual severities are not imprudently undertaken in case of imminent danger; but to cure an habitual lust, such corporal mortifi-

[d] Δῆλος δὲ ἦν καὶ τῶν τοιούτων κατεγνωκὼς φιλοσόφων, οἳ ταύτην ἄσκησιν ἀρετῆς ὑπελάμβανον, ἣν πολλαῖς ἀνάγκαις καὶ πόνοις τοὺς νέους ἀντέχειν καταγυμνάσωσι. τοῦτο μὲν δεῖν οἱ πολλοὶ κελεύοντες, ἄλλοι δὲ, μαστιγοῦντες· οἱ δὲ χαριέστεροι, καὶ σιδήρῳ τὰς ἐπιφανείας αὐτῶν καταξύοντες. ἡγεῖτο γὰρ χρῆναι πολὺ πρότερον ἐν ταῖς ψυχαῖς τὸ στερρὸν τοῦτο καὶ ἀπαθὲς κατασκευάσαι.—LUCIAN. Nigrin. Bipont. vol. i. p. 50.

[e] Col. iii. 5. [f] Verse 8.

[g] Ut corpus redimas, ferrum patieris et ignes,
Arida nec sitiens ora lavabis aquâ.
Ut valeas animo, quicquam tolerare negabis?

[h] Νεκρώσατε τὰ μέλη. [i] Ἀπόθεσθε τὰ πάντα.

[k] Ὁ ἐγγὺς κυρίου πλήρης μαστίγων.—CLEM. ALEXAND. Pædag. 2.

[l] Heb. xiii. 9. [m] Rom. xiv. 17. [n] 1 Tim. iv. 8.

cations are most reasonable, whose effect is permanent, and which takes away whatsoever does minister more fuel, and puts a torch to the pile.

19. But this is altogether a discourse of christian prudence, not of precise duty and religion; for if we do, by any means, provide for our indemnity, and secure our innocence, all other exterior mortifications are not necessary, and they are convenient but as they do facilitate or co-operate towards the end. And if that be well understood, it will concern us that they be used with prudence and caution, with purity of intention, and without pride: for, since they are nothing in themselves, but are hallowed and adopted into the family of religious actions by participation of the end, the doing them not for themselves takes off all complacency and fancy reflecting from an opinion of the external actions, guides and purifies the intention, and teaches us to be prudent in the managing of those austerities, which, as they are in themselves afflictive, so have in them nothing that is eligible, if they be imprudent.

20. And now, supposing these premises as our guide to choose and enter into the action, prudence must be called into the execution and discharge of it, and the manner of its managing. And, for the prudential part, I shall first give the advice of Nigrinus in the discipline of the old philosophers: "He that will best institute and instruct men in the studies of virtue and true philosophy, must have regard to the mind, to the body, to the age, to the former education, and capacities or incapacities of the person;"[o] to which all such circumstances may be added, as are to be accounted for in all prudent estimations; such as are national customs, dangers of scandal, the presence of other remedies, or disbanding of the inclination.

21. Secondly: It may also concern the prudence of this duty, not to neglect the smallest inadvertencies and minutes of lust or spiritual inconvenience, but to contradict them in their weakness and first beginnings. We see that great disturbances are wrought from the smallest occasions, meeting with an impatient spirit, like great flames kindled from a little spark fallen into a heap of prepared nitre. St. Austin tells a story of a certain person "much vexed with flies in the region of his dwelling, and himself heightened the trouble by too violent and busy reflections upon the inconsiderableness of the instrument, and the greatness of the vexation alighting upon a peevish spirit. In this disposition he was visited by a Manichee (an heretic that denied God to be the maker of things visible): he being busy to rub his infection upon the next thing he met, asked the impatient person, whom he thought to be the maker of flies? He answered, I think the devil was; for they are instruments of great vexation and perpetual trouble. What he rather fancied than believed, or expressed by anger rather than at all had entertained within, the Manichee confirmed by such arguments, to which his adversary was very apt to give consent by reason of his impatience and peevishness. The Manichee, having set his foot firm upon his first breach, proceeded in his question, If the devil made flies, why not bees, who are but a little bigger, and have a sting too? The consideration of the sting made him fit to think, that the little difference in bigness needed not a distinct and a greater efficient, especially since the same workman can make a great as well as a little vessel. The Manichee proceeded, If a bee, why not a locust? if a locust, then a lizard? if a lizard, then a bird? if a bird, then a lamb? and thence he made bold to proceed to a cow, to an elephant, to a man. His adversary, by this time, being insnared by granting so much, and now ashamed not to grant more, lest his first concessions should seem unreasonable and impious, confessed the devil to be the maker of all creatures visible."[p] The use which is made of the story, is this caution, that the devil do not abuse us in flies, and provoke our spirits by trifles and impertinent accidents: for if we be unmortified in our smallest motions, it is not imaginable we should stand the blast of an impetuous accident and violent perturbation. Let us not, therefore, give our passions course in a small accident, because the instance is inconsiderable; for, though it be, the consequence may be dangerous, and a wave may follow a wave, till the inundation be general and desperate. And therefore, here it is intended for advice, that we be observant of the accidents of our domestic affairs, and curious that every trifling inadvertency of a servant, or slight misbecoming action, or imprudent words, be not apprehended as instruments of vexation; for so many small occasions, if they be productive of many small disturbances, will produce an habitual churlishness and immortification of spirit.

22. Thirdly: Let our greatest diligence and care be employed in mortifying our predominant passion: for if our care be so great as not to entertain the smallest, and our resolution so strong and holy as not to be subdued by the greatest and most passionate desires, the Spirit hath done all its work, secures the future, and sanctifies the present; and nothing is wanting but perseverance in the same prudence and religion. And this is typically commanded in the precept of God to Moses and Aaron, in the matter of Peor: "Vex the Midianites, because they vexed you, and made you sin by their daughters." And Phinehas did so; he killed a prince of the house of Simeon, and a princess of Midian, and God confirmed the priesthood to him for ever; meaning, that we shall for ever be admitted to a nearer relation to God, if we sacrifice to God our dearest lust. And this is not so properly an act, as the end of mortification. Therefore it concerns the prudence of the duty, that all the efficacy and violence of it be employed against the strongest, and there where is the most dangerous hostility.

23. Fourthly: But if we mean to be masters of the field, and put our victory past dispute, let us

[o] Καὶ τὸν ἄριστα παιδεύειν ἀνθρώπους προαιρούμενον, τοῦτο μὲν ψυχῆς, τοῦτο δὲ σώματος, τοῦτο δὲ ἡλικίας τε καὶ τῆς πρότερον ἀγωγῆς ἐστοχᾶσθαι.—Lucian. Nigrin.

[p] Tract 1. in Joh.

mortify our morosity and natural aversations, reducing them to an indifferency, having in our wills no fondnesses, in our spirits no faction of persons or nations, being prepared to love all men, and to endure all things, and to undertake all employments, which are duty or counsel in all circumstances or disadvantages. For the excellency of evangelical sanctity does surmount all antipathies, as a vessel climbs up and rides upon a wave; "The wolf and the lamb shall cohabit, and a child shall play and put his fingers in the cavern of an aspick;" nations, whose interests are most contradictory, must be knit by the confederations of a mortified and a christian spirit, and single persons must triumph over the difficulties of an indisposed nature, or else their own will is unmortified, and nature is stronger, than can well consist with the dominion and absolute empire of grace. To this I reduce such peevish and unhandsome nicenesses in matters of religion, that are unsatisfied, unless they have all exterior circumstances trimmed up and made pompous for their religious offices; such who cannot pray without a convenient room, and their devotion is made active only by a well-built chapel, and they cannot sing lauds without church music, and too much light dissolves their intention, and too much dark promotes their melancholy; and because these, and the like exterior ministries, are good advantages, therefore without them they can do nothing, which certainly is a great intimation and likeness to immortification. Our will should be like the candle of the eye, without all colour in itself, that it may entertain the species of all colours from without: and when we lust after mandrakes, and deliciousness of exterior ministries, we many times are brought to betray our own interest, and prostitute our dearest affections to more ignoble and stranger desires. Let us love all natures, and serve all persons, and pray in all places, and fast without opportunities, and do alms above our power, and set ourselves heartily on work, to neglect and frustrate those lower temptations of the devil, who will frequently enough make our religion inopportune, if we then will make it infrequent; and will present us with objects enough and flies to disquiet our persons, if our natures be petulant, peevish, curious, and unmortified.

24. It is a great mercy of God to have an affable, sweet, and well-disposed nature, and it does half the work of mortification for us; we have the less trouble to subdue our passions and destroy our lusts. But then, as those, whose natures are morose, choleric, peevish, and lustful, have greater difficulty; so is their virtue of greater excellence, and returned with a more ample reward: but it is in all men's natures, as with them who gathered manna, "They that gathered little had no lack, and they that gathered much had nothing over:" they who are of ill natures, shall want no assistance of God's grace to work their cure,[q] though their flesh be longer healing; and they who are sweetly tempered, being naturally meek and modest, chaste or temperate, will find work enough to contest against their temptations from without, though from within possibly they may have fewer. Yet there are greater degrees of virtue and heroical excellencies, and great rewards, to which God hath designed them by so fair dispositions, and it will concern all their industry to mortify their spirit, which, though it be malleable and more ductile, yet it is as bare and naked of imagery as the rudest and most iron nature: so that mortification will be every man's duty; no nature, nor piety, nor wisdom, nor perfection, but will need it, either to subdue a lust, or a passion; to cut off an occasion, or to resist a temptation; to persevere, or to go on; to secure our present estate, or to proceed towards perfection. But all men do not think so.

25. For there are some, who have great peace, no fightings within, no troubles without, no disputes or contradictions in their spirit: but these men have the peace of tributaries, or a conquered people; the gates of their city stand open day and night, that all the carriages may enter without disputing the pass: the flesh and the spirit dispute not, because the spirit is there in pupillage or in bonds, and the flesh rides in triumph, with the tyranny, and pride, and impotency, of a female tyrant. For, in the sense of religion, we all are warriors or slaves; either ourselves are stark dead in trespasses and sins, or we need to stand perpetually upon our guards in continual observation, and in contestation against our lusts and our passions; so long denying and contradicting our own wills, till we will and choose to do things against our wills, having an eye always to those infinite satisfactions, which shall glorify our wills and all our faculties, when we arrive to that state, in which there shall be no more contradiction, but only that "our mortal shall put on immortality."

26. But as some have a vain and dangerous peace, so others double their trouble by too nice and impertinent scruples, thinking that every temptation is a degree of immortification. As long as we live, we shall have to do with enemies: but as this life is ever a state of imperfection, so the very design and purpose of mortification is not to take away temptations, but to overcome them; it endeavours to facilitate the work, and secure our condition, by removing all occasions it can: but the opportunity of a crime, and the solicitation to a sin, is no fault of ours, unless it be of our procuring, or finds entertainment when it comes unsent for. To suffer a temptation is a misery; but if we then set upon the mortification of it, it is an occasion of virtue, and never is criminal, unless we give consent. But then also it would be considered, that it is not good offering ourselves to fire ordeal, to confirm our innocence; nor prudent to enter into battle without need, and to show our valour; nor safe to procure a temptation, that we may have the reward of mortification of it. For mortification of the spirit is not commanded as a duty finally resting in itself, or immediately landing upon God's glory, such as are acts of charity and devotion, chastity and justice; but it is the

[q] Nemo adeò ferus est, ut non mitescere possit,
Si modò culturæ patientem commodet aurem.
Hor. ep. 1. i. 39.

great instrument of humility and all other graces; and, therefore, is to be undertaken to destroy a sin, and to secure a virtuous habit. And besides that,[r] to call on a danger is to tempt God, and to invite the devil (and no man is sure of a victory): it is also great imprudence to create a need, that we may take it away again; to drink poison, to make experiment of the antidote; and, at the best, it is but running back, to come just to the same place again: for he that is not tempted, does not sin; but he that invites a temptation, that he might overcome it, or provokes a passion, that he may allay it, is then but in the same condition after his pains and his danger: he was not sure he should come so far.

THE PRAYER.

O dearest God, who hast framed man of soul and body, and fitted him with faculties and proportionable instruments to serve thee according to all our capacities, let thy Holy Spirit rule and sanctify every power and member, both of soul and body, that they may keep that beauteous order, which, in our creation, thou didst intend, and to which thou dost restore thy people in the renovations of grace; that our affections may be guided by reason, our understanding may be enlightened with thy word, and then may guide and persuade our will; that we suffer no violent transportation of passions, nor be overcome by a temptation, nor consent to the impure solicitations of lust; that "sin may not reign in our mortal bodies," but that both bodies and souls may be conformable to the sufferings of the holy Jesus; that in our body we may bear the marks and dying of our Lord, and in our spirits we may be humble and mortified, and like him, in all his imitable perfections; that we may die to sin, and live to righteousness, and, after our suffering together with him in this world, we may reign together with him hereafter; to whom, in the Unity of the most mysterious Trinity, be all glory, and dominion, and praise, for ever and ever. Amen.

SECTION IX.

Of Jesus being baptized, and going into the Wilderness to be tempted.

1. Now the full time was come, Jesus took leave of his mother and his trade, to begin his Father's work, and the office prophetical, in order to the redemption of the world; and when "John was baptizing in Jordan, Jesus came to John, to be baptized of him." The Baptist had never seen his face, because they had been, from their infancy, driven to several places, designed to several employments, and never met till now. But immediately the Holy Ghost inspired St. John with a discerning and knowing spirit, and at his first arrival he knew him, and did him worship. And when Jesus desired to be baptized, "John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" For the baptism of John, although it was not a direct instrument of the Spirit for the collation of grace, neither find we it administered in any form of words, not so much as in the name of Christ to come, as many dream:[a] (because, even after John had baptized, the Pharisees still doubted if he were the Messias; which they would not, if, in his form of ministration, he had published Christ to come after him; and also because it had not been proper for Christ himself to have received that baptism, whose form had specified himself to come hereafter; neither would it consist with the revelation which John had, and the confession which he made, to baptize in the name of Christ to come, whom the Spirit marked out to him to be come already, and himself pointed at him with his finger:) yet it was a ceremonious consignation of the doctrine of repentance,[b] which was one great part of the covenant evangelical, and was a divine institution, the susception of it was in order to the fulfilling all righteousness; it was a sign of humility, the persons baptized confessed their sins; it was a sacramental disposing to the baptism and faith of Christ: but therefore John wondered, why the Messias, the Lamb of God, pure and without spot, who needed not the abstersions of repentance, or the washings of baptism, should demand it, and of him, a sinner, and his servant. And in the Hebrew Gospel of St. Matthew, which the Nazarenes used at Berœa, (as St. Hierom reports,[c]) these words are added: "The mother of the Lord and his brethren said unto him, John Baptist baptizeth to the remissions of sins; let us go and be baptized of him. He said unto them, What have I sinned, that I should go and be baptized of him?" And this part of the story is also told by Justin Martyr.[d] But Jesus wanted not a proposition to consign by his baptism proportionable enough to the analogy of its institution; for as others professed their return towards innocence, so he avowed his perseverance in it; and though he was never called in Scripture a sinner, yet he was made sin for us; that is, he did undergo the shame and the punishment; and therefore it was proper enough for him to perform the sacrament of sinners.

2. But the holy Jesus, who came (as himself, in answer to the Baptist's question, professed) "to fulfil all righteousness," would receive that rite, which his Father had instituted in order to the manifestation of his Son. For although the Baptist had a glimpse of him by the first irradiations of the Spirit, yet John professed, that he therefore came baptizing with water, that "Jesus might be manifested to Israel;[e] and it was also a sign given

[r] Vide Disc. Of Temptation.
[a] Gabriel Sotus, Scotus, &c.
[b] Προοίμιον τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τῆς χάριτος.—Acts xix. 4.
[c] Quæst. ad Orthod. 73.
[d] Dial. 3. advers. Pelag.
[e] Ἐβαπτίσθη δὲ καὶ ἐνήστευσεν (Ἰησοῦς,) οὐκ αὐτὸς ἀπορυπώσεως ἢ νηστείας χρείαν ἔχων ἢ καθάρσεως, ὁ τῇ φύσει καθαρὸς καὶ ἅγιος, ἀλλ' ἵνα καὶ Ἰωάννῃ ἀλήθειαν προσμαρτυρήσῃ, καὶ ὑμῖν ὑπογραμμὸν παράσχηται.—Clem. Constit. Apost. lib. vii. c. 23.

to the Baptist himself, that "on whomsoever he saw the Spirit descending and remaining," he is the person "that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." And God chose to actuate the sign at the waters of Jordan, in great and religious assemblies, convened there at John's baptism; and therefore Jesus came to be baptized, and, by this baptism became known to John, who, as before he gave to him an indiscriminate testimony, so now he pointed out the person in his sermons and discourses, and, by calling him the Lamb of God,[f] prophesied of his passion, and preached him to be the world's Redeemer, and the sacrifice for mankind. He was now manifest to Israel; he confirmed the baptism of John; he sanctified the water to become sacramental and ministerial in the remission of sins; he by a real event declared, that to them, who should rightly be baptized, the kingdom of heaven should certainly be opened; he inserted himself, by that ceremony, into the society and participation of holy people, of which communion himself was Head and Prince; and he did, in a symbol, purify human nature, whose stains and guilt he had undertaken.

3. As soon as John had performed his ministry, and Jesus was baptized, he prayed, and the heavens were opened, and the air clarified by a new and glorious light;[g] "and the Holy Ghost, in the manner of a dove, alighted upon" his sacred head, and God the Father gave "a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." This was the inauguration and proclamation of the Messias, when he began to be the great Prophet of the new covenant. And this was the greatest meeting that ever was upon earth, where the whole cabinet of the mysterious Trinity was opened and shown, as much as the capacities of our present imperfections will permit; the second person in the veil of humanity, the third in the shape, or with the motion, of a dove;[h] but the first kept his primitive state; and as to the Israelites he gave notice by way of caution, "Ye saw no shape, but ye heard a voice;" so now also God the Father gave testimony to his holy Son, and appeared only in a voice, without any visible representment.

4. When the right and the solemnity was over, "Christ ascended up out of the waters, and left so much virtue behind him, that, as Gregorius Turonensis reports,[i] that creek of the river, where his holy body had been baptized, was endued with a healing quality, and a power of curing lepers, that bathed themselves in those waters, in the faith and with invocation of the holy name of Jesus. But the manifestation of this power was not till afterwards, for as yet Jesus did no miracles.

5. As soon as ever the Saviour of the world was baptized, had opened the heavens, which yet never had been opened to man, and was declared the Son of God, "Jesus was, by the Spirit, driven into the wilderness," not by an unnatural violence, but by the efficacies of inspiration, and a supernatural inclination and activity of resolution; for it was the Holy Spirit that bare him thither; he was led by the good Spirit to be tempted by the evil: whither also he was pleased to retire, to make demonstration, that even in an active life, such as he was designed to and intended, some recesses and temporary demissions of the world are most expedient, for such persons especially, whose office is prophetical, and for institution of others, that, by such vacancies in prayer and contemplation, they may be better enabled to teach others, when they have in such retirements conversed with God.

6. In the desert, which was four miles from the place of his baptism, and about twenty miles from Jerusalem, as the common computations are, he did abide "forty days and forty nights," where he was perpetually disturbed and assaulted with evil spirits, in the midst of wild beasts, in a continual fast, without eating bread or drinking water; "and the angels ministered to him," being messengers of comfort and sustentation, sent from his Father, for the support and service of his humanity, and employed in resisting and discountenancing the assaults and temporal hostilities of the spirits of darkness.

7. Whether the devils appeared in any horrid and affrighting shapes, is not certain; but it is more likely, to a person of so great sanctity and high designation, they would appear more angelical and immaterial, in representments intellectual, in words and ideas, temptations and enticements, because Jesus was not a person of those low weaknesses to be affrighted or troubled with an ugly phantasm, which can do nothing but abuse the weak and imperfect conceptions of persons nothing extraordinary. And this was the way, which Satan, or the prince of the devils, took, whose temptations were reserved for the last assault, and the great day of trial; for at the expiration of his forty days, Jesus being hungry, the tempter invited him only to eat bread of his own providing, which might refresh his humanity, and prove his Divinity, hoping that his hunger, and the desire of convincing the devil, might tempt him to eat before the time appointed. "But Jesus answered, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God:" meaning, that in every word of God, whether the commandment be general or special, a promise is either expressed or implied of the supply of all provisions necessary for him, that is doing the work of God; and that was the present case of Jesus, who was then doing his Father's work, and promoting our interest, and therefore was sure to be provided for: and therefore so are we.

8. The devil, having failed in his assault, tries him again, requiring but a demonstration of his being the Son of God. He "sets him upon the battlement of the temple,"[k] and invites him to

[f] Symbolum supplicii crucis.—JUST. MART.

[g] Καὶ εὐθὺς περιέλαμψε τὸν τόπον φῶς μέγα.—EVANG. Ebion.

[h] Ὡσεὶ περιστερὰν, Matt. iii. 16. Mark i. 10. Ἐν σωματικῷ εἴδει, Luke iii. 22.

[i] De Gloria Martyr. cap. xvii.

[k] Πτερύγιον, ἀκρωτήριον, τὸ ἐπάνω τῶν ναῶν ἀνατιθέμενον ζώδιον.

throw himself down, upon a pretence that God would send his angels to keep his Son, and quotes Scripture for it. But Jesus understood it well; and though he was secured of God's protection, yet he would not tempt God, nor solicit his providence to a dereliction, by tempting him to an unnecessary conservation. This assault was silly and weak. But at last he unites all his power of stratagem, and places the holy Jesus upon an exceeding high mountain, and, by an angelical power, draws into one centre species and ideas from all the kingdoms and glories of the world,[1] and makes an admirable map of beauties, and represents it to the eyes of Jesus, saying, that all that was put into his power to give, and he "would give it him, if he would fall down and worship him." But then the holy Lamb was angry as a provoked lion, and commanded him away, when his temptations were violent, and his demands impudent and blasphemous. "Then the devil leaveth him, and the angels came and ministered unto him," bringing such things as his necessities required, after he had, by a forty days' fast, done penance for our sins, and consigned to his church the doctrine and discipline of fasting in order to a contemplative life, and the resisting and overcoming all the temptations and allurements of the devil, and all our ghostly enemies.

Ad SECTION IX.

Considerations upon the Baptizing, Fasting, and Temptation of the Holy Jesus by the Devil.

1. WHEN the day did break, and the Baptist was busy in his offices, the Sun of righteousness soon entered upon our hemisphere; and after he had lived a life of darkness and silence for thirty years together, yet now that he came to do the greatest work in the world, and to minister in the most honourable embassy, he would do nothing of singularity, but fulfil all righteousness, and satisfy all commands, and join in the common rites and sacraments, which all people, innocent or penitent, did undergo, either as deleteries of sin or instruments of grace. For so he would needs be baptized by his servant; and though he was of purity sufficient to do it, and did actually, by his baptism, purify the purifier, and sanctify that and all other streams to a holy ministry and effect, yet he went in, bowing his head like a sinner, unclothing himself like an imperfect person, and craving to be washed, as if he had been crusted with an impure leprosy; thereby teaching us to submit ourselves to all those rites which he would institute; and although some of them be, like the baptism of John, joined with confession of sins, and publication of our infirmities, yet it were better for us to lay by our loads, and wash our ulcers, than by concealing them, out of vainer desires of impertinent reputation, cover our disease till we are heartsick and die. But when so holy a person does all the pious ministries of the more imperfect, it is a demonstration to us, that a life common and ordinary, without affectation or singularity, is the most prudent and safe. Every great change, every violence of fortune, all eminences and unevennesses whatsoever, whether of person, or accident, or circumstance, puts us to a new trouble, requires a distinct care, creates new dangers, objects more temptations, marks us out the objects of envy, makes our standing more insecure, and our fall more contemptible and ridiculous. But an even life, spent with as much rigour of duty to God as ought to be, yet in the same manner of devotions, in the susception of ordinary offices, in bearing public burdens, frequenting public assemblies, performing offices of civility, receiving all the rites of an established religion, complying with national customs, and hereditary solemnities of a people; in nothing disquieting public peace, or disrelishing the great instruments of an innocent communion, or dissolving the circumstantial ligaments of charity, or breaking laws, and the great relations and necessitudes of the world, out of fancy or singularity, is the best way to live holily, and safely, and happily; safer from sin and envy, and more removed from trouble and temptation.

2. When Jesus came to John to be baptized, John, out of humility and modesty, refused him; but when Jesus, by reduplication of his desire, fortifying it with a command, made it in the Baptist to become a duty, then he obeyed. And so also did the primitive clerks refuse to do offices of great dignity and highest ministry; looking through the honour upon the danger, and, passing by the dignity, they considered the charge of the cure, and knew that the eminence of the office was in all senses insecure to the person, till, by command and peremptory injunction of their superiors, it was put past a dispute, and became necessary, and that either they must perish instantly in the ruins and precipices of disobedience, or put it to the hazard and a fair venture, for a brighter crown or a bigger damnation. I wish also this care were entailed, and did descend upon all ages of the church; for the ambitious seeking of dignities and prelacies ecclesiastical, is grown the pest of the church, and corrupts the salt itself, and extinguishes the lights, and gives too apparent evidences to the world, that neither the end is pure, nor the intention sanctified, nor the person innocent, but the purpose ambitious or covetous, and the person vicious; and the very entrance into church-offices is with an impure torch, and a foul hand, or a heart empty of the affections of religion, or thoughts of doing God's work. I do not think the present age is to be treated with, concerning denying to accept rich prelacies and pompous dignities; but it were but reasonable that the main intention and intellectual design should be, to appreciate and esteem the office and employment to be of greatest consideration. It is lawful to desire a bishoprick; neither can the unwillingness to accept it be, in a prudent account, adjudged the aptest disposition to receive it (especially if done in ceremony,[a] just in

[1] Φαινόμενα ἐν τῷ ἀέρι φαντάσματα ἄστατα ὄντα καὶ ἀβέβαια.

[a] In Pontifical. Rom.

the instant of their entertainment of it, and possibly after a long ambition): but yet it were well if we remember, that such desires must be sanctified with holy care and diligence in the office; for the honey is guarded with thousands of little sharp stings and dangers; and it will be a sad account, if we be called to audit for the crimes of our diocese, after our own tallies are made even; and he that believes his own load to be big enough, and trembles at the apprehension of the horrors of dooms-day, is not very wise, if he takes up those burdens, which he sees have crushed their bearers, and presses his own shoulders till the bones crack, only because the bundles are wrapped in white linen, and bound with silken cords. "He that desires the office of a bishop, desires a good work," saith St. Paul: and therefore we must not look on it for the fair-spreading sails and the beauteous streamers, which the favour of princes hath put to it, to make it sail fairer and more secure against the dangers of secular discomforts; but upon the burden it bears. Prelacy is a good work; and a good work well done is very honourable, and shall be rewarded; but he that considers the infinite dangers of miscarrying, and that the loss of the ship will be imputed to the pilot, may think it many times the safest course, to put God or his superiors to the charge of a command, before he undertakes such great ministries: and he that enters in by the force of authority, as he himself receives a testimony of his worth and aptness to the employment, so he gives the world another, that his search for it was not criminal, nor his person immodest; and by his weighty apprehension of his dangers he will consider his work, and obtain a grace to do it diligently, and to be accepted graciously. And this was the modesty and prudence of the Baptist.

3. "When Jesus was baptized, he prayed, and the heavens were opened." External rites of Divine institution, receive benediction and energy from above, but it is by the mediation of prayer;[b] for there is nothing ritual, but it is also joined with something moral, and required, on our part, in all persons capable of the use of reason, that we may understand, that the blessings of religion are works and graces too: God, therefore, requiring us to do something, not that we may glory in it, but that we may estimate the grace, and go to God for it in the means of his own hallowing. Naaman had been stupid, if, when the prophet bade him wash seven times in Jordan for his cure, he had not confessed the cure to be wrought by the God of Israel, and the ministry of his prophet, but had made himself the author, because of his obedience to the enjoined condition; and it is but a weak fancy to derogate from God's grace, and the glory and the freedom of it, because he bids us wash before we are cleansed, and pray when we are washed, and commands us to ask before we shall receive. But this also is true, from this instance, that the external rite of sacrament is so instrumental in a spiritual grace, that it never does it but with the conjunction of something moral; and this truth is of so great persuasion in the Greek church,[c] that the mystery of consecration in the venerable eucharist is amongst them attributed not to any mystical words and secret operations of syllables, but to the efficacy of the prayers of the church, in the just imitation of the whole action and the rite of institution. And the purpose of it is, that we might secure the excellence and holiness of such predispositions and concomitant graces, which are necessary to the worthy and effectual susception of the external rites of christianity.

4. After the holy Jesus was baptized, and had prayed, the heavens opened,[d] the Holy Ghost descended, and a voice from heaven proclaimed him to be the Son of God, and one in whom the Father was well pleased; and the same ointment, that was cast upon the head of our High Priest, went unto his beard, and thence fell to the borders of his garment: for as Christ, our Head, felt these effects in manifestation, so the church believes God does to her, and to her meanest children, in the susception of the holy rite of baptism, in right, apt, and holy dispositions. For the heavens open, too, upon us; and the Holy Ghost descends, to sanctify the waters, and to hallow the catechumen, and to pardon the past and repented sins, and to consign him to the inheritance of sons, and to put on his military girdle, and give him the sacrament and oath of fidelity; for all this is understood to be meant by those frequent expressions of Scripture, calling baptism "the laver of regeneration, illumination, a washing away the filth of the flesh, and the answer of a good conscience, a being buried with Christ,"[e] and many others of the like purpose and signification. But we may also learn hence, sacredly to esteem the rites of religion, which he first sanctified by his own personal susception, and then made necessary by his own institution and command, and God hath made to be conveyances of blessing, and ministries of the Holy Spirit.

5. "The Holy Ghost descended upon Jesus, in the manner or visible representment of a dove;" either in similitude or figure, which he was pleased to assume, as the church more generally hath believed; or at least he did descend like a dove, and in his robe of fire hovered over the Baptist's head, and then "sat upon him," as the dove uses to sit upon the house of her dwelling; whose proprieties of nature are pretty and modest hieroglyphics of the duty of spiritual persons, which are thus observed in both philosophies. The dove sings not, but mourns; it hath no gall,[f] strikes not with its bill, hath no crooked talons, and forgets its young ones soonest of any of the inhabitants of the air. And the effects of the Holy Spirit are symbolical in all the sons of

[b] 1 Cor. x. 1, 2, 3. Gal. iii. 14, 27. 1 Pet. iii. 21. 1 Cor. xii. 7, 13. Matt. iii. 2, 6.

[c] Justin. Mart. Apol. 2. Euseb. Emiss. Serm. 5. de Pasch. S. August. lib. iii. c. 4. de Trin.

[d] Quòd Christus vidit cœlos apertos, nostrî utique gratiâ factum est, quibus per lavacrum undæ regeneratricis janua panditur regni cœlestis.—Beda in Matt. lib. i. c. 1.

[e] Eph. v. 26. Heb. x. 32. 1 Pet. iii. 21. Rom. vi. 4.

[f] Scil. in hepate; habet autem in intestino.

sanctification: for the voice of the church is sad in those accents, which express her own condition: but as the dove is not so sad in her breast as in her note, so neither is the interior condition of the church wretched and miserable, but indeed her song is most of it elegy within her own walls, and her condition looks sad, and her joys are not pleasures in the public estimate; but they that afflict her, think her miserable, because they know not the sweetnesses of a holy peace and serenity which supports her spirit, and plains the heart under a rugged brow, making the soul festival under the noise of a threne and sadder groanings. But the sons of consolation are also taught their duty by this apparition; for upon whomsoever the Spirit descends, he teaches him to be meek and charitable, neither offending by the violence of hands nor looser language. For the dove is inoffensive in beak and foot, and feels no disturbance and violence of passions, when its dearest interests are destroyed; that we also may be of an even spirit in the saddest accidents, which usually discompose our peace: and however such symbolical intimations receive their efficacy from the fancy of the contriver; yet here, whether this apparition did intend any such moral representment or no, it is certain, that wherever the Holy Spirit does dwell, there also peace and sanctity, meekness and charity, a mortified will, and an active dereliction of our desires, do inhabit. But besides this hieroglyphical representment, this dove, like that which Noah sent out from the ark, did aptly signify the world to be renewed, and all to be turned to a new creation; and God hath made a new covenant with us, that, unless we provoke him, he will never destroy us any more.

6. No sooner had the voice of God pronounced Jesus to be the well-beloved Son of God, but the devil thought it of great concernment to attempt him, with all his malice and his art; and that is the condition of all those, whom God's grace hath separated from the common expectations and societies of the world: and therefore the son of Sirach gave good advice, "My son, if thou come to serve the Lord, prepare thy soul for temptation;"[g] for not only the spirits of darkness are exasperated at the declension of their own kingdom, but also the nature and constitution of virtues and eminent graces, which holy persons exercise in their lives, is such as to be easily assailable by their contraries, apt to be lessened by time, to be interrupted by weariness, to grow flat and insipid by tediousness of labour, to be omitted and grow infrequent, by the impertinent diversions of society and secular occasions; so that to rescind the ligaments of vice, made firm by nature and evil habits; to acquire every new degree of virtue, to continue the holy fires of zeal in their just proportion, to overcome the devil, and to reject the invitations of the world, and the softer embraces of the flesh, which are the proper employment of the sons of God, is a perpetual difficulty; and every possibility of prevaricating the strictness of a duty, is a temptation, and an insecurity to them who have begun to serve God in hard battles.

7. The Holy Spirit did drive Jesus into the wilderness, to be tempted by the devil. And though we are bound to pray instantly, that we fall into no temptation; yet if, by Divine permission, or by an inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we be engaged in an action or course of life, that is full of temptation, and empty of comfort, let us apprehend it as an issue of Divine Providence, as an occasion of the rewards of diligence and patience, as an instrument of virtue, as a designation of that way, in which we must glorify God; but no argument of disfavour, since our dearest Lord, the most holy Jesus, who could have driven the devil away by the breath of his mouth, yet was, by the Spirit of his Father, permitted to a trial and molestation by the spirits of darkness. And this is St. James's counsel: "My brethren, count it all joy when ye enter into divers temptations; knowing that the trial of your faith worketh patience."[h] So far is a blessing, when the Spirit is the instrument of our motion, and brings us to the trial of our faith: but if the Spirit leaves us, and delivers us over to the devil, not to be tempted, but to be abused and ruined, it is a sad condition, and the greatest instance of their infelicity, whom the church, upon sufficient reason, and with competent authority, delivers over to Satan, by the infliction of the greater excommunication.

8. As soon as it was permitted to the devil to tempt our Lord, he, like fire, had no power to suspend his act, but was as entirely determined by the fulness of his malice, as a natural agent by the appetites of nature; that we may know, to whom we owe the happinesses of all those hours and days of peace, in which we sit under the trees of paradise, and see no serpent encircling the branches, and presenting us with fair fruit, to ruin us. It is the mercy of God we have the quietness of a minute; for if the devil's chain were taken off, he would make our very beds a torment; our tables to be a snare; our sleeps fantastic, lustful, and illusive: and every sense should have an object of delight and danger, an hyena to kiss, and to perish in its embraces. But the holy Jesus having been assaulted by the devil, and felt his malice by the experiments of humanity, is become so merciful a High Priest, and so sensible of our sufferings and danger, by the apprehensions of compassion, that he hath put a hook into the nostrils of Leviathan; and although the relics of seven nations be in our borders and fringes of our country, yet we live as safe as did the Israelites, upon whom sometimes an inroad and invasion was made, and sometimes they had rest forty years; and when the storm came, some remedy was found out by his grace, by whose permission the tempest was stirred up: and we find many persons, who in seven years meet not with a violent temptation to a crime, but their battles are against impediments and retardations of improvement; their own rights are not directly questioned, but the devil and sin are wholly upon the defensive. Our duty here is an act of affection to God, making returns of thanks for the protection, and of duty, to secure and continue the favour.

9. But the design of the Holy Ghost being to

[g] Ecclus. ii. 1.

[h] James i. 2, 3.

expose Jesus to the temptation, he arms himself with fasting, and prayer, and baptism, and the Holy Spirit, against the day of battle; he continues in the wilderness forty days and forty nights, without meat or drink, attending to the immediate addresses and colloquies with God; not suffering the interruption of meals, but representing his own and the necessities of all mankind, with such affections and instances of spirit, love, and wisdom, as might express the excellency of his person, and promote the work of our redemption; his conversation being, in this interval, but a resemblance of angelical perfection, and his fasts not an instrument of mortification,[i] for he needed none; he had contracted no stain from his own nor his parents' acts; neither do we find, that he was at all hungry, or afflicted with his abstinence, till after the expiration of forty days. He was afterwards "an hungred," said the evangelist; and his abstinence from meat might be a defecation of his faculties, and an opportunity of prayer, but we are not sure it intended any thing else. But it may concern the prudence of religion, to snatch at this occasion of duty, so far as the instance is imitable; and in all violences of temptation to fast and pray, prayer being a rare antidote against the poison, and fasting a convenient disposition to intense, actual, and undisturbed prayer. And we may remember also, that we have been baptized and consigned with the Spirit of God,[k] and have received the adoption of sons, and the graces of sanctification, in our baptisms, and had then the seed of God put into us; and then we put on Christ; and entering into battle, put on the whole armour of righteousness; and therefore we may, by observing our strength, gather also our duty and greatest obligation, to fight manfully, that we may triumph gloriously.

10. The devil's first temptation of Christ was upon the instances and first necessities of nature; Christ was hungry, and the devil invited him to break his fast upon the expense of a miracle, by turning the stones into bread. But the answer Jesus made, was such as taught us, since the ordinary providence of God is sufficient for our provision or support, extraordinary ways of satisfying necessities are not to be undertaken; but God must be relied upon, his time attended, his manner entertained, and his measure thankfully received. Jesus refused to be relieved, and denied to manifest the Divinity of his person, rather than he would do an act, which had in it the intimation of a diffident spirit, or might be expounded a disreputation to God's providence. And, therefore, it is an improvident care and impious security, to take evil courses, and use vile instruments, to furnish our table, and provide for our necessities. God will certainly give us bread; and till he does, we can live by the breath of his mouth, by the word of God, by the light of his countenance, by the refreshment of his promises; for if God gives not provisions into our granaries, he can feed us out of his own, that is, out of the repositories of charity. If the flesh-pots be removed, he can also alter the appetite; and when our stock is spent, he can also lessen the necessity; or if that continues, he can drown the sense of it in a deluge of patience and resignation. Every word of God's mouth can create a grace, and every grace can supply two necessities, both of the body and the spirit, by the comforts of this to support that, that they may bear each other's burden, and alleviate the pressure.

11. But the devil is always prompting us to change our stones into bread, our sadnesses into sensual comfort, our drynesses into inundations of fancy and exterior sweetnesses: for he knows, that the ascetic tables of mortification and the stones of the desert, are more healthful than the fulnesses of voluptuousness and the corn of the valleys. He cannot endure we should live a life of austerity or self-denial: if he can get us but to satisfy our senses, and a little more freely to please our natural desires, he then hath a fair field for the battle; but so long as we force him to fight in hedges and morasses, encircling and crowding up his strengths into disadvantages, by our stone walls, our hardnesses of discipline and rudenesses of mortification, we can with more facility repel his flatteries, and receive fewer incommodities of spirit. But thus the devil will abuse us by the impotency of our natural desires; and therefore let us go to God for satisfaction of our wishes. God can and does, when it is good for us, change our stones into bread: for he is a Father so merciful, that "if we ask him a fish, he will not give us a scorpion; if we ask him bread, he will not offer us a stone;" but will satisfy all our desires by ministrations of the Spirit, making stones to become our meat, and tears our drink; which, although they are unpleasant and harsh to natural appetites, yet, by the operation and influences of God's Holy Spirit, they are made instruments of health, and life, and salvation.

12. The devil, perceiving Jesus to be a person of greater eminence and perfection, than to be moved by sensual and low desires, makes a second assault, by a temptation something more spiritual, and tempts him to presumption and indiscreet confidence, to a throwing himself down from the pinnacles of the temple; upon the stock of predestination, that God might secure him by the ministry of angels, and so prove his being the Son of God. And indeed it is usual with the devil, when severe persons have so much mortified their lower appetites, that they are not easily overcome by an invitation of carnality or intemperance, to stir them to opinions of their own sanctity, and make their first escaping prove their second and greater dangers. But that the devil should persuade Jesus to throw himself down, be-

[i] Εἶθ' ὅταν τῆς χάριτος καταξιωθῇς, τότε σοι πρὸς ἀντικειμένας δυνάμεις παλαίειν δίδωσι τὴν ἐξουσίαν. ὥσπερ γὰρ μετὰ τὸ βάπτισμα καὶ τεσσαράκοντα ἡμέρας ἐπειρᾶτο, οὐχ ὅτι καὶ πρὸ τούτου νικᾶν οὐκ ἐδύνατο, ἀλλ' ὅτι πάντα τάξει καὶ ἀκολουθίᾳ πράττειν ἐβούλετο· οὕτω καὶ σὺ πρὸ τοῦ βαπτίσματος τοῖς ἀντικειμένοις παλαίειν μὴ τολμήσας, λαβὼν δὲ τὴν χάριν καὶ λοιπὸν θαρσῶν τοῖς τῆς δικαιοσύνης ὅπλοις, ἀγωνίζου τότε, καὶ εἰ θέλεις εὐαγγελίζου.—Cyril. Hier. Cat. 3.

[k] Ἐάν σοι προσβάλῃ μετὰ τὸ βάπτισμα ὁ τοῦ φωδιώκτης καὶ πειραστὴς, προσβαλεῖ δὲ, (καὶ γὰρ καὶ τῷ λόγῳ καὶ θεῷ μου προσέβαλε διὰ τὸ κάλυμμα, τῷ κρυπτῷ φωτὶ διὰ τὸ φαινόμενον) ἔχεις ᾧ νικήσεις· μὴ φοβηθῇς τὸν ἀγῶνα· προβαλοῦ τὸ ὕδωρ, προβαλοῦ τὸ πνεῦμα, ἐν ᾧ πάντα τὰ βέλη τοῦ πονηροῦ τὰ πεπυρωμένα σβεσθήσεται· πνεῦμα μέν ἐστιν, ἀλλὰ διαλύον ὄρη· ὕδωρ μεν ἐστιν, ἀλλὰ πυρὸς σβεστήριον.—Nazian. Orat. in S. Bapt.

cause he was the Son of God, was an invitation to no purpose, save only that it gave occasion to this truth, That God's providence secures all his sons in the ways of nature, and while they are doing their duty; but loves not to be tempted to acts unreasonable and unnecessary. God will protect his servants in or from all evils happening without their knowledge, or against their will; but not from evils of their own procuring. Heron, an inhabitant of the desert, suffered the same temptation, and was overcome by it; for he died with his fall, sinfully and ingloriously. For the caresses of God's love to his saints and servants are security against all but themselves. The devil and all the world offer to do them mischief, but then they shall be safe, because they are innocent; if they once offer to do the same to themselves, they lose their protection, because they lost their prudence and their charity. But here, also, it will concern all those, who, by their eminent employment, and greater ministries in ecclesiasticals, are set upon the pinnacle of the temple, to take care that the devil tempt not them to a precipice; a fall from so great a height will break the bones in pieces: and yet there also the station is less firm, the posture most uneasy, the prospect vertiginous, and the devil busy, and desirous to thrust us headlong.

13. St. Hierom here observes well,[1] the devil intending mischief to our blessed Saviour, invited him "to cast himself down." He may persuade us to a fall, but cannot precipitate us without our own act. And it is an infinite mercy in God, that the devil, who is of malice infinite, is of so restrained and limited a power, that he can do us no ghostly disadvantage, but by persuading us to do it ourselves. And then it will be a strange imprudence to lay violent and unreasonable hands on ourselves, and do that mischief which our strongest and most malicious adversary cannot; or to be invited by the only rhetoric of a dog's barking, to come near him, to untie his chain, to unloose his muzzle, for no other end but that we may be bitten. Just such a fool is every person that consents to the temptations of the devil.

14. By this time the devil began to perceive that this was the Son of God, and designed to be the King of all the world, and therefore resolved, for the last assault, to proffer him the kingdoms of the world; thinking ambition more likely to ruin him, because he knew it was that which prevailed upon himself, and all those fallen stars, the angels of darkness. That the devil told a lie is most likely, when he said, he had power to dispose the kingdoms of the world; for originally, and by proper inherent right, God alone disposes all governments: but it is also certain, that the devil is a person capable of a delegate employment, in some great mutation of states; and many probabilities have been observed by wise personages, persuading that the grandeur of the Roman empire was, in the degrees of increment and decrement, permitted to the power and managing of the devil; that the greatness of that government, being in all appearance full of advantage to Satan's kingdom, and employed for the disimprovement of the weak beginnings and improbable increase of christianity, might give lustre and demonstration to it, that it came from God; since the great permissions of power made to the devil, and acted with all art and malice in defiance of the religion, could produce no other effect upon it, but that it made it grow greater; and the greatness was made more miraculous, since the devil, when his chain was off, fain would, but could not, suppress it.

15. The Lamb of God, that heard him with patience tempt him to do himself a mischief, and to throw himself headlong, could by no means endure it, when he tempted to a direct dishonouring of God. Our own injuries are opportunities of patience; but when the glory of God, and his immediate honour, is the question, then is the occasion and precise minute for the flames of a clear-shining and unconsuming zeal. But the care of God's glory had so filled and employed all the faculties of Jesus, that he takes no notice of the offer: and it were well, also, that we had fewer opinions of the lustre of worldly dignities; or at least that we, in imitation of our blessed Master, should refuse to accept all the world, when it is to be bought of the devil, at the expense of a deadly sin. For that government cannot be very honourable, that makes us slaves to the worst of tyrants; and all those princes and great personages, who, by injury and usurpation, possess and invade others' rights, would do well to consider, that a kingdom is too dearly paid for, if the condition be first to worship the devil.

16. When the devil could do no good, "he departed for a time." If he could ever have spied a time of returning, he wanted not will nor malice to observe and use it; and although Jesus was a person without danger, yet I doubt not but the Holy Ghost described that circumstance, that we should not have the securities of a deep peace, when we have had the success of conquerors, for a surprise is most full of horror and of more certain ruin; so that we have no security, but a perpetual observation; that, together with the grace of God, (who takes care of all his servants, and will drive away the tempter when he pleases, and help us always when we need,) is as great an argument for our confidence, and encouragement to our prayers and address to God, as it is safety to our person, and honour to our victory. And let us account it our honour, that the trials of temptation, which is the greatest sadness of our condition, are hallowed by the temptation of Jesus, and our condition assured by his assistances, and the assistances procured by our prayers most easily upon the advantage of his sufferings and compassion. And we may observe, that poverty, predestination, and ambition, are the three quivers, from which the devil drew his arrows, which (as the most likely to prevail) he shot against Christ: but now he shot in vain, and gave probation that he might be overcome; our Captain hath conquered for himself and us. By these instances we see our danger, and how we are provided of a remedy.

[1] S. Hieron. in 4 cap. Matt.

THE PRAYER.

O holy Jesus, who didst fulfil all righteousness, and didst live a life of evenness, and obedience, and community, submitting thyself to all rites and sanctions of Divine ordinance; give me grace to live, in the fellowship of thy holy church, a life of piety, and without singularity, receiving the sweet influence of thy sacraments and rites, and living in the purities and innocencies of my first sanctification. I adore thy goodness infinite, that thou hast been pleased to wash my soul in the laver of regeneration, that thou hast consigned me to the participation of thy favours by the holy eucharist. Let me not return to the infirmities of the old man, whom thou hast crucified on thy cross, and who was buried with thee in baptism; nor renew the crimes of my sinful years, which were so many recessions from baptismal purities: but let me ever receive the emissions of thy Divine Spirit, and be a son of God, a partner of thine immortal inheritance; and when thou seest it needful, let me receive testimony from heaven, that I am thy servant and thy child. And grant that I may so walk, that I neither disrepute the honour of the christian institution, nor stain the whitenesses of that innocence, which thou didst invest my soul withal, when I put on the baptismal robe, nor break my holy vow, nor lose my right of inheritance, which thou hast given me by promise and grace; but that thou mayest love me with the love of a father, and a brother, and a husband, and a lord, and I serve thee in the communion of saints, in the susception of sacraments, in the actions of a holy life, and in a never-failing love or uninterrupted devotion; to the glory of thy name, and the promotion of all those ends of religion, which thou hast designed in the excellent economy of christianity. Grant this, holy Jesus, for thy mercy's sake, and for the honour of thy name, which is, and shall be, adored for ever and ever. Amen.

DISCOURSE V.

Of Temptation.

1. GOD, who is the fountain of good, did choose rather to bring good out of evil, than not to suffer any evil to be: not only because variety of accidents and natures do better entertain our affections, and move our spirits, who are transported and suffer great impressions by a circumstance, by the very opposition, and accidental lustre and eminency, of contraries; but also that the glory of the Divine Providence, in turning the nature of things into the designs of God, might be illustrious; and that we may, in a mixed condition, have more observation, and, after our danger and our labour, may obtain a greater reward: for temptation is the opportunity of virtue and a crown; God having disposed us in such a condition, that our virtues must be difficult, our inclinations averse and corrigible, our avocations many, our hostilities bitter, our dangers proportionable, that our labour might be great, our inclinations suppressed and corrected, our intentions be made actual, our enemies be resisted, and our dangers pass into security and honour, after a contestation, and a victory, and a perseverance. It is every man's case; trouble[a] is as certainly the lot of our nature and inheritance, and we are so sure to be tempted, that in the deepest peace and silence of spirit oftentimes is our greatest danger; not to be tempted, is sometimes our most subtle temptation. It is certain, then, we cannot be secure when our security is our enemy; but therefore we must do as God himself does, make the best of it, and not be sad at that, which is the public portion and the case of all men, but order it according to the intention, place it in the eye of virtue, that all its actions and motions may tend thither, there to be changed into felicities. But certain it is, unless we first be cut and hewn in the mountains, we shall not be fixed in the temple of God; but, by incision and contusions, our roughnesses may become plain, or our sparks kindled, and we may be, either for the temple or the altar, spiritual building or holy fire, something that God shall delight in, and then the temptation was not amiss.

2. And therefore we must not wonder, that oftentimes it so happens, that nothing will remove a temptation, no diligence, no advices, no labour, no prayers; not because these are ineffectual, but because it is most fit the temptation should abide, for ends of God's designing: and although St. Paul was a person, whose prayers were likely to be prevalent, and his industry of much prudence and efficacy toward the drawing out of his thorn; yet God would not do it, but continued his war, only promising to send him succour, "My grace is sufficient for thee;"[b] meaning, he should have an enemy to try his spirit and improve it, and he should also have God's grace to comfort and support it; but as, without God's grace, the enemy would spoil him, so without an enemy God's grace would never swell up into glory and crown him. For the caresses of a pleasant fortune are apt to swell into extravagances of spirit, and burst into the dissolution of manners; and unmixed joy is dangerous: but if, in our fairest flowers, we spy a locust, or feel the uneasiness of a sackcloth under our fine linen, or our purple be tied with an uneven and a rude cord; any little trouble, but to correct our wildnesses, though it be but a death's head served up at our feasts, it will make our tables fuller of health and freer from snare, it will allay our spirits, making them to retire from the weakness of dispersion, to the union and strength of a sober recollection.

3. Since, therefore, it is no part of our employ-

[a] Erras, mi frater, erras, si putas unquam christianum persecutionem non pati. Tunc maximè oppugnaris, si te oppugnari nescis.—S. HIER. ad Heliod.

[b] 2 Cor. xii. 9.

ment or our care, to be free from all the attempts of an enemy, but to be safe in despite of his hostility; it now will concern us to inform ourselves of the state of the war in general, and then to make provisions, and to put on armour accordingly.

4. First: St. Cyprian[c] often observes, and makes much of the discourse, that the devil, when he intends a battery, first views the strength and situation of the place. His sense, drawn out of the cloud of an allegory, is this: The devil first considers the constitution and temper of the person he is to tempt, and where he observes his natural inclination apt for a vice, he presents him with objects, and opportunity, and arguments fitting to his caitive disposition; from which he is likely to receive the smaller opposition, since there is a party within that desires his intromission. Thus, to lustful natures, he represents the softer whispers of the spirit of fornication; to the angry and revengeful, he offers to consideration the satisfactions and content of a full revenge, and the emissions of anger; to the envious he makes panegyrics of our rivals, and swells our fancies to opinion, our opinion to self-love, self-love to arrogance, and these are supported by contempt of others, and all determine upon envy, and expire in malice. Now, in these cases, when our natures are caitive and unhandsome, it were good we were conscious of our own weaknesses, and, by special arts and strengths of mortification, fortify that part, where we are apt and exposed to danger: we are sure enough to meet a storm there, and we also are likely to perish in it, unless we correct those aversenesses and natural indispositions, and reduce them to the evennesses of virtue, or the affections and moderation of a good nature. Let us be sure, that the devil take not a helve from our own branches to fit his axe, that so he may cut the tree down: and certainly he that does violence to his nature, will not be easy to the entertainment of affections preternatural and violent.

5. Secondly: But the devil also observes all our exterior accidents, occasions, and opportunities of action; he sees what company we keep, he observes what degrees of love we have to our wives, what looseness of affection towards children, how prevalent their persuasions, how inconvenient their discourses, how trifling their interests, and to what degrees of determination they move us by their importunity or their power. The devil tempted Adam by his wife, because he saw his affections too pliant, and encircling her with the entertainment of fondness, joy, wonder, and amorous fancy; it was her hand that made the fruit beauteous to Adam; "she saw it fair" of itself, "and so she ate;" but Adam was not moved by that argument, but, "The woman gave it me, and I did eat:" she gave vivacity to the temptation, and efficacy to the argument. And the severity of the man's understanding would have given a reasonable answer to the insinuations of the serpent: that was an ugly beast, and his arguments not being of themselves convincing to a wise person, either must put on advantages of a fair insinuation and representment, or they are returned with scorn. But when the beauteous hands of his young virgin-mistress[d] became the orators, the temptation was an amorevolezza; he kisses the presenter, and hugs the ruin. Here, therefore, is our safest course, to make a retrenchment of all those excrescences of affections, which, like the wild and irregular sucker, draw away nourishment from the trunk, making it as sterile as itself is unprofitable. As we must restrain the inclinations of nature, so also of society and relation when they become inconvenient, and let nothing of our family be so adopted, or naturalized into our affections, as to create within us a new concupiscence, and a second time spoil our nature: what God intended to us for a help, let not our fondnesses convert into a snare; and he that is not ready to deny the importunities, and to reject the interests, of a wife, or child, or friend, when the question is for God, deserves to miss the comforts of a good, and to feel the troubles of an imperious, woman.

6. Thirdly: We also have ends and designs of our own, some great purpose, upon which the greatest part of our life turns; it may be, we are to raise a family, to recover a sunk estate; or else ambition, honour, or a great employment, is the great hinge of all our greater actions; and some men are apt to make haste to be rich, or are to pass through a great many difficulties to be honourable: and here the devil will swell the hopes, and obstruct the passages; he will heighten the desire, and multiply the business of access, making the concupiscence more impatient, and yet the way to the purchase of our purposes so full of employment and variety, that both the implacable desire, and the multitude of changes and transactions, may increase the danger, and multiply the sin. When the enemy hath observed our ends, he makes his temptations to reflect from that angle which is direct upon them, provoking to malice and impatience against whomsoever we find standing in our way, whether willingly or by accident; then follow naturally all those sins, which are instrumental to removing the impediments, to facilitating the passage, to endearing our friends, to procuring more confidents, to securing our hopes, and entering upon possession. Simon Magus had a desire to be accounted some great one; and by that purpose he was tempted to sorcery and divination; and with a new object he brought a new sin into the world, adding simony to his sorcery, and taught posterity that crime, which, till then, had neither name nor being. And those ecclesiastics, who violently affect rich or pompous prelacies, pollute themselves with worldly arts, growing covetous as Syrian merchants, ambitious as the Levantine princes, factious as the people, revengeful as jealousy, and proud as conquerors and usurpers; and, by this means, beasts are brought into the temple, and the temple itself is exposed to sale, and the holy rites, as well as the beasts of sacrifice, are made venal. To prevent the infinite inconveniences, that thrust them-

[c] Serm. de Zelo.

[d] Habet namque voluptatem quandam admonitio uxoria, quum plurimùm ametur quod consulit.—S. Chrysost

selves into the common and great roads of our life, the best course is to cut our great channel into little rivulets, making our ends the more, that we may be indifferent to any, proposing nothing great, that our desires may be little; for so we shall be better able to digest the troubles of an enemy, the contradictions of an unhandsome accident, the crossing of our hopes; because our desires are even, and our ends are less considerable, and we can, with much readiness, divert upon another purpose, having another ready with the same proportion to our hopes and desires as the first. Thus, if we propound to ourselves an honest employment or a quiet retirement, a work of charity abroad or of devotion at home, if we miss in our first setting forth, we return to shore, where we can negociate with content, it being alike to us either to traffic abroad with more gain, or trade at home with more safety. But when we once grow great in our desires, fixing too earnestly upon one object, we either grow impatient, as Rachel, "Give me children, or I die;" or take ill courses and use unlawful means, as Thamar, choosing rather to lie with her father than to die without issue: or else are miserable in the loss and frustration of our hopes; like the women of Ramah, who "would not be comforted." Let, therefore, our life be moderate, our desires reasonable, our hopes little, our ends none in eminency and prelation above others:[e] for as the rays of light, passing through the thin air, end in a small and undiscerned pyramis, but, reflected upon a wall, are doubled, and increase the warmth to a scorching and troublesome heat; so the desires of man, if they pass through an even and indifferent life towards the issues of an ordinary and necessary course, they are little, and within command; but if they pass upon an end, or aim of difficulty or ambition, they duplicate, and grow to a disturbance: and we have seen the even and temperate lives of indifferent persons continue in many degrees of innocence; but the temptation of busy designs is too great, even for the best of dispositions.

7. But these temptations are crasse and material, and soon discernible; it will require some greater observation to arm against such as are more spiritual and immaterial. For he hath apples to cozen children, and gold for men; the kingdoms of the world for the ambition of princes, and the vanities of the world for the intemperate; he hath discourses and fair-spoken principles to abuse the pretenders to reason, and he hath common prejudices for the more vulgar understandings. Amongst these I choose to consider such, as are by way of principle or proposition.

8. The first great principle of temptation I shall note, is a general mistake, which excuses very many of our crimes upon pretence of infirmity, calling all those sins, to which by natural disposition we are inclined, (though, by carelessness and evil customs, they are heightened to a habit,) by the name of sins of infirmity; to which men suppose they have reason and title to pretend. If, when they have committed a crime, their conscience checks them, and they are troubled, and, during the interval and abatement of the heats of desire, resolve against it, and commit it readily at the next opportunity; then they cry out against the weakness of their nature, and think, as long as this body of death is about them, it must be thus, and that this condition may stand with the state of grace: and then the sins shall return periodically, like the revolutions of a quartan ague, well and ill for ever, till death surprises the mistaker. This is a patron of sins, and makes the temptation prevalent by an authentic instrument; and they pretend the words of St. Paul, "For the good that I would, that I do not; but the evil that I would not, that I do. For there is a law in my members rebelling against the law of my mind, bringing me into captivity to the law of sin."[f] And thus the state of sin is mistaken for a state of grace, and the imperfections of the law are miscalled the affections and necessities of nature, that they might seem to be incurable, and the persons apt for an excuse, therefore, because for nature there is no absolute cure. But that these words of St. Paul may not become a savour of death, and instruments of a temptation to us, it is observable, that the apostle, by a fiction of person, (as is usual with him,[g]) speaks of himself, not as in the state of regeneration under the gospel, but under the difficulties, obscurities, insufficiencies, and imperfections of the law; which, indeed, he there contends to have been a rule good and holy, apt to remonstrate our misery, because by its prohibitions, and limits given to natural desires, it made actions (before indifferent) now to be sins; it added many curses to the breakers of it, and, by an efficacy of contrariety, it made us more desirous of what was now unlawful: but it was a covenant, in which our nature was restrained, but not helped; it was provoked, but not sweetly assisted; our understandings were instructed, but our wills not sanctified, and there were no suppletories of repentance; every greater sin was like the fall of an angel, irreparable by any mystery, or express, recorded or enjoined. Now of a man under this covenant he describes the condition to be such, that he understands his duty, but by the infirmities of nature he is certain to fall, and by the helps of the law not strengthened against it, nor restored after it; and therefore he calls himself, under that notion, "a miserable man, sold under sin," not doing according to the rules of law, or the dictates of his reason, but by the unaltered misery of his nature certain to prevaricate. But the person described here is not St. Paul, is not any justified person, not so much as a christian, but one who is under a state of direct opposition to the state of grace; as will manifestly appear, if we observe the antithesis from St. Paul's own characters. For the man here named is such, as in whom "sin wrought all concupiscence, in whom sin lived, and slew him," so

[e] Vim temperatam dii quoque provehunt
In majus: iidem odere vires
Omne nefas animo moventes.

[f] Rom. vii. 19, 23.

[g] Ut videre est, Rom. iii. 7 Gal. ii. 18. 1 Cor. vi. 12. and x. 23, 29, 30. and xiii. 2.

that he was dead in trespasses and sins; and although he "did delight in the law after his inward man," that is, his understanding had intellectual complacencies and satisfactions, which afterwards he calls "serving the law of God with his mind," that is, in the first dispositions and preparations of his spirit, yet he could act nothing; for the law in his members did enslave him, "and brought him into captivity to the law of sin;"[h] so that this person was full of actual and effective lusts, he was a slave to sin, and dead in trespasses: but the state of a regenerate person is such, as to have "crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts;"[i] in whom sin did not reign, not only in the mind, but even also not in the mortal body; over whom sin had no dominion; in whom the old man was crucified, and the body of sin was destroyed, and sin not at all served. And to make the antithesis yet clearer, in the very beginning of the next chapter the apostle saith, "That the spirit of life in Christ Jesus had made him free from the law of sin and death;"[k] under which law, he complained immediately before he was sold and killed, to show the person was not the same in these so different and contradictory representments. No man in the state of grace can say, "The evil that I would not, that I do;" if, by evil, he means any evil that is habitual, or in its own nature deadly.

9. So that now let no man pretend an inevitable necessity to sin; for if ever it comes to a custom or to a great violation, though but in a single act, it is a condition of carnality, not of spiritual life; and those are not the infirmities of nature, but the weaknesses of grace, that make us sin so frequently; which the apostle truly affirms to the same purpose: "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot (or that ye do not[l]) do the things that ye would."[m] This disability proceeds from the strength of the flesh, and weakness of the Spirit: for he adds, "But if ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law:" saying plainly, that the state of such a combat, and disability of doing good, is a state of man under the law, or in the flesh, which he accounts all one; but every man that is sanctified under the gospel is led by the Spirit, and walks in the Spirit, and brings forth the fruits of the Spirit. It is not our excuse, but the aggravation of our sin, that we fall again, in despite of so many resolutions to the contrary. And let us not flatter ourselves into a confidence of sin, by supposing the state of grace can stand with the custom of any sin: for it is the state either of an animalis homo, (as the apostle calls him,[n]) that is, a man in pure naturals, without the clarity of Divine revelations, who "cannot perceive or understand the things of God;" or else of the carnal man, that is, a person, who, though in his mind he is convinced, yet he is not yet freed from the dominion of sin, but only hath his eyes opened, but not his bonds loosed. For, by the perpetual analogy and frequent expresses in Scripture, the spiritual person, or the man "redeemed by the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," is free from the law, and the dominion, and the kingdom, and the power of all sin. "For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."[o]

10. But sins of infirmity, in true sense of Scripture, signify nothing but the sins of an unholy and unsanctified nature, when they are taken for actions done against the strength of resolution, out of the strength of natural appetite and violence of desire; and therefore, in Scripture, the state of sin and the state of infirmity is all one. "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" (saith the apostle[p]): the condition in which we were, when Christ became a sacrifice for us, was certainly a condition of sin and enmity with God, and yet this he calls a being without strength, or in a state of weakness and infirmity; which we, who believe all our strength to be derived from Christ's death, and the assistance of the Holy Spirit, the fruit of his ascension, may soon apprehend to be the true meaning of the word. And in this sense is that saying of our blessed Saviour, "The whole have no need of a physician, but they that are weak:" for therefore "Christ came into the world to save sinners," those are the persons of Christ's infirmary, whose restitution and reduction to a state of life and health was his great design.[q] So that whoever sin habitually, that is, constantly, periodically, at the revolution of a temptation, or frequently, or easily, are persons who still remain in the state of sin and death; and their intervals of piety are but preparations to a state of grace, which they may then be, when they are not used to countenance or excuse the sin, or to flatter the person. But if the intermediate resolutions of emendation (though they never run beyond the next assault of passion or desire) be taken for a state of grace, blended with infirmities of nature, they become destructive of all those purposes, through our mistake, which they might have promoted, if they had been rightly understood, observed, and cherished. Sometimes, indeed, the greatness of a temptation may become an instrument to excuse some degrees of the sin, and make the man pitiable, whose ruin seems almost certain, because of the greatness and violence of the enemy, meeting with a natural aptness; but then the question will be, whither, and to what actions, that strong temptation carries him? whether to a work of a mortal nature, or only to a small irregularity? that is, whether to death, or to a wound? for whatever the principle be, if the effect be death, the man's case was therefore to be pitied, because his ruin was the more inevitable; not so pitied, as to excuse him from the state of death. For let the temptation be never so strong, every christian man hath assistances sufficient to support him, so as that, without his own yielding, no tempt-

[h] Rom. vii. 8, 11, 22, 23, 25.
[i] Gal. v. 24. Rom. vi. 6, 12, 14.
[k] Rom. viii. 2.
[l] Ἵνα μὴ ποιῆτε.
[m] Gal. v. 17.
[n] Rom. vii. 14.
[o] Rom. viii. 6.
[p] Rom. v. 6. Ὄντων ἡμῶν ἀσθενῶν, τουτέστιν ἀσεβῶν, without strength, that is, ungodly.
[q] Vide August. lib. ii. c. 17. De Peccatorum Meritis, et Enchir. 81.

ation is stronger than that grace, which God offers him; for if it were, it were not so much as a sin of infirmity; it were no sin at all. This, therefore, must be certain to us; when the violence of our passions or desires overcomes our resolutions and fairer purposes, against the dictate of our reason, that indeed is a state of infirmity, but it is also of sin and death, a state of immortification; because the offices of grace are, to crucify the old man, that is, our former and impurer conversation, to subdue the petulancy of our passions, to reduce them to reason, and to restore empire and dominion to the superior faculties. So that this condition, in proper speaking, is not so good as the infirmity of grace, but it is no grace at all: for "whoever are Christ's, have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts;"[r] those other imperfect, ineffective resolutions are but the first approaches of the kingdom of Christ, nothing but the clarities of lightning, dark as soon as light; and they therefore cannot be excuses to us, because the contrary weaknesses (as we call them) do not make the sin involuntary, but chosen and pursued, and, in true speaking, it is the strength of the lust, not the infirmity of a state of grace.

11. But yet there is a condition of grace, which is a state of little and imperfect ones, such as are called in Scripture "smoking flax and bruised reeds;" which is a state of the first dawning of the Sun of righteousness, when the lights of grace new rise upon our eyes; and then indeed they are weak, and have a more dangerous neighbourhood of temptations and desires, but they are not subdued by them:[s] they sin not by direct election; their actions criminal are but like the slime of Nilus, leaving rats half formed; they sin but seldom, and when they do, it is in small instances, and then also by surprise, by inadvertency; and then also they interrupt their own acts, and lessen them perpetually; and never do an act of sinfulness, but the principle is such, as makes it to be involuntary in many degrees. For when the understanding is clear, and the dictate of reason undisturbed and determinate, whatsoever then produces an irregular action excuses not, because the action is not made the less voluntary by it; for the action is not made involuntary from any other principle but from some defect of understanding, either in act, or habit, or faculty. For where there is no such defect, there is a full deliberation according to the capacity of the man, and then the act of election that follows is clear and full, and is that proper disposition, which makes him truly capable of punishment or reward respectively. Now although, in the first beginnings of grace, there is not a direct ignorance to excuse totally; yet because a sudden surprise or an inadvertency is not always in our power to prevent, these things do lessen the election and freedom of the action: and then, because they are but seldom, and never proceed to any length of time, or any great instances of crime, and are every day made still more infrequent, because grace growing stronger, the observation and advertency of the spirit, and the attendance of the inner man, grows more effectual and busy; this is a state of the imperfection of grace, but a state of grace it is. And it is more commonly observed to be expressed in the imperfection of our good actions, than in the irregularity of bad actions: and in this sense are those words of our blessed Saviour, "The spirit truly is willing, but the flesh is weak;" which in this instance was not expressed in sin, but in a natural imperfection, which then was a recession from a civility, a not watching with the Lord. And this is the only infirmity that can consist with the state of grace.

12. So that now we may lay what load we please upon our nature, and call our violent and mortified desires by the name of an imperfect grace; but then we are dangerously mistaken, and flatter ourselves into an opinion of piety, when we are "in the gall of bitterness;" so making our misery the more certain and irremediable, because we think it needs nothing but a perpetuity and perseverance to bring us to heaven. The violence of passion and desires is a misery of nature, but a perfect principle of sin; multiplying and repeating the acts, but not lessening the malignity; but sins of infirmity, when we mean sins of a less and lower malice, are sins of a less and imperfect choice, because of the unavoidable imperfection of the understanding. Sins of infirmity are always infirm sins, that is, weak and imperfect in their principle, and in their nature, and in their design; that is, they are actions incomplete in all their capacities; but then passions and periodical inclinations consisting with a regular, and determined, and actual understanding, must never be their principal; for whatsoever proceeds thence, is destructive of spiritual life, and inconsistent with the state of grace. But sins of infirmity, when they pretend to a less degree of malignity, and a greater degree of excuse, are such as are little more than sins of pure and inculpable ignorance; for in that degree, in which any other principle is mixed with them, in the same degree they are criminal and inexcusable. For as a sin of infirmity is pretended to be little in its value and malignity, so it is certain, if it be great in the instance, it is not a sin of infirmity, that is, it is a state or act of death, and absolutely inconsistent with the state of grace.

13. Secondly: Another principle of temptation, pregnant with sin, and fruitful of monsters, is a weaker pretence, which less wary and credulous persons abuse themselves withal, pretending as a ground for their confidence and incorrigible pursuance of their courses, that they have a good meaning, that they intend sometimes well, and sometimes not ill; and this shall be sufficient to sanctify their actions, and to hallow their sin. And this is of worse malice, when religion is the colour for a war, and the preservation of faith made the warrant for destruction of charity, and a zeal for God made the false light to lead us to disobedience to man, and hatred of idolatry is the usher of sacrilege, and the defiance of superstition the introducer of profaneness, and reformation made the colour for a schism, and liberty of conscience the way to a bold and saucy heresy: for the end may indeed

[r] Gal. v. 24.

[s] S. August lib. de Gratia et liber Arbit. c. 17, et c. 29.

hallow an indifferent action, but can never make straight a crooked and irregular. It was not enough for Saul to cry "for God and the sacrifice," that he spared the fat flocks of Amalek: and it would be a strange zeal and forwardness, that rather than the altar of incense should not smoke, will burn assa-fœtida, or the marrow of a man's bones. For as God will be honoured by us, so also in ways of his own appointment: for we are the makers of our religion, if we, in our zeal for God, do what he hath forbidden us.[t] And every sin, committed for religion, is just such a violence done to it as it seeks to prevent or remedy.

14. And so it is, if it be committed for an end or pretence of charity as well as of religion. We must be curious, that no pretence engage us upon an action, that is certainly criminal in its own nature. Charity may sometimes require our lives, but no obligation can endear a damnation to us; we are not bound to the choice of an eternal ruin, to save another. Indeed so far as an option will go, it may concern the excrescences of piety to choose, by a tacit or express act of volition, "to become anathema for our brethren,"[u] that is, by putting a case and fiction of law, to suppose it better, and wish it rather, that I should perish than my nation. Thus far is charitable, because it is innocent; for as it is great love to our country, so it is no uncharitableness to ourselves: for such options always are ineffective, and produce nothing but rewards of charity, and a greater glory. And the holy Jesus himself, who only could be, and was, effectively accursed to save us, got by it an exceeding and mighty glorification; and St. Paul did himself advantage by his charitable devotion for his countrymen. But since God never puts the question to us, that either we or our nation must be damned, he having fixed every man's final condition upon his own actions, in the virtue and obedience of Christ, if we mistake the expresses of charity, and suffer ourselves to be damned indeed for God's glory, or our brethren's good, we spoil the duty, and ruin ourselves, when our option comes to act. But it is observable, that although religion is often pretended to justify a sin, yet charity is but seldom; which makes it full of suspicion, that religion is but the cover to the death's head, and at the best is but an accusing of God, that he is not willing or not able to preserve religion, without our irregular and impious co-operations. But however, though it might concern us to wish ourselves rather accursed than our religion, or our prince, or our country should perish, (for I find no instances, that it is lawful so much as to wish it for the preservation of a single friend,) yet it is against charity to bring such a wish to pass, and, by sin to damn ourselves really for a good end, either of religion or charity.

15. Let us, therefore, serve God, as he hath described the way; for all our accesses to him, being acts of his free concession and grace, must be by his own designation and appointment. We might as well have chosen what shape our bodies should be of, as of what instances the substance of our religion should consist.

[t] Vide Historia Uzzæ, 2 Sam. vi. 6–9.

16. Thirdly: A third principle of temptation is, an opinion of prosecuting actions of civility, compliance, and society, to the luxation of a point of piety and stricter duty: and good natures, persons of humane and sweeter dispositions, are too apt to dash upon this rock of offence. But the evil that I would note is, that there are some conditions of men, to whom a vice is so accustomed, that he that mingles with them must handle the crime and touch the venom. There are some vices which are national; there are some that are points of honour; some are civilities of entertainment; and they are therefore accounted unavoidable, because the understandings of men are degenerous as their manners, and it is accounted sottish and fantastical not to communicate in their accustomed loosenesses. Amongst some men all their first addresses are drinkings, their entertainments intemperate beyond the permissions of christian austerity: their drink is humorous, and their humours quarrelous; and it is dishonourable not to engage in duel, and venture your soul to ascertain an empty reputation. These inconveniences rely upon false opinions and vain fancies, having no greater foundation than the sottish discourses of ignorant and ungodly persons; and they have no peculiar and appropriate remedy, but a resolute severity of manners, and a consideration what is required of us as christians, to confront against those fonder customs and expectations from us, as we engage in the puddles of the world, and are blended in society.

17. To which purposes we must be careful not to engage too freely in looser company, never without business or unavoidable accidents; and when we mingle in affairs, it will concern our safety to watch, lest multitude of talk, goodness, and facility of nature, the delight of company, and the freedom and ill-customed civilities do, by degrees, draw us away from our guards and retirement of spirit. For in these cases, every degree of dissolution disarms us of our strengths: and if we give way so far as we think it tolerable, we instantly and undiscernibly pass into unlawful and criminal. But our best defences are deposited in a severe and prudent understanding, and discerning the sottishness of such principles, which represent vice in civil language, and propound a crime to you under the cover of kindness; which is just so much recompence, as it is satisfaction to a condemned person, that he was accused by a witty orator, and sentenced by an eloquent judge. Remember always, that "the friendships of the world are enmity with God;" and that those societies, which are combined by relations of drink, and wantonness, and impertinence, and crimes, are either inconsiderable in civility, or reason, or reputation; no wise man is moved by their testimony or discourses; and they are so impotent, rude, and undiscerning a theatre, that most commonly he is the best man, who from thence is the worst reported and represented.

18. But in all the instances of this great evil, the very stating the question right is above half the victory. For it is a question between mistaken

[u] Rom. ix. 3.

civility and certain duty; piety on one side, and the disguises of humanity on the other. God and man are the parties interested; and to counterpoise the influence of the sight and face of man, (which being in a visible communication, it is not in some natures to neglect or contradict,) there are all the excellencies of God, the effects of his power, his certain presence and omniscience, the severities of his judgment, and the sweetness and invitation of his mercies; besides the prudence, wisdom, and satisfaction to the spirit, when we wisely neglect such sottish and low abuses and temptations, to conform to the rules of reason and duty, in compliance with the purposes of God and our own felicities.

19. These ill-managed principles are dangers as universal as an infected air; yet there are some diseases more proper to the particular state of religion. First, to young beginners in religion he represents the difficulties of religion, and propounds the greater examples of holy persons, and affrights them with those mountains of piety; observing where, and upon what instance of severity, his fancy will be most apprehensive and afflicted: and this he fails not often to represent, with a purpose, that by believing no piety less than the greatest can be good, he may despair of those heights, and retire into the securities and indifferences of a careless life. But this is to be cured by all those instruments of piety, which in special are incentives of the love of God, and endearments of spiritual and religious affections; and particularly by consideration of the Divine goodness, "who knows whereof we are made, and remembers that we are but dust," and will require no more of us than according to our powers and present capacities. But the subject-matter of this temptation is considered and refuted in the discourse of the love of God.[x]

20. But most commonly, young beginners are zealous and high, and not so easily tempted to a recession, till after a long time, by a revolution of affections, they are abated by a defervescency in holy actions. The devil uses to prompt them on; not that he loves the piety and the progress, but that he would engage the person in imprudences, and such forwardness of expresses, which either are in their own nature indiscretions, or from which, by reason of the incapacity of the person, it is necessary for him to retire. A new convert is like a bird newly entered into a net, through which possibly she might pass without danger, if her fears and unreasonable strivings did not entangle her; but when, by busy and disturbed flutterings, she discomposes the order of it, she is entangled and unpenned, and made a prey to her treacherous enemy. Such are the indiscreet strivings, and too forward enterprises of new penitents; whom we shall observe too often undertaking great austerities, making vows, and casting bands upon their liberty, and snares upon their persons; thinking nothing great enough to expiate their sin, or to present to God, or to endear their services, or secure their perseverance; and therefore they lay a load of fetters upon themselves, or rather cut off their legs, that they may never go back; therefore laying an obligation of vows and intolerable burdens on themselves, that by these they may, by a compendium of piety, redeem the time, and by those make it impossible to prevaricate. But the observation of the sad events and final accidents of these men, hath given probation of the indiscretion of such furious addresses and beginnings. And it was prudently done of Meletius[y] of Antioch, when he visited the diocesses of Syria, and the several religious persons famous for severe undertakings: espying that Simeon Stylites dwelt upon a pillar, and had bound his leg with a strong chain of iron, he sent for a smith, causing it to be knocked off, and said, "To a man that loves God, his mind is a sufficient chain." For the loads of voluntary austerities, rashly undertaken, make religion a burden, when their first heats expire; and their vows, which are intended to secure the practice and perpetuate the piety, are but the occasions of an aggravate crime; and the vow does not secure the piety, but the weariness and satiety of the duty tempts to the breaking of the vow, or at least makes the man impatient, when he cannot persist with content, nor retire with safety.

21. It therefore concerns all spiritual guides, to manage their new converts with sober counsels and moderate permissions, knowing that sublime speculations in the metaphysics are not fit entertainment for an infant understanding. There is "milk for babes, and strong meat for men" of riper piety; and it will employ all the regular strength of young beginners to contest against the relics of those mischiefs, which remain since the expulsion of the old man, and to master those difficulties, which, by the nature of the state, are certainly consequent to so late mutation. And if we, by the furies of zeal and the impatience of mistaken piety, are violent and indiscreet in the destroying of our enemies, we probably may tread the thistle down, and trample upon all its appearances, and yet leave the root in the ground, with haste and imprudent forwardness. Gentle and soft counsels are the surest enemies to your vice, and the best conservators and promoters of a virtuous state: but a hasty charge, and the conduct of a young leader, may engage an early spirit in dangers and dishonours. And this temptation is of so much greater danger, because it hath a face of zeal, and meets with all encouragements from without; every man being apt to cherish a convert, and to inflame his new fires; but few consider the inconveniences that are consequent to indiscreet beginnings, and the worse events usually appendant to such inconveniences.

22. Indeed it is not usual, that prudence and a new-kindled zeal meet in the same person: but it will therefore concern the safety of new converts, who cannot guide themselves, to give themselves up to the conduct of an experienced spiritual person, who being disinterested in those heats of the first

[x] Part 2. in Explicat. of the Decalogue, 1 Com.

[y] Theod. lib. v. c. 4.

apprehensions, and being long taught by the observation of the accidents of a spiritual life, upon what rocks rashness and zeal usually do engage us, can best tell, what degrees and what instances of religion they may, with most safety, undertake: but for the general, it is best in the addresses of grace to follow the course of nature; let there be an infancy, and a childhood, and a vigorous youth; and by the divers and distant degrees of increment, let the persons be established in wisdom and grace. But above all things, let them be careful, that they do not lay upon themselves necessities of any lasting course, no vows of perpetuity in any instance of uncommanded action or degree of religion: for he may alter in his capacity and exterior condition; he may see by experience, that the particular engagement is imprudent; he may, by the virtue of obedience, be engaged on a duty inconsistent with the conveniences and advantages of the other; and his very loss of liberty in an uncommanded instance, may tempt him to inconvenience. But then, for the single and transient actions of piety, although in them the danger is less, even though the imprudence be great, yet it were well, if new beginners in religion would attempt a moderate and an even piety, rather than actions of eminence, lest they retire with shame, and be afflicted with scruple, when their first heats are spent, and expire in weariness and temptation. It is good to keep within the circuits of a man's affections, not stretching out all the degrees of fancy and desire, but leaving the appetites of religion rather unsatisfied, and still desiring more, than by stretching out the whole faculty, leave no desires but what are fulfilled and wearied.

23. Thirdly: I shall not need here to observe such temptations, which are direct invitations to sin, upon occasion of the piety of holy persons; such as are security, too much confidence, pride, and vanity: these are part of every man's danger, and are to be considered upon their several arguments. Here I was only to note the general instruments of mischief. It remains now, that I speak of such remedies and general antidotes, not which are proportioned to sins in special, but such as are preventions, or remedies, and good advices in general.

24. First: Let every man abstain from all occasions of sin, as much as his condition will permit. And it were better to do some violence to our secular affairs, than to procure apparent or probable danger to our souls. For if we see not a way open and ready prepared to our iniquity, our desires oftentimes are not willing to be troubled, but opportunity gives life and activeness to our appetites. If David had not from his towers beheld the private beauties of Bathsheba, Uriah had lived, and his wife been unattempted; but sin was brought to him by that chance, and entering at the casement of his eyes, set his heart on fire, and despoiled him of his robes of honour and innocence. The riches of the wedge of gold, and the beauty of the Babylonish garment, made Achan sacrilegious upon the place, who was innocent enough in his preceding purposes: and therefore that soul, that makes itself an object to sin, and invites an enemy to view its possessions, and live in the vicinage, loves the sin itself; and he that is pleased with the danger, would willingly be betrayed into the necessity and the pleasure of the sin: for he can have no other end to entertain the hazards, but that he hath a farther purpose to serve upon them; he loves the pleasure of the sin, and therefore he would make the condition of sinning certain and unavoidable. And therefore holy Scripture, which is admirable and curious in the cautions and securities of virtue, does not determine its precepts in the precise commands of virtuous actions, but also binds up our senses, obstructs the passage of temptation, blocks up all the ways and avenues of vice, commanding us "to make a covenant with our eyes; not to look upon a maid; not to sit with a woman that is a singer; not to consider the wine when it sparkles, and gives its colour rightly in the cup:" but "to set a watch before our mouths, to keep the door of our lips;" and many more instances to this purpose, that sin may not come so near as to be repulsed; as knowing sin hath then prevailed too far, when we give the denial to its solicitations.

25. We read a story of a virtuous lady, that desired of St. Athanasius to procure for her, out of the number of the widows fed from the ecclesiastical corban, an old woman, morose, peevish, and impatient; that she might, by the society of so ungentle a person, have often occasion to exercise her patience, her forgiveness, and charity. I know not how well the counsel succeeded with her; I am sure it was not very safe: and to invite the trouble, to triumph over it, is to wage a war of an uncertain issue; for no end but to get the pleasures of the victory, which oftentimes do not pay for the trouble, never for the danger. An Egyptian, who acknowledged fire for his god, one day doing his devotions, kissed his god after the manner of worshippers, and burnt his lips. It was not in the power of that false and imaginary deity to cure the real hurt he had done to his devoutest worshipper. Just such a fool is he, that kisses a danger, though with a design of virtue, and hugs an opportunity of sin for an advantage of piety; he burns himself in the neighbourhood of the flame, and twenty to one but he may perish in its embraces. And he that looks out a danger, that he may overcome it, does as did the Persian, who worshipping the sun, looked upon him, when he prayed him to cure his sore eyes. The sun may as well cure a weak eye, or a great burden knit a broken arm, as a danger can do him advantage, that seeks such a combat which may ruin him, and after which he rarely may have this reward, that it may be said of him, he had the good fortune not to perish in his folly. It is easier to prevent a mischief than to cure it; and besides the pain of the wound, it is infinitely more full of difficulty to cure a broken leg, which a little care and observation would have preserved whole. To recover from a sin is none of the easiest labours, that concern the sons of men; and therefore it concerns them rather not to enter into such a narrow strait, from which they can never draw back their head, without leaving their hair and skin and their

ears behind. If God please to try us, he means us no hurt, and he does it with great reason and great mercy; but if we go to try ourselves, we may mean well, but not wisely: for as it is simply unlawful for weak persons to seek a temptation, so for the more perfect it is dangerous. We have enemies enough without, and one of our own within:[z] but we become our own tempter, when we run out to meet the world, or invite the devil home, that we may throw holy water upon his flames, and call the danger nearer, that we may run from it.[a] And certainly men are more guilty of many of their temptations than the devil, through their incuriousness or rashness doing as much mischief to themselves as he can: for he can but offer; and so much we do, when we run into danger. Such were those stories of St. Antony provoking the devil to battle. If the stories had been as true as the actions were rash and ridiculous, the story had fastened a note of indiscretion upon that good man; though now I think, there is nothing but a mark of fiction and falsehood on the writer.

26. Secondly: Possibly without fault we may be engaged in a temptation, but then we must be diligent to resist the first beginnings: for when our strength is yet entire and unabated, if we suffer ourselves to be overcome, and consent to its first and weakest attempts, how shall we be able to resist, when it hath tired our contestation, and wearied our patience, when we are weaker and prevailed upon, and the temptation is stronger and triumphant in many degrees of victory? By how much a hectic fever is harder to be cured than a tertian, or a consumption of the lungs than a little distillation of rheum upon the throat; by so much is it harder to prevail upon a triumphing lust than upon its first insinuations. But the ways of resisting are of a different consideration, proportionably to the nature of the crimes.

27. First: If the temptation be to crimes of pleasure and sensuality, let the resistance be by flight:[b] for, in case of lust, even to consider the arguments against it is half as great temptation, as to press the arguments for it; for all considerations of such allurements make the soul perceive something of its relish, and entertain the fancy. Even the pulling pitch from our clothes defiles the fingers; and some adherences of pleasant and carnal sins will be remanent even from those considerations, which stay within the circuit of the flames, though but with purpose to quench the fire, and preserve the house. Chastity cannot suffer the least thought of the reproaches of the spirit of impurity: and it is necessary to all that will keep their purity and innocence against sensual temptations, to avoid every thing that may prejudice decorum. Libanius the sophist reports, that a painter being one day desirous to paint Apollo upon a laurel-board, the colours would not stick, but were rejected; out of which his fancy found out this extraction: that the chaste Daphne (concerning whom the poets feign, that, flying from Apollo, who attempted to ravish her, she was turned into a laurel-tree) could not endure him even in painting,[c] and rejected him after the loss of her sensitive powers. And indeed chaste souls do, even to death, resent the least image and offer of impunity: whatsoever is like a sin of uncleanness, he that means to preserve himself chaste, must avoid, as he would avoid the sin; in this case there being no difference but of degrees between the inward temptation and the crime.

28. Secondly: If the temptation be to crimes of troublesome and preternatural desires, or intellectual nature, let the resistance be made consertâ manu, by a perfect fight, by the amassing of such arguments in general, and remedies in particular, which are apt to become deleteries to the sin, and to abate the temptation. But, in both these instances, the resistance must at least be as soon as the attempt is, lest the violence of the temptation outrun our powers: for if, against our full strength, it hath prevailed to the first degrees, its progress to a complete victory is not so improbable, as were its successes at the first beginnings. But to serve this, and all other ends, in the resisting and subduing a temptation, these following considerations have the best and most universal influence.

39. First: "Consideration of the presence of God," who is witness of all our actions, and a revenger of all impiety. This is so great an instrument of fear and religion, that whoever does actually consider God to be present, and considers what the first consideration signifies, either must be restrained from the present temptation or must have thrown off all the possibilities and aptnesses of virtue; such as are modesty, and reverence, and holy fear. For if the face of a man scatters all base machinations, and we dare not act our crimes in the theatre, unless we be impudent as well as criminal; much more does the sense of a present Deity fill the places of our heart with veneration and the awe of religion, when it is thoroughly apprehended and actually considered. We see not God, "he is not in our thoughts," when we run into darkness to act our impurities. For we dare not commit adultery if a boy be present; behold, the boy is sent off with an excuse, and God abides there, but yet we commit the crime: it is because, as Jacob said at Bethel, "God was in that place, and we knew not of it;" and yet we neither breathe, nor move an artery, but in him, and by his assistance: "In him we live, and move, and have our being."[d] And, "All things are naked and open in his sight."[e] "The iniquity of my people is very great; for they say, The Lord seeth not."[f] "Shall not he that made the eye, see?"[g] "To him the night and day are both alike."[h]

[z] Sed quid ego omne malum mundique hominumque maligni
Hostis ad invidiam detorqueo? quum mala nostra
Ex nostris concreta animis, genus, et caput, et vim,
Quid sint, quid valeant, sumunt de corde parente.
Prud. Hamartig.

[a] Ecclus. xxi. 27. Quum exsecratur impius Satanam, suam ipsius animam exsecratur.

[b] Time videre unde possis cadere; noli fieri perversâ simplicitate securus.—S. Aug.

[c] Καὶ ἀρνεῖται τον ἔρωτα, κἂν τὸ δένδρον.

[d] Acts xvii. 28. [e] Heb. iv. 13.

[f] Ezek. ix. 9. Jer. xxiii. 24. [g] Psalm xciv. 9.

[h] Psalm cxxxix. 12.

These, and many more to the same design, are the voices of Scripture, that our spirits may retire into the beholding of God, to the purposes of fear and holiness, with whom we do cohabit by the necessities of nature, and the condition of our essence, wholly in dependence; and then only we may sin securely, when we can contrive to do it so, that God may not see us.

30. There are many men who are "servants of the eyes,"[i] as the apostle's phrase is; who, when they are looked on, act virtue with much pompousness and theatrical bravery:[k] but these men, when the theatre is empty, put off their upper garment, and retire into their primitive baseness. Diogenes endured the extremity of winter's cold, that the people might wonder at his austerity and philosophical patience; but Plato, seeing the people admiring the man and pitying the sufferance, told them, that the way to make him warm himself, was for them to be gone, and to take no notice of him. For they that walk as in the sight of men, serve that design well enough, when they fill the public voice with noises and opinions, and are not, by their purposes, engaged to act in private; but they who are servants of the eyes of God, and walk as in the Divine presence, perceive the same restraints in darkness, and closets, and grots, as in the light and midst of theatres; and that consideration imposes upon us a happy necessity of doing virtuously, which presents us placed in the eyes of our Judge. And, therefore, it was not unhandsomely said of a Jewish doctor, "If every man would consider God to be the great eye of the world, watching perpetually over all our actions, and that his hand is indefatigable, and his ear ever open, possibly sin might be extirpated from off the face of the earth." And this is the condition of beatitude; and the blessed souls within their regions of light and felicity cannot sin, because of the vision beatifical, they always behold the face of God: and those who partake of this state by way of consideration, which is essential to the condition of the blessed, and derive it into practice and discourse, in proportion to this shall retain an innocence and a part of glory.

31. For it is a great declension of human reason, and a disreputation to our spirits, that we are so wholly led by sense, that we will not walk in the regions of the Spirit, and behold God by our eyes of faith and discourse, suffering our course of life to be guided by such principles, which distinguish our natures from beasts, and our conditions from vicious, and our spirits from the world, and our hopes from the common satisfactions of sense and corruption. The better half of our nature is of the same constitution with that of angels: and therefore, although we are drenched in matter and the communications of earth, yet our better part was designed to converse with God: and we had, besides the eye of reason, another eye of faith put into our souls, and both clarified with revelations and demonstrations of the Spirit, expressing to us so visible and clear characters of God's presence, that the expression of the same Spirit is, "We may feel him, for he is within us,"[l] and about us, and we are in him, and in the comprehensions of his embracings, as birds in the air, or infants in the wombs of their pregnant mothers. And that God is pleased not to communicate himself to the eyes of our body, but still to remain invisible, besides that it is his own glory and perfection, it is also no more to us but like a retreat behind a curtain, where, when we know our Judge stands as an espial and a watch over our actions, we shall be sottish, if we dare to provoke his jealousy, because we see him not, when we know that he is close by, though behind the cloud.

32. There are some general impressions upon our spirits, which, by way of presumption and custom, possess our persuasions, and make restraint upon us to excellent purposes; such as are the religion of holy places, reverence of our parents, presence of an austere, an honourable, or a virtuous person.[m] For many sins are prevented by the company of a witness, especially if, besides the ties of modesty, we have also towards him an endearment of reverence and fair opinion;[n] and if he were with us in our privacies, he would cause our retirements to be more holy. St. Ambrose reports of the Virgin Mary, that she had so much piety and religion in her countenance and deportment, that divers persons, moved by the veneration and regard of her person, in her presence have first commenced their resolutions of chastity and sober living. However the story be, her person certainly was of so express and great devotion and sanctity, that he must needs have been of a very impudent disposition, and firm immodesty, who durst have spoken unhandsome language in the presence of so rare a person. And why then any rudeness in the presence of God, if that were as certainly believed and considered? For whatsoever amongst men can be a restraint of vice or an endearment of virtue, all this is highly verified in the presence of God, to whom our conscience, in its very concealments, is as a fair table written in capital letters by his own finger; and then, if we fail of the advantage of this exercise, it must proceed either from our dishonourable opinion of God, or our own fearless inadvertency, or from a direct spirit of reprobation: for it is certain, that this consideration is, in its own nature, apt to correct our manners, to

[i] Ephes. vi. 6. Ὀφθαλμόδουλοι.

[k] Non enim virtute ac studiis, ut haberentur philosophi, laborabant; sed vultum et tristitiam, et dissentientem à cæteris habitum, pessimis moribus prætendebant.—QUINTIL. lib. i. procem.

Ambitio et luxuria et impotentia scenam desiderant; sanabis ista, si absconderis.—SENEC. ep. 15.

Magna vobis, si dissimulare non vultis, injecta necessitas probitatis, cùm omnia agitis ante oculos judicis cuncta cernentis.—BOETH. lib. v. Consol. prosâ ult.

[l] Acts xvii. 27.

Πεπεισμένοι ὅτι ὁι θεοὶ
Ἥερα ἑσσάμενοι πάντη φοιτῶσιν ἐπ' αἶαν,
Ἀνθρώπων ὕβρεις τε καὶ εὐνομίας ἐφορῶντες.

[m] Aliquem habeat animus quem revereatur, cujus auctoritate etiam secretum tuum sanctius fiat. Quid prodest inclusam esse conscientiam? patemus Deo.—SENEC. lib. i. ep. 11.

[n] Tiberius inter bona malaque mixtus, incolumi matre; intestabilis sævitiâ, sed obtectis libidinibus, dum Sejanum dilexit timuitve: postremò in scelera simul ac dedecora prorupit, postquam, remoto pudore et metu, suo tantùm ingenio utebatur.—TACIT. lib. vi. c. 51.

produce the fear of God,[o] and humility, and spiritual and holy thoughts, and the knowledge of God and of ourselves, and the consequents of all these, holy walking, and holy comforts. And, by this only argument, St. Paphnutius and St. Ephrem are reported in church story to have converted two harlots from a course of dissolution to great sanctity and austerity.

33. But then this presence of God must not be a mere speculation of the understanding; though so only it is of very great benefit and immediate efficacy, yet it must reflect as well from the will as from discourse: and then only we walk in the presence of God, when by faith we behold him present, when we speak to him in frequent and holy prayers, when we beg aid from him in all our needs, and ask counsel of him in all our doubts, and before him bewail our sins, and tremble at his presence. This is an entire exercise of religion. And beside that the presence of God serves to all this, it hath also especial influence in the disimprovement of temptations, because it hath in it many things contrariant to the nature and efficacy of temptations; such as are consideration, reverence, spiritual thoughts, and the fear of God: for wherever this consideration is actual, there either God is highly despised, or certainly feared. In this case we are made to declare; for our purposes are concealed only in an incuriousness and inconsideration; but whoever considers God as present, will, in all reason, be as religious as in a temple, the reverence of which place custom or religion hath imprinted in the spirits of most men: so that, as Ahasuerus said of Haman, "Will he ravish the queen in my own house?" aggravating the crime by the incivility of the circumstance; God may well say to us, whose religion compels us to believe God every where present; since the Divine presence hath made all places holy, and every place hath a Numen in it, even the eternal God, we unhallow the place, and desecrate the ground whereon we stand, supported by the arm of God, placed in his heart, and enlightened by his eye, when we sin in so sacred a presence.

34. The second great instrument against temptation, is "meditation of death."[p] Raderus reports, that a certain virgin, to restrain the inordination of intemperate desires, which were like thorns in her flesh, and disturbed her spiritual peace, shut herself up in a sepulchre, and for twelve years dwelt in that scene of death. It were good we did so too, making tombs and coffins presential to us by frequent meditation. For God hath given us all a definitive arrest in Adam, and from it there lies no appeal; but it is infallibly and unalterably "appointed for all men once to die,"[q] or to "be changed," to pass from hence to a condition of eternity, good or bad. Now, because this law is certain,[r] and the time and the manner of its execution is uncertain, and from this moment eternity depends, and that after this life the final sentence is irrevocable, that all the pleasures here are sudden, transient, and unsatisfying, and vain; he must needs be a fool, that knows not to distinguish moments from eternity:[s] and since it is a condition of necessity, established by Divine decrees, and fixed by the indispensable laws of nature, that we shall, after a very little duration, pass on to a condition strange, not understood, then unalterable, and yet of great mutation from this, even of greater distance from that in which we are here, than this is from the state of beasts; this, when it is considered, must, in all reason, make the same impression upon our understandings and affections, which naturally all strange things, and all great considerations, are apt to do; that is, create resolutions and results passing through the heart of man, such as are reasonable and prudent, in order to our own felicities, that we neglect the vanities of the present temptation, and secure our future condition, which will, till eternity itself expires, remain such as we make it to be by our deportment in this short transition and passage through the world.

35. And that this discourse is reasonable, I am therefore confirmed, because I find it to be to the same purpose used by the Spirit of God, and the wisest personages in the world. "My soul is always in my hand, therefore do I keep thy commandments,"[t] said David: he looked upon himself as a dying person, and that restrained all his inordinations, and so he prayed, "Lord, teach me to number my days, that I may apply my heart unto wisdom."[u] And therefore the Egyptians used to serve up a skeleton to their feasts, that the dissolutions and vapours of wine might be restrained with that bunch of myrrh, and the vanities of their eyes chastised by that sad object: for they thought it unlikely a man should be transported far with any thing low or vicious,[x] that looked long and often into the hollow eye-pits of a death's head, or dwelt in a charnel-house. And such considerations make all the importunity and violence of sensual desires to disband. For when a man stands perpetually at the door of eternity, and, as did John the almoner, every day is building of his sepulchre, and every night one day of our life is gone and passed into the possession of death, it will concern us to take care, that the door leading to hell do not open upon us, that we be not crushed to ruin by the stones of our grave, and that

[o] Ὁρῶ γὰρ ἡμᾶς οὐδὲν ὄντας ἄλλο, πλὴν
Εἴδωλ' ὁσοιπερ ζῶμεν, ἢ κούφην σκιάν.
Τοιαῦτα τοίνυν εἰσορῶν, ὑπέρκοπον
Μηδέν ποτ' εἴπῃς αὐτὸς εἰς θεοὺς ἔπος.
Sophocl. Aj. 125.

[p] Tota philosophia nihil est nisi meditatio mortis. Plato.

[q] Μόνος θεῶν γὰρ Θάνατος οὐ δώρων ἐρᾷ. Οὐδ' ἄν τε θύων, οὔτ' ἐπισπένδων ναοῖς.—Æschyl.
Ἀθανασίας δ' οὐκ ἔστιν, οὐδ' ἄν συναγάγῃς Τὰ Ταντάλου τάλαντ' ἐκεῖνα λεγόμενα.—Menand.
Vita humana propè uti ferrum est: si exerceas, conteritur; si non exerceas, tamen rubigo interficit.—Cato apud A. Gell. lib. xi. c. 2.

[r] Πρὸς μὲν τὰ ἄλλα πάντα ἀσφάλειάν ἐστε προϊστασθαι· χάριν δὲ θανάτου, πάντες ἄνθρωποι ἀτείχιστον πόλιν οἰκοῦμεν.—Metrodor. Phil.

[s] Dies iste quem tanquam extremum reformidas, æterni natalis est. Per hoc spatium, quod ab infantiâ patet in senectutem, in aliam naturæ sumimur partem.—Senec. Ep. 102.

[t] Psalm cxix. 109. [u] Psalm xc. 12.

[x] Θάνατος πρὸ ὀφθαλμῶν ἔστω σοι καθ' ἡμέραν, καὶ οὐδὲν οὐδέποτε ταπεινὸν ἐνθυμήσῃ, οὐδὲ ἄγαν ἐπιθυμήσεις τινός.—Epict. Enchir. cap. 28.

our death become not a consignation to us to a sad eternity. For all the pleasures of the whole world,[y] and in all its duration, cannot make recompence for one hour's torment in hell: and yet if wicked persons were to sit in hell for ever without any change of posture or variety of torment beyond that session, it were insufferable beyond the endurance of nature: and therefore, where little less than infinite misery in an infinite duration shall punish the pleasures of sudden and transient crimes, the gain of pleasure, and the exchange of banks here for a condition of eternal and miserable death, is a permutation fit to be made by none but fools and desperate persons, who made no use of a reasonable soul, but that they, in their perishing, might be convinced of unreasonableness, and die by their own fault.

36. The use that wise men have made, when they reduced this consideration to practice, is, to believe every day to be the last of their life, for so it may be, and, for aught we know, it will; and then think what you would avoid, or what you would do, if you were dying, or were to-day to suffer death by sentence and conviction; and that, in all reason, and in proportion to the strength of your consideration, you will do every day. For "that is the sublimity of wisdom, to do those things living, which are to be desired and chosen by dying persons."[z] An alarm of death, every day renewed, and pressed earnestly, will watch a man so tame and soft, that the precepts of religion will dwell deep in his spirit. But they "that make a covenant with the grave, and put the evil day far from them," they are the men that eat spiders and toads for meat greedily, and a temptation to them is as welcome as joy, and they seldom dispute the point in behalf of piety or mortification: for they that look upon death at a distance, apprehend it not, but in such general lines and great representments that describe it only as future and possible, but nothing of its terrors or affrightments, or circumstances of advantage, are discernible by such an eye, that disturbs its sight, and discomposes the posture, that the object may seem another thing than what it is truly and really. St. Austin, with his mother Monica, was led one day by a Roman prætor to see the tomb of Cæsar. Himself thus describes the corpse. "It looked of a blue mould, the bone of the nose laid bare, the flesh of the nether lip quite fallen off, his mouth full of worms, and in his eye-pits two hungry toads feasting upon the remanent portion of flesh and moisture; and so he dwelt in his house of darkness."[a] And if every person, tempted by an opportunity of lust or intemperance, would choose such a room for his privacy, that company for his witness, that object to allay his appetite, he would soon find his spirit more sober, and his desires obedient.[b] I end this with the counsel of St. Bernard, "Let every man, in the first address to his actions, consider, whether, if he were now to die, he might safely and prudently do such an act, and whether he would not be infinitely troubled, that death should surprise him in the present dispositions; and then let him proceed accordingly." For, since "our treasure is in earthen vessels," which may be broken in pieces by the collision of ten thousand accidents, it were not safe to treasure up wrath in them; for if we do, we shall certainly drink it in the day of recompence.

37. Thirdly: Before, and in, and after all this, the blessed Jesus propounds prayer as a remedy against temptations: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation."[c] For, besides that prayer is the great instrument of obtaining victory by the grace of God, as a fruit of our desires, and of God's natural and essential goodness; the very praying against a temptation, if it be hearty, fervent, and devout, is a denying of it, and part of the victory: for it is a disclaiming the entertainment of it, it is a positive rejection of the crime; and every consent to it is a ceasing to pray, and to desire remedy. And we shall observe, that whensoever we begin to listen to the whispers of a tempting spirit, our prayers against it lessen as the consent increases; there being nothing a more direct enemy to the temptation than prayer, which, as it is of itself a professed hostility against the crime, so it is a calling in auxiliaries from above to make the victory more certain. If temptation sets upon thee, do thou set upon God; for he is as soon overcome as thou art, as soon moved to good as thou art to evil; he is as quickly invited to pity thee as thou art to ask him;[d] provided thou dost not finally rest in the petition, but pass into action, and endeavour, by all means human and moral, to quench the flame newly kindled in thy bowels, before it come to devour the marrow of the bones. For a strong prayer, and a lazy, incurious, unobservant walking, are contradictions in the discourses of religion. Ruffinus[e] tells us a story of a young man solicited by the spirit of uncleanness, who came to an old religious person, and begged his prayers. It was in that age, when God used to answer prayers of very holy persons by more clear and familiar significations of his pleasure, than he knows now to be necessary. But after many earnest prayers sent up to the throne of grace, and the young man not at all bettered, upon consideration and inquiry of particulars he found the cause to be, because the young man relied so upon the prayers of the old eremite, that he did nothing at all to discountenance his lust, or contradict the temptation. But then he took another

[y] Linquenda tellus, et domus, et placens
Uxor; neque harum, quas colis, arborum
Te, præter invisas cupressos,
Ulla brevem dominum sequetur.
Hor. lib. ii. od. 14.

[z] Hic est apex summæ sapientiæ, ea viventem facere, quæ morienti essent appetenda.

[a] Καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ σποδός εἰμι,
Νίνου μεγάλης βασιλεύσας.
In Epitaph. Sardinapali.

[b] Ἤβωοις, φίλε θυμέ· τάχ' ἄν τινες ἄλλοι ἔσοιντο Ἄνδρες, ἐγὼ δὲ θανὼν γαῖα μέλαιν' ἔσομαι.—Fragm. Theog. in Speculo Monach.

[c] Matt. xxvi. 41.

[d] ———Hic levare functum
Pauperem laboribus
Vocatus atque non vocatus audit.
Hor. lib. ii. od. 18.

[e] Lib. iii. 13.

course, enjoined him austerities and exercises of devotion, gave him rules of prudence and caution, tied him to work and to stand upon his guard; and then the prayers returned in triumph, and the young man trampled upon his lust. And so shall I and you, by God's grace, if we pray earnestly and frequently, if we watch carefully that we be not surprised, if we be not idle in secret nor talkative in public, if we read Scriptures, and consult with a spiritual guide, and make religion to be our work, that serving of God be the business of our life, and our designs be to purchase eternity; then we shall walk safely, or recover speedily, and, by doing advantages to piety, secure a greatness of religion, and spirituality to our spirits and understanding. But remember, that when Israel fought against Amalek, Moses's prayer and Moses's hand secured the victory, his prayer grew ineffectual when his hands were slack; to remonstrate to us, that we must co-operate with the grace of God, praying devoutly, and watching carefully, and observing prudently, and labouring with diligence and assiduity.

THE PRAYER.

Eternal God and most merciful Father, I adore thy wisdom, providence, and admirable dispensation of affairs, in the spiritual kingdom of our Lord Jesus, that thou, who art infinitely good, dost permit so many sadnesses and dangers to discompose that order of things and spirits, which thou didst create innocent and harmless, and dost design to great and spiritual perfections; that the emanation of good from evil, by thy overruling power and excellencies, may force glory to thee from our shame, and honour to thy wisdom by these contradictory accidents and events. Lord, have pity upon me in these sad disorders, and with mercy know my infirmities. Let me, by suffering what thou pleasest, co-operate to the glorification of thy grace and magnifying thy mercy; but never let me consent to sin, but, with the power of thy majesty, and mightiness of thy prevailing mercy, rescue me from those throngs of dangers and enemies, which daily seek to deflower that innocence, with which thou didst clothe my soul in the new birth. Behold, O God, how all the spirits of darkness endeavour the extinction of our hopes, and the dispersion of all those graces, and the prevention of all those glories, which the holy Jesus hath purchased for every loving and obedient soul. Our very meat and drink are full of poison, our senses are snares, our business is various temptation, our sins are inlets to more, and our actions made occasions of sins. Lord, deliver me from the malice of the devil, from the fallacies of the world, from my own folly; that I be not devoured by the first, nor cheated by the second, nor betrayed by myself: but let thy grace, which is sufficient for me, be always present with me; let thy Spirit instruct me in the spiritual warfare, arming my understanding, and securing my will, and fortifying my spirit with resolutions of piety, and incentives of religion, and deleteries of sin; that the dangers I am encompassed withal, may become unto me an occasion of victory and triumph, through the aids of the Holy Ghost, and by the cross of the Lord Jesus, who hath, for himself and all his servants, triumphed over sin, and hell, and the grave, even all the powers of darkness, from which, by the mercies of Jesus, and the merits of his passion, now and ever, deliver me, and all thy faithful people. Amen.

[a] John iv. 14.

DISCOURSE VI.

Of Baptism.

PART I.

1. WHEN the holy Jesus was to begin his prophetical office, and to lay the foundation of his church on the corner-stone, he first tempered the cement with water, and then with blood, and afterwards built it up by the hands of the Spirit: himself entered at that door, by which his disciples for ever after were to follow him; for therefore he went in at the door of baptism, that he might hallow the entrance, which himself made to the house he was now building.

2. As it was in the old, so it is in the new creation; out of the waters God produced every living creature: and when at first "the Spirit moved upon the waters," and gave life, it was the type of what was designed in the renovation. Every thing that lives now, "is born of water and the Spirit;" and Christ, who is our Creator and Redeemer in the new birth, opened the fountains, and hallowed the stream: Christ, who is our Life, went down into the waters of baptism; and we, who descend thither, find the effects of life; it is living water, of which whoso drinks needs not to drink of it again, for "it shall be in him a well of water, springing up to life eternal."[a]

3. But because every thing is resolved into the same principles from whence it was taken, the old world, which by the power of God came from the waters, by their own sin fell into the waters again, and were all drowned, and only eight persons were saved by an ark: and the world renewed upon the stock and reserves of that mercy consigned the sacrament of baptism in another figure; for then God gave his sign from heaven, that by water the world should never again perish; but he meant that they should be saved by water: for "baptism, which is a figure like to this, doth also now save us, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."[b]

4. After this, the Jews report that the world took up the doctrine of baptisms, in remembrance that the iniquity of the old world was purged by water; and they washed all that came to the service of the true God, and, by that baptism, bound them to the observation of the precepts which God gave to Noah.

5. But when God separated a family for his own

[b] 1 Pet. iii. 21.

special service, he gave them a sacrament of initiation, but it was a sacrament of blood, the covenant of circumcision: and this was the forerunner of baptism, but not a type; when that was abrogated, this came into the place of it, and that consigned the same faith which this professes. But it could not properly be a type, whose nature is, by a likeness of matter or ceremony, to represent the same mystery. Neither is a ceremony, as baptism truly is, properly capable of having a type; itself is but a type of a greater mysteriousness. And the nature of types is, in shadow to describe by dark lines a future substance:[c] so that, although circumcision might be a type of the effects and graces bestowed in baptism, yet of the baptism or ablution itself it cannot be properly, because of the unlikeness of the symbols and configurations, and because they are both equally distant from substances, which types are to consign and represent. The first bishops of Jerusalem, and all the christian Jews for many years, retained circumcision together with baptism; and Christ himself, who was circumcised, was also baptized; and therefore it is not so proper to call circumcision a type of baptism: it was rather a seal and sign of the same covenant to Abraham, and the fathers, and to all Israel, as baptism is to all ages of the christian church.

6. And because this rite could not be administered to all persons, and was not at all times after its institution, God was pleased by a proper and specific type to consign this rite of baptism, which he intended to all, and that for ever: and God, when the family of his church grew separate, notorious, numerous, and distinct, sent them into their own country by a baptism, through which the whole nation passed; for "all the fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;"[d] so by a double figure foretelling, that as they were initiated to Moses's law by the cloud above and the sea beneath, so should all the persons of the church, men, women, and children, be initiated unto Christ by the Spirit from above and the water below: for it was the design of the apostle in that discourse, to represent that the fathers and we were equal as to the privileges of the covenant; he proved that we do not exceed them, and it ought therefore to be certain, that they do not exceed us, nor their children ours.

7. But after this, something was to remain, which might not only consign the covenant, which God made with Abraham, but be as a passage from the fathers, through the synagogue, to the church, from Abraham by Moses to Christ: and that was circumcision, which was a rite which God chose to be a mark to the posterity of Abraham, to distinguish them from the nations, which were not within the covenant of grace, and to be "a seal of the righteousness of faith," which God made to be the spirit and life of the covenant.

8. But because circumcision, although it was ministered to all the males, yet it was not to the females, although they and all the nation were baptized and initiated into "Moses in the cloud and in the sea;" therefore the children of Israel, by imitation of the patriarchs, the posterity of Noah, used also ceremonial baptisms to their women, and to their proselytes, and to all that were circumcised; and the Jews deliver, that Sarah and Rebecca, when they were adopted into the family of the church, that is, of Abraham and Isaac, were baptized; and so were all strangers that were married to the sons of Israel. And that we may think this to be typical of christian baptism, the doctors of the Jews had a tradition, that when the Messias would come, there should be so many proselytes, that they could not be circumcised, but should be baptized. The tradition proved true, but not for their reason.

But that this rite of admitting into mysteries, and institutions, and offices of religion by baptisms, was used by the posterity of Noah, or at least very early among the Jews, besides the testimonies of their own doctors, I am the rather induced to believe, because the heathens had the same rite in many places, and in several religions: so they initiated disciples into the secrets of Mithra;[e] and the priests of Cotytto were called Baptæ, because by baptism they were admitted into the religion;[f] and they thought murder, incest, rapes, and the worst of crimes, were purged by dipping in the sea or fresh springs;[g] and a proselyte is called in Arrianus, Βεβαμμένος, Intinctus, a baptized person.

9. But this ceremony of baptizing was so certain and usual among the Jews, in their admitting proselytes, and adopting into institutions, that to baptize and to make disciples are all one; and when John the Baptist, by an order from heaven, went to prepare the way to the coming of our blessed Lord, he preached repentance, and baptized all that professed they did repent. He taught the Jews to live good lives, and baptized with the baptism of a prophet, such as was not unusually done by extraordinary and holy persons in the change or renewing of discipline or religion. Whether "John's baptism was from heaven, or of men," Christ asked the Pharisees. That it was from heaven the people therefore believed, because he was a prophet and a holy person: but it implies also, that such baptisms are sometimes from men, that is, used by persons of an eminent religion, or extraordinary fame for the gathering of disciples and admitting proselytes: and the disciples of Christ did so too;[h] even before Christ had instituted the sacrament for the christian church, the disciples that came to Christ were baptized by his apostles.

10. And now we are come to the gates of baptism. All these, till John, were but types and preparatory baptisms, and John's baptism was but the prologue to the baptism of Christ. The Jewish baptisms admitted proselytes to Moses, and to the law of

[c] Umbra in lege, imago in evangelio, veritas in cœlo.—S. Ambr.
[d] 1 Cor. x. 1, 2.
[e] Tertul. de Præscript. c. 40.
[f] Scholiast. in Juv. Sat. ii. lib. 1.
[g] O nimiùm faciles, qui tristia crimina cædis
Tolli flumineâ posse putatis aquâ.
[h] John iv. 2.

ceremonies; John's baptism called them to believe in the Messias now appearing, and to repent of their sins, to enter into the kingdom which was now at hand, and preached that repentance which should be for the remission of sins. His baptism remitted no sins,[i] but preached and consigned repentance, which, in the belief of the Messias, whom he pointed to, should pardon sins. But because he was taken from his office before the work was completed, the disciples of Christ finished it: they went forth preaching the same sermon of repentance, and the approach of the kingdom, and baptized, or made proselytes or disciples, as John did; only they (as it is probable) baptized in the name of Jesus, which it is not so likely John did. And this very thing might be the cause of the different forms of baptism recorded in the Acts,[k] of "baptizing in the name of Jesus,"[l] and at other times "in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost;"[m] the former being the manner of doing it in pursuance of the design of John's baptism, and the latter the form of institution by Christ for the whole christian church, appointed after his resurrection; the disciples, at first, using promiscuously what was used by the same authority, though with some difference of mystery.

11. The holy Jesus having found his way ready prepared by the preaching of John, and by his baptism, and the Jewish manner of adopting proselytes and disciples into the religion, a way chalked out for him to initiate disciples into his religion, took what was so prepared, and changed it into a perpetual sacrament. He kept the ceremony, that they, who were led only by outward things, might be the better called in, and easier enticed into the religion, when they entered by a ceremony which their nation always used in the like cases: and, therefore, without change of the outward act, he put into it a new spirit, and give it a new grace, and a proper efficacy: he sublimed it to higher ends, and adorned it with stars of heaven; he made it to signify greater mysteries, to convey greater blessings, to consign the bigger promises, to cleanse deeper than the skin, and to carry proselytes farther than the gates of the institution. For so he was pleased to do in the other sacrament: he took the ceremony which he found ready in the custom of the Jews, where the major-domo, after the paschal supper, gave bread and wine to every person of his family; he changed nothing of it without, but transferred the rite to greater mysteries, and put his own Spirit to their sign, and it became a sacrament evangelical. It was so also in the matter of excommunication, where the Jewish practice was made to pass into christian discipline: without violence and noise "old things became new," while he fulfilled the law, making it up in full measures of the Spirit.

12. By these steps baptism passed on to a Divine evangelical institution, which we find to be consigned by three evangelists:[n] "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." It was one of the last commandments the holy Jesus gave upon the earth, when he taught his apostles "the things which concerned his kingdom." For "he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved:[o] but "unless a man be born of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven;"[p] agreeable to the decretory words of God by Abraham in the circumcision, to which baptism does succeed in the consignation of the same covenant, and the same spiritual promises,[q] "The uncircumcised child, whose flesh is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant." The Manichees, Seleucus, Hermias, and their followers,[r] people of a day's abode and small interest, but of malicious doctrine, taught baptism not to be necessary, not to be used, upon this ground; because they supposed, that it was proper to John to baptize with water, and reserved for Christ, as his peculiar, to "baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire." Indeed, Christ baptized none otherwise; he sent his Spirit upon the church in Pentecost, and baptized them with fire, the Spirit appearing like a flame: but he appointed his apostles to baptize with water, and they did so, and their successors after them, every where and for ever, not expounding, but obeying the preceptive words of their Lord, which were almost the last that he spake upon earth. And I cannot think it needful to prove this to be necessary, by any more arguments; for the words are so plain that they need no exposition: and yet if they had been obscure, the universal practice of the apostles, and the church, for ever, is a sufficient declaration of the commandment; no tradition is more universal, no, not of Scripture itself; no words are plainer, no, not the ten commandments: and if any suspicion can be superinduced, by any jealous or less discerning person, it will need no other refutation, but to turn his eyes to those lights, by which himself sees Scripture to be the word of God, and the commandments to be the declaration of his will.

13. But that which will be of greatest concernment in this affair, is, to consider the great benefits which are conveyed to us in this sacrament; for this will highly conclude, that the precept was for ever, which God so seconds with his grace, and mighty blessings; and the susception of it necessary, because we cannot be without those excellent things, which are the graces of the sacrament.

14. First: The fruit is, that "in baptism we are admitted to the kingdom of Christ," presented unto him, consigned with his sacrament, enter into his militia, give up our understandings and our choice to the obedience of Christ, and, in all senses that we can, become his disciples, witnessing a good confession, and undertaking a holy life: and therefore, in Scripture, μαθητεύειν and βαπτίζειν are con-

[i] Audi quid Scripturæ doceant: Joannis baptisma non tam peccata dimisit, quàm baptisma pœnitentiæ fuit in peccatorum remissionem, idque in futuram remissionem, quæ esset posteà per sanctificationem Christi subsequutura.—Hieronym. adv. Luciferum.

[k] Vide supra, Sect. ix. n. l.
[l] Acts viii. 16. Acts ii. 38.
[m] Matt. xxviii. 19.
[n] Matt. xxviii. 19.
[o] Mark xvi. 16.
[p] John iii. 5.
[q] Gen. xvii. 14.
[r] S. Aug. Hæres. 46, 59.

joined in their significations, as they are in the mystery; it is a giving up our names to Christ, and it is part of the foundation, or the first principles, of the religion, as appears in St. Paul's catechism;[s] it is so the first thing, that it is for babes and neophytes, in which they are matriculated and adopted into the house of their Father, and taken into the hands of their mother. Upon this account, baptism is called in antiquity, "Ecclesiæ janua, porta gratiæ, et primus introitus sanctorum ad æternam Dei et ecclesiæ consuetudinem:[t] the gate of the church, the door of grace, the first entrance of the saints to an eternal conversation with God and the church." St. Bernard calls it, "Sacramentum initiationis, et intrantium christianismum investituram: the sacrament of initiation, and the investiture of them that enter into the religion." And the person so entering is called πεπεισμένος and συγκατατεθειμένος,[u] one of the religion, or a proselyte and convert, and one added to the number of the church, in imitation of that of St. Luke, ὁ Κύριος προσετίθει σωζομένους τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, "God added to the church those that should be saved;"[x] just as the church does to this day and for ever, baptizing infants and catechumens: σωζόμενοι προστίθενται, they are added to the church, that they may be added to the Lord, and the number of the inhabitants of heaven.

15. Secondly: The next step beyond this is "adoption into the covenant,"[y] which is an immediate consequent of the first presentation; this being the first act of man, that the first act of God. And this is called by St. Paul, a being "baptized in one Spirit into one body,"[z] that is, we are made capable of the communion of saints, the blessings of the faithful, the privileges of the church: by this we are, as St. Luke calls it, τεταγμένοι εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον,[a] ordained, or disposed, "put into the order of eternal life," being made members of the mystical body, under Christ our Head.

16. Thirdly: And therefore "baptism is a new birth," by which we enter into the new world, the new creation, the blessings and spiritualities of the kingdom: and this is the expression which our Saviour himself used to Nicodemus, "Unless a man be born of water and the Spirit;"[b] and it is by St. Paul called λουτρὸν παλιγγενεσίας,[c] "the laver of regeneration;" for now we begin to be reckoned in a new census, or account; God has become our Father, Christ our elder Brother, the Spirit "the earnest of our inheritance," the church our mother; our food is the body and blood of our Lord, faith is our learning, religion our employment, and our whole life is spiritual, and heaven the object of our hopes, and the mighty price of our high calling.[d] And from this time forward we have a new principle put into us, the spirit of grace, which, besides our soul and body, is a principle of action, of one nature, and shall, with them, enter into the portion of our inheritance. And, therefore, the primitive christians, who consigned all their affairs, and goods, and writings, with some marks of their Lord, usually writing Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς, Θεοῦ υἱὸς, Σωτὴρ, "Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our Saviour," made it an abbreviature by writing only the capitals, thus, I. X. Θ. Υ. Σ. which the heathens, in mockery and derision, made Ἰχθὺς, which signifies a fish, and they used it for Christ, as a name of reproach: but the christians owned the name, and turned it into a pious metaphor, and were content that they should enjoy their pleasure in the acrostic; but upon that occasion Tertullian speaks pertinently to this article, "Nos pisciculi, secundum ἰχθὺν nostrum Jesum Christum, in aquâ nascimur;[e] Christ, whom you call a fish, we acknowledge to be our Lord and Saviour; and we, if you please, are the little fishes; for we are born in water, thence we derive our spiritual life." And because from henceforward we are a new creation, the church uses to assign new relations to the catechumens, spiritual fathers, and susceptors; and at their entrance into baptism, the christian and Jewish proselytes did use to cancel all secular affections to their temporal relatives. "Nec quicquam priùs imbuuntur quàm contemnere deos, exuere patriam, parentes, liberos, fratres vilia habere,"[f] said Tacitus of the christians: which was true in the sense only that Christ said, "He that doth not hate father or mother for my sake, is not worthy of me;" that is, he that doth not hate them *præ me*, rather than forsake me forsake them, is unworthy of me.

17. Fourthly: "In baptism all our sins are pardoned," according to the words of a prophet, "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness."[g] "The catechumen descends into the font a sinner, he arises purified; he goes down the son of death, he comes up the son of the resurrection; he enters in the son of folly and prevarication, he returns the son of reconciliation; he stoops down the child of wrath, and ascends the heir of mercy; he was the child of the devil, and now he is the servant and the son of God." They are the words of Ven. Bede concerning this mystery.[h] And this was ingeniously signified by that Greek inscription upon a font, which is so prettily contrived, that the words may be read after the Greek or after the Hebrew manner, and be exactly the same; ΝΙΨΟΝ ΑΝΟΜΗΜΑ, ΜΗ ΜΟΝΑΝ ΟΨΙΝ, "Lord, wash my sin, and not my face only." And so it is intended and promised: "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, and call on the name of the Lord,"[i] said Ananias to Saul; for "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it, τῷ λουτρῷ τοῦ ὕδατος ἐν ῥήματι, with the washing of water in the word;"[k] that is, baptism in the

[s] Heb. vi. 1, 2.
[t] S. August. lib. ii. c. 1. de Cat. Rudib.
[u] Just. Martyr. Apol. 2.
[x] Acts ii. 47.
[y] Τὸ βάπτισμα καὶ υἱοθεσίας χάριν τυγχάνειν.—CYRIL. Hierosol. Catec. 2.
[z] 1 Cor. xii. 13.
[a] Acts xiii. 48.
[b] John iii. 5.
[c] Titus iii. 5.
[d] Διὰ βαπτισμὸν ἀρχὴ ἑτέρου βίου γίνεται ἡμῖν, ἡ παλιγγενεσία, καὶ σφραγὶς, καὶ φυλακτήριον, καὶ φωτισμός.—DAMASC. lib. iv. Orth. Fid. c. 10.
[e] Lib. de Baptis. c. 1.
[f] Lib. 5. Hist.
[g] Ezek. xxxvi. 25. Πιστεύω ἓν βάπτισμα εἰς ἄφεσιν τῶν ἁμαρτίων.—SYMB. Nicen.
[h] Lib. i. c. 3. in Joann
[i] Acts xxii. 16.
[k] Eph. v. 25, 26.

christian religion: and, therefore, Tertullian calls baptism "lavacrum compendiatum,"[1] a compendious laver, that is, an entire cleansing the soul in that one action justly and rightly performed. In the rehearsal of which doctrine it was not an unpleasant etymology, that Anastasius Sinaita gave of baptism, *βάπτισμα*, quasi *βάπταισμα, ἐν ᾧ βάλλεται, ἤγουν πίπτει, τὸ πταῖσμα*, "in which our sins are thrown off;" and they fall like leeches when they are full of blood and water, or like the chains from St. Peter's hands at the presence of the angel. Baptism is *ἀνεκλόγιστος ἄφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν*, an entire full forgiveness of sins, so that they shall never be called again to scrutiny.

"————Omnia dæmonis arma
His merguntur aquis, quibus ille renascitur infans,
Qui captivus erat————."[m]

The captivity of the soul is taken away by the blood of redemption, and the fiery darts of the devil are quenched by these salutary waters; and what the flames of hell are expiating or punishing to eternal ages, that is washed off quickly in the holy font, and an eternal debt paid in an instant. For so sure as the Egyptians were drowned in the Red sea, so sure are our sins washed in this holy flood: for this is a red sea too: these waters signify the blood of Christ: "These are they that have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."[n] *Τὸ αἷμα καθαρίζει, τὸ ὕδωρ καθαρίζει, καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα ἁγνίζει· τὸ αἷμα διὰ πνεύματος, τὸ πνεῦμα διὰ ὕδατος*, "The blood of Christ cleanseth us, the water cleanseth us, the Spirit purifies us; the blood by the Spirit, the Spirit by the water,"[o] all in baptism and in pursuance of that baptismal state. These three are they that "bear record in earth, the Spirit, the water, and the blood;" *καὶ οἱ τρεῖς εἰς τὸ ἕν εἰσι*, "and these three agree in one," or are to one purpose;[p] they agree in baptism, and in the whole pursuance of the assistances which a christian needs all the days of his life. And therefore St. Cyril calls baptism, *τῶν τοῦ Χριστοῦ παθημάτων ἀντίτυπον*, "the antitype of the passions of Christ." It does preconsign the death of Christ, and does the infancy of the work of grace, but not weakly; it brings from death to life; and though it brings us but to the birth in the new life, yet this is a greater change than is in all the periods of our growth to manhood, to "a perfect man in Christ Jesus."

18. Fifthly: Baptism does not only pardon our sins, but puts us into a state of pardon for the time to come. For baptism is the beginning of the new life, and an admission of us into the evangelical covenant, which on our parts consists in a sincere and timely endeavour to glorify God by faith and obedience; and on God's part he will pardon what is past, assist us for the future, and not measure us by grains and scruples, or exact our duties by the measure of an angel, but by the span of a man's hand. So that by baptism we are consigned to the mercies of God and the graces of the gospel; that is, that our pardon be continued, and our piety be a state of repentance. And therefore that baptism, which in the Nicene creed we profess to be for "the remission of sins," is called in the Jerusalem creed, "the baptism of repentance;" that is, it is the entrance of a new life, the gate to a perpetual change and reformation, all the way continuing our title to, and hopes of, forgiveness of sins. And this excellence is clearly recorded by St. Paul: "The kindness and love of God our Saviour towards man hath appeared; not by works of righteousness which we have done:"[q] that is the formality of the gospel covenant, not to be exacted by the strict measures of the law: "but according to his mercy he saved us," that is, by gentleness and remissions, by pitying and pardoning us, by relieving and supporting us; because "he remembers that we are but dust." And all this mercy we are admitted to, and is conveyed to us *διὰ λουτροῦ παλιγγενεσίας*, "by the laver of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." And this plain, evident doctrine, was observed, explicated, and urged against the Messalians, who said that baptism was like a razor; that cuts away all the sins that were past, or presently adhering, but not the sins of our future life: *Οὐδέ γὰρ τοῦτο μόνον ἐπαγγέλλεται τὸ μυστήριον, ἀλλὰ τὰ τούτων μείζω καὶ τελειότερα· ἀρραβὼν γάρ ἐστι τῶν μελλόντων ἀγαθῶν, καὶ τῆς ἐσομένης ἀναστάσεως τύπος, καὶ κοινωνία τῶν δεσποτικῶν παθημάτων, καὶ μετουσία τῆς δεσποτικῆς ἀναστάσεως, καὶ ἱμάτιον σωτηρίου, καὶ χιτὼν εὐφροσύνης, καὶ στολὴ φωτοειδὴς, μᾶλλον δὲ αὐτὸ φῶς.*[r] "This sacrament promises more and greater things; it is the earnest of future good things, the type of the resurrection, the communication of the Lord's passion, the partaking of his resurrection, the robe of righteousness, the garment of gladness, the vestment of light, or rather light itself." And for this reason it is that baptism is not to be repeated, because it does at once all that it can do at an hundred times; for it admits us to the condition of repentance and evangelical mercy; to a state of pardon for our infirmities and sins, which we timely and effectually leave: and this is a thing that can be done but once, as a man can begin but once. He that hath once entered in at this gate of life, is always in possibility of pardon, if he be in a possibility of working and doing, after the manner of a man, that which he hath promised to the Son of God. And this was expressly delivered and observed

[1] Lib. v. adv. Marc. c. 9. *Θάλασσα κλύζει πάντα τῶν ἀνθρώπων κακά.*—Gr. Prov.
Annon ità credimus, quia omne genus peccati, cùm ad salutare lavacrum venimus, aufertur.—Origen. Hom. 15. in Josu.
Ecce quicquid iniquitatum sempiternus ignis excoquere et expiare vix posset, subitò sacro fonte submersum est, et de æternis debitis brevissimo lavacri compendio cum indulgentissimo creditore transactum est.—Ambros. lib. i. cap. 7. de Pœnit.
Qui dicit peccata in baptismo non funditus dimitti, dicat in mari Rubro Ægyptios non veraciter mortuos.—S. Greg. M. lib. ix. ep. 39.

[m] Arator, lib. ii. Hist. Apostol.
[n] Rev. vii. 14.
[o] 1 John i. 7. Acts xxii. 16. Tit. iii. 5. Heb. ix. 14.
[p] 1 John v. 8.
[q] Titus iii. 4, 5.
[r] Theodor. Ep. de div. Decr. cap. de Bapt.

by St. Austin:[s] "That which the apostle says, 'Cleansing him with the washing of water in the word,' is to be understood, that in the same laver of regeneration and word of sanctification, all the evils of the regenerate are cleansed and healed; not only the sins that are past, which are all now remitted in baptism, but also those that are contracted afterwards by human ignorance and infirmity: not that baptism be repeated as often as we sin,[t] but because by this, which is once administered, is brought to pass, that pardon of all sins, not only of those that are past, but also those which will be committed afterwards, is obtained." The Messalians denied this, and it was part of their heresy in the undervaluing of baptism; and for it they are most excellently confuted by Isidore Pelusiot, in his third book, epistle 195, to the Count Hermin, whither I refer the reader.

19. In proportion to this doctrine it is, that the holy Scripture calls upon us to live a holy life, in pursuance of this grace of baptism. And St. Paul recalls the lapsed Galatians to their covenant, and the grace of God stipulated in baptism: "Ye are all children of God, by faith in Jesus Christ;"[u] that is, "heirs of the promise, and Abraham's seed;" that promise which cannot be disannulled, increased, or diminished, but is the same to us as it was to Abraham, the same before the law and after. Therefore do not you hope to be "justified by the law;" for you are entered into the covenant of faith, and are to be justified thereby. This is all your hope; by this you must stand for ever, or you cannot stand at all; but by this you may: for "you are God's children by faith," that is, not by the law, or the covenant of works. And that you may remember whence you are going, and return again, he proves that they are the children of God, by faith in Jesus Christ, because they "have been baptized into Christ,"[x] and so "put on Christ." This makes you children, and such as are "to be saved by faith," that is, a covenant, "not of works," but of pardon in Jesus Christ, the author and establisher of this covenant. For this is the covenant made in baptism, that "being justified by his grace, we shall be heirs of life eternal; for by grace," that is, by favour, remission, and forgiveness in Jesus Christ, "ye are saved." This is the only way that we have of being justified, and this must remain as long as we are in hopes of heaven; for besides this we have no hopes: and all this is stipulated and consigned in baptism, and is of force after our fallings into sin and risings again. In pursuance of this, the same apostle declares, that the several states of sin are so many recessions from the state of baptismal grace; and if we arrive to the direct apostacy, and renouncing of, or a contradiction to, the state of baptism, we are then unpardonable, because we are fallen from our state of pardon. This St. Paul conditions most strictly, in his epistle to the Hebrews: "This is the covenant I will make in those days; I will put my laws in their hearts; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin;"[y] that is, our sins are so pardoned, that we need "no more oblation;" we are then made partakers of the death of Christ, which we afterwards renew in memory, and eucharist, and representment. But the great work is done in baptism; for so it follows, "Having boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, that is, by the veil of his flesh," his incarnation. But how do we enter into this? Baptism is the door, and the ground of this confidence for ever: for so he adds, "Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." This is the consignation of this blessed state, and the gate to all this mercy. "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith,"[z] that is, the religion of a christian, the faith into which we were baptized; for that is the faith that justifies and saves us: let us therefore hold fast this profession of this faith, and do all the intermedial works, in order to the conservation of it; such as are, assembling in the communion of saints, (the use of the word and sacrament is included in the precept,) mutual exhortation, good example,[a] and the like: "For if we sin wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth," that is, if we sin against the profession of this faith, and hold it not fast, but let the faith and the profession go wilfully, which afterwards he calls "a treading under foot the Son of God, accounting the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing," and "a doing despite to the Spirit of grace," viz. which moved upon those waters, and did illuminate him in baptism; if we do this, "there is no more sacrifice for sins," no more deaths of Christ, into which you may be baptized; that is, you are fallen from the state of pardon and repentance, into which you were admitted in baptism, and in which you continue so long as you have not quitted your baptismal rights and the whole covenant. Contrary to this is that which St. Peter calls "making our calling and election sure," that is, a doing all that which may continue us in our state of baptism and the grace of the covenant. And between these two states, of absolute apostacy from, and entirely adhering to and securing, this state of calling and election, are all the intermedial sins, and being overtaken in single faults, or declining towards vicious habits, which in their several proportions are degrees of danger and insecurity; which St. Peter calls λήθην καθαρισμοῦ τῶν πάλαι αὐτοῦ ἁμαρτιῶν, "a forgetting our baptism, or purification from our sins."[b] And in this sense are those words, "The just shall live by faith," that is, by that profession which they made in baptism; from which if they swerve not, they shall be supported in their spiritual life. It is a grace which, by virtue of the covenant consigned in baptism, does, like a centre, transmit effluxes to all the periods and portions of our life; our whole life, all the periods of our succeeding hopes, are kept alive by this.

[s] Lib. de Nuptiis, c. 23, &c. Tract. 124. in Joan.
[t] Vide Salmer. tom. xiii. p. 487.
[u] Gal. iii. 26, 29.
[x] Ver. 27.
[y] Heb. x. 16–20.
[z] τῆς ἐλπιδος, scil. ad futurum respiciens.
[a] ἐπισυναγωγὴ, παράκλησις, κατανόησις.
[b] 2 Pet. i. 9. V. Part II. Disc. 9, of Repentance, num. 9. ad 31.

This consideration is of great use, besides many other things, to reprove the folly of those, who in the primitive church deferred their baptism till their death-bed; because baptism is a laver of sanctification, and drowns all our sins, and buries them in the grave of our Lord, they thought they might sin securely upon the stock of an after-baptism; for unless they were strangely prevented by a sudden accident, a death-bed baptism they thought would secure their condition: but early some of them durst not take it, much less in the beginning of their years, that they might at least gain impunity for their follies and heats of their youth. Baptism hath influence into the pardon of all our sins, committed in all the days of our folly and infirmity; and so long as we have not been baptized, so long we are out of the state of pardon: and therefore an early baptism is not to be avoided, upon this mistaken fancy and plot upon heaven; it is the greater security towards the pardon of our sins, if we have taken it in the beginning of our days.

20. Sixthly: The next benefit of baptism, which is also a verification of this, is "a sanctification of the baptized person by the Spirit of grace."

> Sanctus in hunc cœlo descendit Spiritus amnem,
> Cœlestique sacras fonte maritat aquas:
> Concipit unda Deum, sanctamque liquoribus almis
> Edit ab æterno semine progeniem.[c]

The Holy Ghost descends upon the waters of baptism, and makes them prolific, apt to produce children unto God: and therefore St. Leo compares the font of baptism to the womb of the blessed Virgin, when it was replenished with the Holy Spirit. And this is the baptism of our dearest Lord: his ministers baptize with water; our Lord at the same time verifies their ministry with giving the Holy Spirit. They are joined together by St. Paul: "We are, by one Spirit, baptized into one body;"[d] that is, admitted into the church, by baptism of water and the Spirit. This is that which our blessed Lord calls "a being born of water and of the Spirit."[e] By water we are sacramentally dead and buried, by the Spirit we are made alive. But because these are mysterious expressions, and, according to the style of Scripture, high and secret in spiritual significations, therefore, that we may understand what these things signify, we must consider it by its real effects, and what it produces upon the soul of a man.

21. First: It is the suppletory of original righteousness, by which Adam was at first gracious with God, and which he lost by his prevarication. It was in him a principle of wisdom and obedience, a relation between God and himself, a title to the extraordinary mercies of God, and a state of friendship. When he fell, he was discomposed in all; the links of the golden chain and blessed relation were broken; and it so continued in the whole life of man, which was stained with the evils of this folly and the consequent mischiefs. And therefore, when we began the world again, entering into the articles of a new life, God gave us his Spirit, to be an instrument of our becoming gracious persons, and of being in a condition of obtaining that supernatural end which God at first designed to us. And therefore, as our baptism is a separation of us from unbelieving people; so the descent of the Holy Spirit upon us, in our baptism, is a consigning or marking us for God, as the sheep of his pasture, as the soldiers of his army, as the servants of his household. We are so separated from the world, that we are appropriated to God: so that God expects of us duty and obedience; and all sins are acts of rebellion and undutifulness. Of this nature was the sanctification of Jeremiah, and John the Baptist, from their mother's womb; that is, God took them to his own service, by an early designation, and his Spirit marked them to a holy ministry. To this also relates that of St. Paul, whom God by a decree separated from his mother's womb, to the ministry of the gospel: the decree did antedate the act of the Spirit, which did not descend upon him until the day of his baptism. What these persons were, in order to exterior ministers, that all the faithful are, in order to faith and obedience; consigned in baptism, by the Spirit of God, to a perpetual relation to God, in a continual service and title to his promises. And in this sense the Spirit of God is called σφραγὶς, a seal,[f] "In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise:"[g] τὸ μὲν ὕδωρ καθαίρει, τὸ δὲ Πνεῦμα σφραγίζει τὴν ψυχήν. "The water washes the body, and the Spirit seals the soul," viz. to a participation of those promises which he hath made, and to which we receive a title by our baptism.

22. Secondly: The second effect of the Spirit is light or illumination; that is, the Holy Spirit becomes unto us the author of holy thoughts and firm persuasions, and "sets to his seal that the word of God is true," into the belief of which we are then baptized, and makes faith to be a grace, and the understanding resigned, and the will confident, and the assent stronger than the premises, and the propositions to be believed, because they are beloved: and we are taught the ways of godliness after a new manner, that is, we are made to perceive the secrets of the kingdom, and to love religion, and to long for heaven and heavenly things, and to despise the world, and to have new resolutions, and new perceptions, and new delicacies, in order to the establishment of faith and its increments and perseverance. Τῇ λαμπούσῃ ψυχῇ ἀπὸ κατακλυσμοῦ ἀνιδρυθεὶς ὁ Θεὸς, οἷον εἰ θρόνον ἀυτὴν ἑαυτῷ κατεργάζει·[h] "God sits in the soul, when it is illuminated in baptism, as if he sat in his throne;" that is, he rules by a firm persuasion, and entire principles of obedience. And therefore baptism is called in Scripture, φωτισμὸς, and the baptized, φωτισθέντες, illuminated: "Call to mind the former days, in which you were illuminated."[i] And the same phrase is in the sixth to the Hebrews,[k] where the parallel places expound each other. For that which St. Paul calls ἅπαξ φωτισθέντες, "once illuminated," he calls after,

[c] Paul Ep. 12. ad Serenum. [d] 1 Cor. xii. 13.
[e] John iii. 5. S. Basil. de Spir. S. c. 15.
[f] 2 Cor. i. 22. Eph. iv. 30. John vi. 27.
[g] Eph. i. 13. S. Cyril. Hieros. Catec. 3.
[h] S. Basil. in Psal. xxviii.
[i] Heb. x. 32. [k] Ver. 4.

λαβόντες τὴν ἐπίγνωσιν τῆς ἀληθείας, "a receiving the knowledge of the truth:" and that you may perceive this to be wholly meant of baptism, the apostle expresses it still by synonymas: "Tasting of the heavenly gift, and made partakers of the Holy Ghost, sprinkled in our hearts from an evil conscience, and washed in our bodies with pure water;"[l] all which also are a syllabus or collection of the several effects of the graces bestowed in baptism. But we are now instancing in that which relates most properly to the understanding, in which respect the Holy Spirit also is called anointing or unction: and the mystery is explicated by St. John: "The anointing which ye have received of him, abideth in you; and ye need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things."[m]

23. Thirdly: The Holy Spirit descends upon us in baptism, to become the principle of a new life, to become a holy seed, springing up to holiness; and is called by St. John, σπέρμα Θεοῦ, "the seed of God:"[n] and the purpose of it we are taught by him: "Whosoever is born of God" (that is, he that is regenerated and entered into this new birth) "doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." The Spirit of God is the Spirit of life; and now that he, by the Spirit, is born anew, he hath in him that principle, which, if it be cherished, will grow up to life, to life eternal. And this is "the Spirit of sanctification, the victory over the world," the deletery of concupiscence, the life of the soul, and the perpetual principle of grace sown in our spirits, in the day of our adoption to be the sons of God, and members of Christ's body. But take this mystery in the words of St. Basil:[o] "There are two ends proposed in baptism; to wit, to abolish the body of sin, that we may no more bring forth fruit unto death; and to live in the Spirit, and to have our fruit to sanctification. The water represents the image of death, receiving the body in its bosom, as in a sepulchre: but the quickening Spirit sends upon us a vigorous δύναμιν, power or efficacy, even from the beginning renewing our souls from the death of sin unto life; for as our mortification is perfected in the water, so the Spirit works life in us." To this purpose is the discourse of St. Paul: having largely discoursed of our being baptized into the death of Christ, he adds this as the corollary of all;[p] "He that is dead[q] is freed from sin;" that is, being mortified and buried[r] in the waters of baptism, we have a new life of righteousness put into us, we are quitted from the dominion of sin, and are planted together in the likeness of Christ's resurrection,[s] that henceforth we should not serve sin.[t]

24. Fourthly: But all these intermedial blessings tend to a glorious conclusion, for baptism does also consign us to a holy resurrection. It takes the sting of death from us, by burying us together with Christ; and takes off sin, which is the sting of death: and then we shall be partakers of a blessed resurrection. This we are taught by St. Paul: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection."[u] That declares the real event in its due season. But because baptism consigns it, and admits us to a title to it, we are said, with St. Paul, to be "risen with Christ in baptism: buried with him in baptism, wherein also you are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, which hath raised him from the dead."[x] Which expression I desire to be remembered, that by it we may better understand those other sayings of the apostle, of "putting on Christ in baptism, putting on the new man," &c. for these only signify, ἐπιχείρημα, or the design on God's part, and the endeavour and duty on man's. We are then consigned to our duty, and to our reward; we undertake one, and have a title to the other. And though men of ripeness and reason enter instantly into their portion of work, and have present use of the assistances, and something of their reward in hand; yet we cannot conclude, that those that cannot do it presently, are not baptized rightly, because they are not in capacity to "put on the new man" in righteousness, that is, in an actual holy life; for they may "put on the new man" in baptism, just as "they are risen with Christ:" which, because it may be done by faith before it is done in real event, and it may be done by sacrament and design before it be done by a proper faith; so also may our putting on the new man be; it is done sacramentally, and that part, which is wholly the work of God, does only antedate the work of man, which is to succeed in its due time, and is after the manner of preventing grace. But this is by the by. In order to the present article, baptism is by Theodoret called μετουσία τῆς δεσποτικῆς ἀναστάσεως, "a participation of the Lord's resurrection."

25. Fifthly and lastly: "By baptism we are saved:" that is, we are brought from death to life here, and that is "the first resurrection;" and we are brought from death to life hereafter, by virtue of the covenant of the state of grace, into which in baptism we enter, and are preserved from the second death, and receive a glorious and an eternal life. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved,"[y] said our blessed Saviour; and "according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost."[z]

26. After these great blessings, so plainly testified in Scripture and the doctrine of the primitive church, which are regularly consigned and bestowed in baptism, I shall less need to descend to temporal blessings, or rare contingencies, or miraculous events, or probable notices of things less certain. Of this nature are those stories recorded in the writings of

[l] Heb. vi. 4.
[m] 1 John ii. 20, 27.
[n] 1 John iii. 9.
[o] Lib. de Spir. S. c. 18.
[p] Rom. vi. 7.
[q] χρηστὸν ποιεῖν, i. e. ἀποκτινῦναι.—Plutarch.
[r] Ibid. ver. 4.
[s] Ver. 5.
[t] Ver. 6. Vide Disc. 9, of Repentance, n. 46.
[u] Rom. vi. 3, 5.
[x] Col. ii. 12.
[y] Mark xvi. 16.
[z] Titus iii. 5.

the church,[a] that Constantine was cured of a leprosy in baptism; Theodosius recovered of his disease, being baptized by the bishop of Thessalonica; and a paralytic Jew was cured as soon as he became a christian, and was baptized by Atticus of Constantinople; and bishop Arnulph baptizing a leper, also cured him, said Vincentius Bellovacensis. It is more considerable, which is generally and piously believed by very many eminent persons in the church, that, at our baptism, God assigns an angel-guardian, (for then the catechumen, being made a servant and a brother to the Lord of angels, is sure not to want the aids of them who "pitch their tents round about them that fear the Lord,"[b]) and that this guard and ministry is then appointed when themselves are admitted into the inheritance of the promises; and their title to salvation is hugely agreeable to the words of St. Paul, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation?"[c] where it appears, that the title to the inheritance is the title to this ministry, and therefore must begin and end together. But I insist not on this, though it seems to me hugely probable. All these blessings put into one syllabus, have given to baptism many honourable appellatives in Scripture and other divine writers,[d] calling it *ἀναγέννησιν, παλιγγενεσίαν, ὄχημα πρὸς θεὸν, ὄχημα πρὸς οὐρανὸν, βασιλείας πρόξενον, τὴν κλεῖδα τῆς βασιλείας τῶν οὐρανῶν, μεγάλην περιτομὴν ἀχειροποίητον, ἀνακαίνωσιν, ἐπερώτημα, ἀρραβῶνα, ἐνέχυρον, ἀπόδειξιν, ἀνάκτισιν, ἔνδυμα φωτεινὸν*, sacramentum vitæ et æternæ salutis: "A new birth, a regeneration, a renovation, a chariot carrying us to God, the great circumcision, a circumcision made without hands, the key of the kingdom, the paranymph of the kingdom, the earnest of our inheritance, the answer of a good conscience, the robe of light, the sacrament of a new life and of eternal salvation." *Ἄριστον μὲν ὕδωρ·* This is celestial water, springing from the sides of the rock upon which the church was built, when the rock was smitten with the rod of God.

27. It remains now that we inquire what concerns our duty, and in what persons, or in what dispositions, baptism produces all these glorious effects: for the sacraments of the church work in the virtue of Christ, but yet only upon such as are servants of Christ, and hinder not the work of the Spirit of grace. For the water of the font, and the Spirit of the sacrament, are indeed to wash away our sins, and to purify our souls; but not unless we have a mind to be purified. The sacrament works pardon for them that hate their sin, and procures grace for them that love it. They that are guilty of sins, must repent of them, and renounce them, and they must make a profession of the faith of Christ, and give, or be given, up to the obedience of Christ; and then they are rightly disposed. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved,"[e] saith Christ; and St. Peter called out to the whole assembly, "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you."[f] Concerning this, Justin Martyr[g] gives the same account of the faith and practice of the church; *Ὅσοι ἂν πεισθῶσι καὶ πιστεύωσιν*, &c. "Whosoever are persuaded, and believe those things to be true, which are delivered and spoken by us, and undertake to live accordingly, they are commanded to fast and pray, and to ask of God remission for their former sins, we also praying together with them, and fasting. Then they are brought to us where water is, and are regenerated in the same manner of regeneration by which we ourselves are regenerated." For in baptism, St. Peter observes, there are two parts, the body and the spirit: that is, *σαρκὸς ἀπόθεσις ρυπου*, "the putting away the filth of the flesh,"[h] that is, the material washing; and this is baptism no otherwise than a dead corpse is a man: the other is *συνειδήσεως ἀγαθῆς ἐπερώτημα*, "the answer of a good conscience towards God," that is, the conversion of the soul to God; that is, the effective disposition in which baptism does save us. And in the same sense are those sayings of the primitive doctors to be understood, "Anima non lavatione, sed responsione sancitur,"[i] the soul is not healed by washing (viz.) alone, but by the answer, the *ἐπερώτημα* in St. Peter, the correspondent of our part of the covenant: for that is the perfect sense of this unusual expression. And the effect is attributed to this, and denied to the other, when they are distinguished. So Justin Martyr affirms: "The only baptism that can heal us is repentance, and the knowledge of God. For what need is there of that baptism, that can only cleanse the flesh and the body? Be washed in your flesh from wrath and covetousness, from envy and hatred; and behold the body is pure."[k] And Clemens Alexandrinus, upon that proverbial saying, *Ἴσθι μὴ λουτρῷ, ἀλλὰ νόῳ καθαρὸς*, "Be not pure in the laver, but in the mind," adds, "I suppose that an exact and a firm repentance is a sufficient purification to a man; if judging and considering ourselves for the facts we have done before, we proceed to that which is before us; considering that which follows, and cleansing or washing our mind from sensual affections, and from former sins." Just as we use to deny the effect to the instrumental cause, and attribute it to the principal in the manner of speaking, when our purpose is to affirm this to be the principal, and of chief influence. So we say, it is not the good lute, but the skilful hand, that makes the music: it is not the body, but the soul, that is the man; and yet he is not the man without both. For baptism is but the material part in the sacrament, "it is the Spirit that giveth life;" whose work is faith and repentance begun by himself without the sacrament, and consigned

[a] Niceph. lib. vii. c. 35. Socr. lib. 5. c. 6. Idem, lib. vii. c. 7.
[b] Psalm xxxiv. 7.
[c] Heb. i. 14.
[d] Basil. Theod. Epiphan. Nazianz. Col. ii. 2. Cyril. Hieros. Dionys. Areop. Aug. lib. ii. c. 13. contrà Crescon. Gram.
[e] Mark xvi. 16.
[f] Acts ii. 38.
[g] Apol. ad Anton. Cæs.
[h] 1 Pet. iii. 21.
[i] Tert. de Res. Carn.
[k] Ad Tryphon Jud.

in the sacrament, and actuated and increased in the co-operation of our whole life. And therefore baptism is called in the Jerusalem creed, ἓν βάπτισμα μετανοίας εἰς ἄφεσιν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν, "one baptism of repentance for the remission of sins:" and by Justin Martyr,[l] λουτρὸν τῆς μετανοίας καὶ τῆς γνώσεως τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὃ ὑπὲρ τῆς ἀνομίας τῶν λαῶν τοῦ Θεοῦ γέγονεν, "the baptism of repentance, and the knowledge of God, which was made for the sins of the people of God." He explains himself a little after, τὸ βάπτισμα τὸ μόνον καθαρίσαι τουτὸ μετανοήσαντας δυνάμενον, "baptism that can only cleanse them that are penitent." "In sacramentis Trinitati occurrit fides credentium et professio, quæ apud acta conficitur angelorum, ubi miscentur cœlestia et spiritualia semina; ut sancto germine nova possit renascentium indoles procreari, ut dum Trinitas cum fide concordat, qui natus fuerit seculo renascatur spiritualiter Deo. Sic fit hominum Pater Deus, sancta fit mater ecclesia," said Optatus.[m] "The faith and profession of the believers meets with the ever-blessed Trinity, and is recorded in the register of angels, where heavenly and spiritual seeds are mingled; that from so holy a spring may be produced a new nature of the regeneration, that while the Trinity (viz. that is invocated upon the baptized) meets with the faith of the catechumen, he that was born to the world may be born spiritually to God. So God is made a Father to the man, and the holy church a mother." Faith and repentance strip the old man naked, and make him fit for baptism; and then the Holy Spirit, moving upon the waters, cleanses the soul, and makes it to put on the new man, who grows up to perfection and a spiritual life, to a life of glory, by our verification of our undertaking in baptism on our part, and the graces of the Spirit on the other. For the waters pierce no farther than the skin, till the person puts off his affection to the sin that he hath contracted; and then he may say, "Aquæ intraverunt usque ad animam meam," "The waters are entered even unto my soul, to purify and cleanse it, by the washing of water, and the renewing by the Holy Spirit." The sum is this:[n] Βαπτιζόμενοι φωτιζόμεθα, φωτιζόμενοι υἱοποιούμεθα, υἱοποιούμενοι τελειούμεθα, τελειούμενοι ἀθανατιζόμεθα. "Being baptized we are illuminated, being illuminated we are adopted to the inheritance of sons, being adopted we are promoted towards perfection, and being perfected we are made immortal."

Quisquis in hos fontes vir venerit, exeat indè
Semideus, tactis citò nobilitetur in undis.

28. This is the whole doctrine of baptism, as it is in itself considered, without relation to rare circumstances or accidental cases: and it will also serve to the right understanding of the reasons why the church of God hath, in all ages, baptized all persons that were within her power, for whom the church could stipulate, that they were, or might be, relatives of Christ, sons of God, heirs of the promises, and partners of the covenant, and such as did not hinder the work of baptism upon their souls. And such were not only persons of age and choice, but the infants of christian parents. For the understanding and verifying of which truth, I shall only need to apply the parts of the former discourse to their particular case, premising first these propositions.

[l] Dial. cum Tryph. [m] Lib. ii. adv. Parm.
[n] Clem. Alex. lib. i. Pædag. c. 6.

Of Baptizing Infants.

PART II.

1. Baptism is the key in Christ's hand, and therefore opens as he opens, and shuts by his rule: and as Christ himself did not do all his blessings and effects unto every one, but gave to every one as they had need; so does baptism. Christ did not cure all men's eyes, but them only that were blind; "Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance:" that is, they that lived in the fear of God, according to the covenant in which they were debtors, were indeed improved and promoted higher by Christ, but not called to that repentance to which he called the vicious gentiles, and the adulterous persons among the Jews, and the hypocritical Pharisees. There are some so innocent that they "need no repentance," saith the Scripture; meaning, that though they do need contrition for their single acts of sin, yet they are within the state of grace, and need not repentance as it is a conversion of the whole man. And so it is in baptism, which does all its effects upon them that need them all, and some upon them that need but some: and therefore, as it pardons sins to them that have committed them, and do repent and believe; so to the others, who have not committed them, it does all the work which is done to the others above or besides that pardon.

2. Secondly, When the ordinary effect of a sacrament is done already by some other efficiency or instrument, yet the sacrament is still as obligatory as before, not for so many reasons or necessities, but for the same commandment. Baptism is the first ordinary current in which the Spirit moves and descends upon us; and where God's Spirit is, they are the sons of God, for Christ's Spirit descends upon none but them that are his: and yet Cornelius,[a] who had received the Holy Spirit, and was heard by God, and visited by an angel, and accepted in his alms, and fastings, and prayers, was tied to the susception of baptism. To which may be added, that the receiving the effects of baptism beforehand was used as an argument the rather to administer baptism. The effect of which consideration is this, that baptism and its effects may be separated, and do not always go in conjunction; the effect may be before, and therefore much rather may it be after, its susception; the sacrament operating in the virtue of Christ, even "as the Spirit shall move:" according to that saying of St. Austin,[b] "Sacrosancto lavacro inchoata innovatio novi hominis perficiendo perficitur in aliis citiùs, in aliis tardiùs;" and St. Bernard,[c] "Lavari quidem citò possumus, sed ad

[a] Acts x. 47 [b] Aug. de Moribus Eccles. Cath. lib. i. c. 35. [c] Bern. Serm. de Cœna Dom.

sanandum multâ curatione opus est." The work of regeneration, that is begun in the ministry of baptism, is perfected in some sooner, in some later.—We may soon be washed; but to be healed is a work of a long cure."

3. Thirdly: The dispositions, which are required to the ordinary susception of baptism, are not necessary to the efficacy, or required to the nature, of the sacrament, but accidentally, and because of the superinduced necessities of some men; and therefore the conditions are not regularly to be required. But, in those accidents, it was necessary for a gentile proselyte to repent of his sins, and to believe in Moses's law, before he could be circumcised: but Abraham was not tied to the same conditions, but only to faith in God; but Isaac was not tied to so much; and circumcision was not of Moses, but of the fathers: and yet, after the sanction of Moses's law, men were tied to conditions, which were then made necessary to them that entered into the covenant, but not necessary to the nature of the covenant itself. And so it is in the susception of baptism: if a sinner enters into the font, it is necessary he be stripped of those appendages, which himself sewed upon his nature, and then repentance is a necessary disposition: if his understanding hath been a stranger to religion, polluted with evil principles and a false religion, it is necessary he have an actual faith, that he be given in his understanding up to the obedience of Christ. And the reason of this is plain; because, in these persons, there is a disposition contrary to the state and effects of baptism; and therefore they must be taken off by their contraries, faith and repentance, that they may be reduced to the state of pure receptives. And this is the sense of those words of our blessed Saviour, "Unless ye become like one of these little ones, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven;" that is, ye cannot be admitted into the gospel covenant, unless all your contrarieties and impediments be taken from you, and you be as apt as children to receive the new immissions from heaven. And this proposition relies upon a great example, and a certain reason. The example is our blessed Saviour, who was "nullius pœnitentiæ debitor;" he had committed no sin, and needed no repentance; he needed not to be saved by faith, for of faith he was "the author and finisher," and the great object, and its perfection and reward: and yet he was baptized by the baptism of John, the baptism of repentance. And therefore it is certain, that repentance and faith are not necessary to the susception of baptism, but necessary to some persons that are baptized. For it is necessary we should much consider the difference. If the sacrament by any person may be justly received, in whom such dispositions are not to be found, then the dispositions are not necessary or intrinsical to the susception of the sacrament; and yet some persons coming to this sacrament may have such necessities of their own, as will make the sacrament ineffectual without such dispositions. These I call necessary to the person, but not to the sacrament; that is, necessary to all such, but not necessary to all absolutely. And faith is necessary sometimes, where repentance is not; sometimes repentance and faith together, and sometimes otherwise. When Philip [d] baptized the eunuch, he only required of him to believe, not to repent. But St. Peter,[e] when he preached to the Jews, and converted them, only required repentance; which, although it, in their case, implied faith, yet there was no explicit stipulation for it: they had "crucified the Lord of life;" [f] and if they would come to God by baptism, they must renounce their sin; that was all was then stood upon. It is as the case is, or as the persons have superinduced necessities upon themselves. In children the case is evident as to the one part, which is equally required; I mean repentance: the not doing of which cannot prejudice them as to the susception of baptism, because they, having done no evil, are not bound to repent; and to repent is as necessary to the susception of baptism as faith is. But this shows, that they are accidentally necessary; that is, not absolutely, not to all, not to infants: and if they may be excused from one duty, which is indispensably necessary to baptism, why they may not from the other is a secret, which will not be found out by these, whom it concerns to believe it.

4. And therefore, when our blessed Lord made a stipulation and express commandment for faith, with the greatest annexed penalty to them that had it not, "he that believeth not, shall be damned," the proposition is not to be verified or understood as relative to every period of time; for them no man could be converted from infidelity to the christian faith, and from the power of the devil to the kingdom of Christ, but his present infidelity shall be his final ruin. It is not therefore γνώμη, but χρεία, not a sentence, but a use, a prediction and intermination. It is not like that saying, "God is true, and every man a liar," and, "Every good and every perfect gift is from above;" for these are true in every instant, without reference to circumstances: but "he that believeth not, shall be damned," is a prediction, or that which in rhetoric is called χρεία, or a use, because this is the affirmation of that, which usually or frequently comes to pass; such as this: "He that strikes with the sword, shall perish by the sword; he that robs a church, shall be like a wheel," of a vertiginous and unstable estate; "he that loves wine and oil, shall not be rich:" and therefore it is a declaration of that, which is universally or commonly true; but not so, that in what instant soever a man is not a believer, in that instant it is true to say he is damned; for some are called the third, some the sixth, some the ninth hour; and they that come in, being first called at the eleventh hour, shall have their reward: so that this sentence stands true at the day and the judgment of the Lord, not at the judgment or day of man. And in the same necessity as faith stands to salvation, in the same it stands to baptism; that is, to be measured by the whole latitude of its extent. Our baptism shall no more do all its intention, unless faith supervene, than a man is in possibility of being saved

[d] Acts viii. 37. [e] Acts ii. 38. [f] Acts iii. 15.

without faith; it must come in its due time, but is not indispensably necessary in all instances and periods. Baptism is the seal of our election and adoption; and as election is brought to effect by faith and its consequents, so is baptism; but to neither is faith necessary as to its beginning and first entrance. To which also I add this consideration, that actual faith is necessary, not to the susception, but to the consequent effects, of baptism, appears, because the church, and particularly the apostles, did baptize some persons who had not faith, but were hypocrites; such as were Simon Magus, Alexander the coppersmith, Demas, and Diotrephes; and such was Judas when he was baptized, and such were the Gnostic teachers. For the effect depends upon God, who knows the heart, but the outward susception depends upon them, who do not know it; which is a certain argument that the same faith, which is necessary to the effect of the sacrament, is not necessary to its susception; and if it can be administered to hypocrites, much more to infants; if to those who really hinder the effect, much rather to them that hinder not. And if it be objected, that the church does not know but the pretenders have faith, but she knows infants have not; I reply, that the church does not know but the pretenders hinder the effect, and are contrary to the grace of the sacrament, but she knows that infants do not: the first possibly may receive the grace, the other cannot hinder it.

5. But besides these things, it is considerable, that, when it is required, persons have faith. It is true, they that require baptism should give a reason why they do; so it was in the case of the eunuch baptized by Philip: but this is not to be required of others that do not ask it, and yet they may be of the church, and of the faith; for by faith is also understood the christian religion, and the christian faith is the christian religion, and of this a man may be, though he make no confession of his faith, as a man may be of the church, and yet not be of the number of God's secret ones; and to this, more is required than to that: to the first, it is sufficient that he be admitted by a sacrament or a ceremony; which is infallibly certain, because hypocrites and wicked people are in the visible communion of the church, and are reckoned as members of it, and yet to them there was nothing done but the ceremony administered; and therefore, when that is done to infants, they also are to be reckoned in the church communion. And indeed, in the examples of Scripture, we find more inserted into the number of God's family by outward ceremony than by the inward grace. Of this number were all those, who were circumcised the eighth day, who were admitted thither, as the woman's daughter was cured in the gospel, by the faith of their mother, their natural parents, or their spiritual; to whose faith it is as certain God will take heed, as to their faith who brought one to Christ, who could not come himself, the poor paralytic; for when Christ saw their faith, he cured their friend: and yet it is to be observed, that Christ did use to exact faith, actual faith, of them that came to him to be cured; "According to your faith be it unto you."[g] The case is equal in its whole kind. And it is considerable what Christ saith to the poor man, that came in behalf of his son, "All things are possible to him that believeth:"[h] it is possible for a son to receive the blessing and benefit of his father's faith; and it was so in his case, and is possible to any; for "to faith all things are possible." And as to the event of things, it is evident in the story of the gospel, that the faith of their relatives was equally effective to children and friends or servants, absent or sick, as the faith of the interested person was to himself: as appears, beyond all exception, in the case of the friends of the paralytic, let down with cords through the tiles; of the centurion,[i] in behalf of his servant; of the nobleman, for his son sick at Capernaum;[k] of the Syrophœnician, for her daughter: and Christ required faith of no sick man, but of him that presented himself to him,[l] and desired for himself that he might be cured, as it was in the case of the blind man. Though they could not believe, yet Christ required belief of them that came to him on their behalf. And why then it may not be so, or is not so, in the case of infants' baptism, I confess it is past my skill to conjecture. The reason on which this further relies, is contained in the next proposition.

6. Fourthly: No disposition, or act of man, can deserve the first grace, or the grace of pardon: for so long as a man is unpardoned, he is an enemy to God, and as a dead person; and, unless he be prevented by the grace of God, cannot do a single act in order to his pardon and restitution; so that the first work which God does upon a man, is so wholly his own, that the man hath nothing in it, but to entertain it; that is, not to hinder the work of God upon him. And this is done in them that have in them nothing that can hinder the work of grace, or in them who remove the hinderances. Of the latter sort are all sinners, who have lived in a state contrary to God; of the first are they, who are prevented by the grace of God before they can choose; that is, little children, and those that become like unto little children. So that faith and repentance are not necessary at first to the reception of the first grace, but by accident. If sin have drawn curtains, and put bars and coverings to the windows, these must be taken away; and that is done by faith and repentance: but if the windows be not shut, so that the light can pass through them, the eye of Heaven will pass in and dwell there. "No man can come unto me, unless my Father draw him;"[m] that is, the first access to Christ is nothing of our own, but wholly of God; and it is as in our creation, in which we have an obediential capacity, but co-operate not; only if we be contrary to the work of grace, that contrariety must be taken off, else there is no necessity. And if all men, according to Christ's saying, must "receive the kingdom of God as little children,"[n] it is cer-

[g] Matt. ix. 29.
[h] Mark ix. 23.
[i] Matt. viii. 13.
[k] John iv. 50.
[l] Matt. ix. 28.
[m] John vi. 44.
[n] Mark x. 15

tain, little children do receive it; they receive it as all men ought; that is, without any impediment or obstruction, without any thing within that is contrary to that state.

7. Fifthly: Baptism is not to be estimated as one act, transient and effective to single purposes; but it is an entrance to a conjugation and a state of blessings. All our life is to be transacted by the measures of the gospel covenant, and that covenant is consigned by baptism; there we have our title and adoption to it: and the grace that is then given to us, is like a piece of leaven put into a lump of dough, and faith and repentance do, in all the periods of our life, put it into fermentation and activity. Then the seed of God is put into the ground of our hearts, and repentance waters it, and faith makes it subactum solum, the ground and furrows apt to produce fruits; and therefore faith and repentance are necessary to the effect of baptism, not to its susception; that is, necessary to all those parts of life, in which baptism does operate, not to the first sanction or entering into the covenant. The seed may lie long in the ground, and produce fruits in its due season, if it be refreshed with "the former and the latter rain;" that is, the repentance that first changes the state, and converts the man, and afterwards returns him to his title, and recalls him from his wanderings, and keeps him in the state of grace, and within the limits of the covenant: and all the way faith gives efficacy and acceptation to this repentance; that is, continues our title to the promise of not having righteousness exacted by the measures of the law, but by the covenant and promise of grace, into which we entered in baptism, and walk in the same all the days of our life.

8. Sixthly: The Holy Spirit, which descends upon the waters of baptism, does not instantly produce its effects in the soul of the baptized; and when it does, it is irregularly, and as it pleases. "The Spirit bloweth where it listeth, and no man knoweth whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth;" and the catechumen is admitted into the kingdom, yet "the kingdom of God cometh not with observation:"[o] and this saying of our blessed Saviour was spoken of "the kingdom of God that is within us:"[p] that is, the Spirit of grace, the power of the gospel put into our hearts, concerning which he affirmed, that it operates so secretly, that it comes not with outward show; "neither shall they say, Lo here, or Lo there." Which thing I desire the rather to be observed, because, in the same discourse, which our blessed Saviour continued to that assembly, he affirms "this kingdom of God" to belong unto "little children,"[q] this kingdom, that "cometh not with outward significations," or present expresses, this kingdom that is within us. For the present, the use I make of it is this: that no man can conclude that this kingdom of power, that is, the Spirit of sanctification, is not come upon infants, because there is no sign or expression of it. It is "within us," therefore it hath no signification. It is "the seed of God;" and it is no good argument to say, here is no seed in the bowels of the earth, because there is nothing green upon the face of it. For the church gives the sacrament, God gives the grace of the sacrament. But because he does not always give it at the instant in which the church gives the sacrament, (as if there be a secret impediment in the suscipient,) and yet afterwards does give it, when the impediment is removed, (as to them that repent of that impediment,) it follows, that the church may administer rightly, even before God gives the real grace of the sacrament: and if God gives this grace afterwards by parts, and yet all of it is the effect of that covenant, which was consigned in baptism; he that defers some, may defer all, and verify every part, as well as any part. For it is certain, that in the instance now made, all the grace is deferred; in infants, it is not certain but that some is collated or infused: however, be it so or no, yet upon this account the administration of the sacrament is not hindered.

9. Seventhly: When the Scripture speaks of the effects of, or dispositions to, baptism, it speaks in general expressions, as being most apt to signify a common duty, or a general effect, or a more universal event, or the proper order of things: but those general expressions do not "supponere universaliter;" that is, are not to be understood exclusively to all that are not so qualified, or universally of all suscipients, or of all the subjects of the proposition. When the prophets complain of the Jews, that they are fallen from God, and turned to idols, and walk not in the way of their fathers; and at other times the Scripture speaks the same thing of their fathers, that they walked perversely towards God, "starting aside like a broken bow;" in these, and the like expressions, the holy Scripture uses a synecdoche, or signifies many only, under the notion of a more large and indefinite expression: for neither were all the fathers good, neither did all the sons prevaricate; but among the fathers there were enough to recommend to posterity by way of example, and among the children there were enough to stain the reputation of the age; but neither the one part nor the other was true of every single person. St. John the Baptist spake to the whole audience, saying, "O generation of vipers!" and yet he did not mean that all Jerusalem and Judea, that "went out to be baptized of him," were such; but he, under an undeterminate reproof, intended those that were such, that is, especially the priests and the Pharisees. And it is more considerable yet in the story of the event of Christ's sermon in the synagogue, upon his text taken out of Isaiah, "all wondered at his gracious words, and bare him witness;"[r] and a little after, "all they in the synagogue were filled with wrath:" that is, it was generally so, but hardly to be supposed true of every single person, in both the contrary humours and usages. Thus Christ said to the apostles, "Ye have abode with me in my temptations;" and yet Judas was all the way a follower of interest and the bag, rather than Christ, and afterwards none of them all did abide with Christ in his greatest temptations. Thus also, to come nearer the present question, the secret

[o] Luke xvii. 20. [p] Verse 21. [q] Luke xviii. 16. [r] Luke iv. 22, 28.

effects of election, and of the Spirit, are in Scripture attributed to all that are of the outward communion. So St. Peter calls all the christian strangers of the eastern dispersion, "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father;" [s] and St. Paul saith of all the Roman christians, and the same of the Thessalonians, that their "faith was spoken of in all the world:" and yet amongst them it is not to be supposed, that all the professors had an unreprovable faith, or that every one of the church of Thessalonica was an excellent and a charitable person; and yet the apostle useth this expression, "Your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all towards each other aboundeth." [t] These are usually significant of a general custom or order of things, or duty of men, or design, and natural or proper expectation of events. Such are these also in this very question, "As many of you as are baptized into Christ, have put on Christ;" that is, so it is regularly, and so it will be in its due time, and that is the order of things, and the designed event: but from hence we cannot conclude of every person, and in every period of time, "This man hath been baptized," therefore "now he is clothed with Christ, he hath put on Christ;" nor thus, "This person cannot, in a spiritual sense, as yet put on Christ," therefore "he hath not been baptized," that is, "he hath not put him on in a sacramental sense." Such is the saying of St. Paul, "whom he hath predestinated, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified:" [u] this also declares the regular event, or at least the order of things, and the design of God, but not the actual verification of it to all persons. These sayings concerning baptism in the like manner are to be so understood, that they cannot exclude all persons from the sacrament, that have not all those real effects of the sacrament at all times, which some men have at some times, and all men must have at some time or other, viz. when the sacrament obtains its last intention. But he that shall argue from hence, that children are not rightly baptized, because they cannot in a spiritual sense put on Christ, concludes nothing, unless these propositions did signify universally, and at all times, and in every person, and in every manner: which can no more pretend to truth, than that all christians are God's elect, and all that are baptized are saints, and all that are called are justified, and all that are once justified shall be saved finally. These things declare only the event of things, and their order, and the usual effect, and the proper design, in their proper season, in their limited proportions.

10. Eighthly: A negative argument for matters of fact in Scripture cannot conclude a law, or a necessary or a regular event. And therefore, supposing that it be not intimated, that the apostles did baptize infants, it follows not that they did not, and if they did not, it does not follow that they might not, or that the church may not. For it is unreasonable to argue, the Scripture speaks nothing of the baptism of the holy Virgin-mother, therefore she was not baptized. The words and deeds of Christ are infinite which are not recorded, and of the acts of the apostles we may suppose the same in their proportion: and therefore what they did not is no rule to us, unless they did it not because they were forbidden. So that it can be no good argument to say, the apostles are not read to have baptized infants, therefore infants are not to be baptized; but thus, we do not find that infants are excluded from the common sacraments and ceremonies of christian institution, therefore we may not presume to exclude them. For although the negative of a fact is no good argument, yet the negative of a law is a very good one. We may not say, the apostles did not, therefore we may not; but thus, they were not forbidden to do it, there is no law against it, therefore it may be done. No man's deeds can prejudicate a Divine law expressed in general terms, much less can it be prejudiced by those things that were not done. "That which is wanting cannot be numbered," [x] cannot be effectual; therefore, "Baptize all nations," must signify all that it can signify, all that are reckoned in the capitations and accounts of a nation. Now, since all contradiction to this question depends wholly upon these two grounds, the negative argument in matter of fact, and the pretences that faith and repentance are required to baptism; since the first is wholly nothing, and infirm upon an infinite account, and the second may conclude, that infants can no more be saved than be baptized, because faith is more necessary to salvation than to baptism; it being said, "He that believeth not shall be damned," and it is not said, "He that believeth not shall be excluded from baptism;" it follows, that the doctrine of those that refuse to baptize their infants, is, upon both its legs, weak, and broken, and insufficient.

11. Upon the supposition of these grounds, the baptism of infants, according to the perpetual practice of the church of God, will stand firm and unshaken upon its own base. For, as the eunuch said to Philip, "What hinders them to be baptized?" If they can receive benefit by it, it is infallibly certain, that it belongs to them also to receive it, and to their parents to procure it; for nothing can deprive us of so great a grace but an unworthiness, or a disability. They are not disabled to receive it, if they need it, and if it does them good, and they have neither done good nor evil, and, therefore, they have not forfeited their right to it. This, therefore, shall be the first great argument or combination of inducements: Infants receive many benefits by the susception of baptism, and therefore, in charity and in duty, we are to bring them to baptism.

12. First: The first effect of baptism is, that in it we are admitted to the kingdom of Christ, offered and presented unto him. In which certainly there is the same act of worship to God, and the same blessing to the children of christians, as there was in presenting the first-born among the Jews. For our children can be God's own portion as well as theirs: and as they presented the first-born to God, and so acknowledged that God might have taken his life in sacrifice, as well as the sacrifice of

[s] 1 Pet. i. 2. [t] 2 Thess. i. 3. [u] Rom. viii. 30. [x] Eccles. i. 15.

the lamb, or the oblation of a beast; yet, when the right was confessed, God gave him back again, and took a lamb in exchange, or a pair of doves: so are our children presented to God as forfeit, and God might take the forfeiture, and not admit the babe to the promises of grace; but when the presentation of the child and our acknowledgment is made to God, God takes the Lamb of the world in exchange, and he hath paid our forfeiture, and the children are "holy unto the Lord." And what hinders here? Cannot a cripple receive an alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple, unless he go thither himself? or cannot a gift be presented to God by the hands of the owners, and the gift become holy and pleasing to God, without its own consent? The parents have a portion of the possession: children are blessings, and God's gifts, and the father's greatest wealth, and, therefore, are to be given again to him. In other things we give something to God of all that he gives us; all we do not, because our needs force us to retain the greater part, and the less sanctifies the whole: but our children must all be returned to God; for we may love them, and so may God too, and they are the better our own by being made holy in their presentation. Whatsoever is given to God is holy, every thing in its proportion and capacity: a lamb is holy, when it becomes a sacrifice; and a table is holy, when it becomes an altar; and a house is holy, when it becomes a church; and a man is holy, when he is consecrated to be a priest; and so is every one, that is dedicated to religion: these are holy persons, the others are holy things. And infants are between both: they have the sanctification that belongs to them, the holiness that can be of a reasonable nature offered and destined to God's service; but not in that degree that is in an understanding, choosing person. Certain it is, that infants may be given to God; and if they may be, they must be: for it is not here as in goods, where we are permitted to use all, or some, and give what portion we please out of them; but we cannot do our duty towards our children, unless we give them wholly to God, and offer them to his service and to his grace. The first does honour to God; the second does charity to the children. The effects and real advantages will appear in the sequel. In the mean time, this argument extends thus far, that children may be presented to God acceptably, in order to his service. And it was highly preceptive, when our blessed Saviour commanded, that we should "suffer little children to come to" him: and when they came, they carried away a blessing along with them. He was desirous they should partake of his merits: he is not willing, neither is it his Father's will, "that any of these little ones should perish." And, therefore, he died for them, and loved, and blessed them: and so he will now, if they be brought to him, and presented as candidates of the religion, and of the resurrection. Christ hath a blessing for our children; but let them come to him, that is, be presented at the doors of the church to the sacrament of adoption and initiation; for I know no other way for them to come.

[y] Sect. xxv. &c.

13. Secondly: Children may be adopted into the covenant of the gospel, that is, "made partakers of the communion of saints," which is the second effect of baptism; parts of the church, members of Christ's mystical body, and put into the order of eternal life. Now concerning this, it is certain the church clearly hath power to do her offices in order to it. The faithful can pray for all men, they can do their piety to some persons with more regard, and greater earnestness; they can admit whom they please, in their proper dispositions, to a participation of all their holy prayers, and communions, and preachings, and exhortations: and if all this be a blessing, and all this be the actions of our own charity, who can hinder the church of God from admitting infants to the communion of all their pious offices, which can do them benefit in their present capacity? How this does necessarily infer baptism, I shall afterwards discourse.[y] But, for the present, I enumerate, that the blessings of baptism are communicable to them; they may be admitted into a fellowship of all the prayers and privileges of the church, and the communion of saints, in blessings, and prayers, and holy offices. But that which is of greatest persuasion, and convincing efficacy, in this particular, is, that the children of the church are as capable of the same covenant as the children of the Jews: but it was the same covenant that circumcision did consign, a spiritual covenant under a veil, and now it is the same spiritual covenant without the veil; which is evident to him that considers it, thus:

14. The words of the covenant are these: "I am the Almighty God, walk before me, and be thou perfect: I will multiply thee exceedingly: thou shalt be a father of many nations: thy name shall not be Abram, but Abraham: nations and kings shall be out of thee: I will be a God unto thee, and unto thy seed after thee: and, I will give all the land of Canaan to thy seed: and, all the males shall be circumcised; and it shall be a token of the covenant between me and thee: and, he that is not circumcised shall be cut off from his people."[z] The covenant which was on Abraham's part was, "To walk before God, and to be perfect;" on God's part, to bless him with a numerous issue, and them with the land of Canaan: and the sign was circumcision, the token of the covenant. Now, in all this there was no duty to which the posterity was obliged, nor any blessing which Abraham could perceive or feel, because neither he nor his posterity did enjoy the promise for many hundred years after the covenant: and therefore, as there was a duty for the posterity, which is not here expressed; so there was a blessing for Abraham, which was concealed under the leaves of a temporal promise, and which we shall better understand from them, whom the Spirit of God hath taught the mysteriousness of this transaction. The argument, indeed, and the observation, is wholly St. Paul's.[a] Abraham and the patriarchs "died in faith, not having received the promises," viz. of a possession in Canaan. "They saw the promises afar off," they embraced them, and looked through the cloud, and

[z] Gen. xvii. 1, &c. [a] Heb. xi. 13—16.

the temporal veil: this was not it: they might have returned to Canaan, if that had been the object of their desires, and the design of the promise; but they desired and did seek a country, but it was a better, and that a heavenly. This was the object of their desire, and the end of their search, and the reward of their faith, and the secret of their promise. And therefore circumcision was "a seal of the righteousness of faith which he had before his circumcision,"[b] before the making this covenant; and therefore it must principally relate to an effect and a blessing greater than was afterwards expressed in the temporal promise: which effect was "forgiveness of sins, a not imputing to us our infirmities, justification by faith, accounting that for righteousness:" and these effects or graces were promised to Abraham, not only for his posterity after the flesh, but his children after the Spirit, even to all that shall believe, and "walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he walked in, being yet uncircumcised."

15. This was no other but the covenant of the gospel, though afterwards otherwise consigned: for so the apostle expressly affirms, that Abraham was the father of circumcision, (viz. by virtue of this covenant,) "not only to them that are circumcised, but to all that believe:[c] for this promise was not through the law" of works, or of circumcision, "but of faith." And therefore, as St. Paul observes, God promised that Abraham should be a father, not of that nation only, but "of many nations, and the heir of the world; that the blessing of Abraham might come on the gentiles through Jesus Christ,"[d] that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. "And if ye be Christ's, then ye are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Since, then, the covenant of the gospel is the covenant of faith, and not of works; and the promises are spiritual, not secular; and Abraham the father of the faithful gentiles as well as the circumcised Jews, and the heir of the world, not by himself, but by his seed, or the Son of man, our Lord Jesus; it follows, that the promises which circumcision did seal, were the same promises which are consigned in baptism: the covenant is the same, only that God's people are not impaled in Palestine, and the veil is taken away, and the temporal is passed into spiritual; and the result will be this, "That to as many persons, and in as many capacities, and in the same dispositions, as the promises were applied and did relate in circumcision, to the same they do belong and may be applied in baptism."[e] And let it be remembered, that the covenant which circumcision did sign, was a covenant of grace and faith; the promises were of the Spirit, or spiritual; it was made before the law, and could not be rescinded by the legal covenant; nothing could be added to it, or taken from it; and we that are partakers of this grace, are therefore partakers of it by being Christ's servants, united to Christ, and so are become Abraham's seed, as the apostle at large and professedly proves in divers places, but especially in the fourth to the Romans, and the third to the Galatians. And, therefore, if infants were then admitted to it, and consigned to it by a sacrament, which they understood not any more than ours do, there is not any reason why ours should not enter in at the ordinary gate and door of grace as well as they. Their children were circumcised the eighth day, but were instructed afterwards, when they could inquire what these things meant. Indeed, their proselytes were first taught, then circumcised; so are ours baptized: but their infants were consigned first; and so must ours.

16. Thirdly: In baptism we are born again; and this infants need in the present circumstances, and for the same great reason that men of age and reason do. For our natural birth is either of itself insufficient, or is made so by the fall of Adam, and the consequent evils, that nature alone, or our first birth, cannot bring us to heaven, which is a supernatural end, that is, an end above all the power of our nature as now it is. So that if nature cannot bring us to heaven, grace must, or we can never get thither; if the first birth cannot, a second must: but the second birth spoken of in Scripture is baptism; "a man must be born of water and the Spirit." And therefore baptism is λουτρὸν παλιγγενεσίας, "the laver of a new birth."[f] Either then infants cannot go to heaven any way that we know of, or they must be baptized. To say they are to be left to God, is an excuse, and no answer; for when God hath opened the door, and calls that the "entrance into heaven," we do not leave them to God, when we will not carry them to him in the way which he hath described, and at the door which himself hath opened: we leave them indeed, but it is but helpless and destitute: and though God is better than man, yet that is no warrant to us; what it will be to the children, that we cannot warrant or conjecture. And if it be objected, that to the new birth are required dispositions of our own, which are to be wrought by and in them that have the use of reason; besides that this is wholly against the analogy of a new birth, in which the person to be born is wholly a passive, and hath put into him the principle, that in time will produce its proper actions, it is certain that they that can receive the new birth are capable of it. The effect of it is a possibility of being saved, and arriving to a supernatural felicity. If infants can receive this effect, then also the new birth, without which they cannot receive the effect. And if they can receive salvation, the effect of the new birth, what hinders them but they may receive that, that is in order to that effect, and ordained only for it, and which is nothing of itself, but in its institution and relation, and which may be received by the same capacity in which

[b] Rom. iv. 3, 5, 7, 8, 11, 12.
[c] Rom. iv. 11, 13, 17.
[d] Gal. iii. 14, 29.
[e] Οἱ τύποι ἐν τῷ νόμῳ ἦσαν, ἡ δὲ ἀλήθεια ἐν τῷ ἐναγγελίῳ· ἐκεῖ γὰρ ἡ περιτομὴ σαρκικὴ ὑπηρετήσασα χρόνῳ, ἕως τῆς μεγάλης περιτομῆς, τουτέστι τοῦ βαπτίσματος τοῦ περιτέμνοντος ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ ἁμαρτημάτων, καὶ σφραγίσαντος ἡμᾶς εἰς ὄνομα Θεοῦ.—EPIPHAN. lib. i. Hæres. 8. scil. Epicureor.
[f] Titus iii. 5.

one may be created, that is, a passivity, or a capacity obediential ?

17. Fourthly: Concerning pardon of sins, which is one great effect of baptism, it is certain that infants have not that benefit, which men of sin and age may receive. He that hath a sickly stomach, drinks wine, and it not only refreshes his spirits, but cures his stomach: he that drinks wine, and hath not that disease, receives good by his wine, though it does not minister to so many needs; it refreshes, though it does not cure him: and when oil is poured upon a man's head, it does not always heal a wound, but sometimes makes him a cheerful countenance, sometimes it consigns him to be a king, or a priest. So it is in baptism: it does not heal the wounds of actual sins, because they have not committed them; but it takes off the evil of original sin: whatsoever is imputed to us by Adam's prevarication, is washed off by the death of the second Adam,[g] into which we are baptized. But concerning original sin, because there are so many disputes which may intricate the question, I shall make use only of that, which is confessed on both sides, and material to our purpose. Death came upon all men by Adam's sin, and the necessity of it remains upon us, as an evil consequent of the disobedience. For though death is natural, yet it was kept off from man by God's favour; which, when he lost, the banks were broken, and the water reverted to its natural course, and our nature became a curse, and death a punishment. Now, that this also relates to infants so far, is certain, because they are sick, and die. This the Pelagians denied not.[h] But to whomsoever this evil descended, for them also a remedy is provided by the second Adam; "That as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive;" that is, at the day of judgment: then death shall be destroyed. In the mean time, death hath a sting and a bitterness, a curse it is, and an express of the Divine anger; and if this sting be not taken away here, we shall have no participation of the final victory over death. Either, therefore, infants must be for ever without remedy in this evil consequent of their father's sin, or they must be adopted into the participation of Christ's death, which is the remedy. Now, how can they partake of Christ's death, but by baptism into his death? For if there be any spiritual way fancied, it will, by a stronger argument, admit them to baptism: for if they can receive spiritual effects, they can also receive the outward sacrament; this being denied only upon pretence they cannot have the other. If there be no spiritual way extraordinary, then the ordinary way is only left for them. If there be an extraordinary, let it be shown, and christians will be at rest concerning their children. One thing only I desire to be observed, that Pelagius denied original sin, but yet denied not the necessity of infants' baptism; and being accused of it, in an epistle to Pope Innocent the First, he purged himself of the suspicion, and allowed the practice, but denied the inducement of it: which shows, that their arts are weak that think baptism to be useless to infants, if they be not formally guilty of the prevarication of Adam. By which I also gather, that it was so universal, so primitive a practice, to baptize infants, that it was greater than all pretences to the contrary; for it would much have conduced to the introducing his opinion against grace and original sin, if he had destroyed that practice, which seemed so very much to have its greatest necessity from the doctrine he denied. But against Pelagius, and against all that follow the parts of his opinion, it is of good use which St. Austin, Prosper,[i] and Fulgentius argue; if infants are punished for Adam's sin, then they are also guilty of it in some sense. Nimis enim impium est hoc de Dei sentire justitiâ, quòd à prævaricatione liberos cum reis voluerit esse damnatos:" so Prosper. Dispendia quæ flentes nascendo testantur, dicito quo merito sub justissimo et omnipotentissimo judice eis, si nullum peccatum attrahant, arrogentur," said St. Austin. For the guilt of it signifies nothing but the obligation to the punishment; and he that feels the evil consequent to him the sin is imputed; not as to all the same dishonour, or moral accounts, but to the more material, to the natural account: and, in holy Scripture, the taking off the punishment is the pardon of the sin; and in the same degree the punishment is abolished, in the same God is appeased, and then the person stands upright, being reconciled to God by his grace. Since, therefore, infants have the punishment of sin, it is certain the sin is imputed to them; and, therefore, they need being reconciled to God by Christ: and if so, then, when they are baptized into Christ's death, and into his resurrection, their sins are pardoned, because the punishment is taken off, the sting of natural death is taken away, because God's anger is removed, and they shall partake of Christ's resurrection; which because baptism does signify and consign, they also are to be baptized. To which also add this appendant consideration, that whatsoever the sacraments do consign, that also they do convey and minister: they do it, that is, God by them does it, lest we should think the sacraments to be mere illusions, and abusing us by deceitful ineffective signs: and, therefore, to infants the grace of a title to a resurrection and reconciliation to God, by the death of Christ, is conveyed, because it signifies and consigns this to them more to the life and analogy of resemblance, than circumcision to the infant sons of Israel. I end this consideration with the words of Nazianzen: Ἡ γέννησις ἐκ βαπτίσματος πᾶν ἀπὸ γενέσεως κάλυμμα περιτέμνει, καὶ πρὸς τὴν ἄνω ζωὴν ἐπανάγει· "Our birth, by baptism, does cut off every unclean appendage of our natural birth, and leads us to a celestial life."[k] And this, in children, is therefore more necessary, because the evil came upon them without their own act of reason and choice, and, therefore, the grace and remedy ought not to stay the leisure of dull nature, and the formalities of the civil law.

[g] Rom. v. 17, 18.
[h] Vide Aug. lib. iv. contra Duas Epistolas Pælag. c. 4. lib. 6. contra Jur. cap. 4.
[i] Prosper contra Collatorem, c. 20.
[k] Orat. 40. de Baptis.

18. Fifthly: The baptism of infants does to them the greatest part of that benefit, which belongs to the remission of sins; for baptism is a state of repentance and pardon for ever. This I suppose to be already proved; to which I only add this caution, that the Pelagians, to undervalue the necessity of supervening grace, affirmed, that baptism did minister to us grace sufficient to live perfectly, and without sin for ever. Against this St. Jerome sharply declaims, and affirms, "Baptismum præterita donare peccata, non futuram servare justitiam;"[l] that is, "non statim justum facit et omni plenum justitiâ," as he expounds his meaning in another place.[m] "Vetera peccata conscindit, novas virtutes non tribuit; dimittit à carcere, et dimisso, si laboraverit, præmia pollicetur." Baptism does not so forgive future sins, that we may do what we please, or so as we need not labour, and watch, and fear, perpetually, and make use of God's grace to actuate our endeavours; but puts us into a state of pardon, that is, in a covenant of grace, in which so long as we labour and repent, and strive to do our duty, so long our infirmities are pitied, and our sins certain to be pardoned, upon their certain conditions; that is, by virtue of it we are capable of pardon, and must work for it, and may hope it. And therefore infants have a most certain capacity and proper disposition to baptism: for sin creeps before it can go; and little indecencies are soon learned, and malice is before their years, and they can do mischief and irregularities betimes; and though we know not when, nor how far, they are imputed in every month of their lives, yet it is an admirable art of the Spirit of grace, to put them into a state of pardon, that their remedy may at least be as soon as their necessity: and therefore Tertullian and Gregory Nazianzen advised the baptism of children to be at three or four years of age; meaning, that they then begin to have little inadvertencies and hasty follies, and actions so evil as did need a lavatory. But if baptism hath an influence upon sins in the succeeding portions of our life, then it is certain, that their being presently innocent does not hinder, and ought not to retard, the sacrament: and therefore Tertullian's, "Quid festinat innocens ætas ad remissionem peccatorum?[n] What need innocents hasten to the remission of sins?" is soon answered. It is true, they need not in respect of any actual sins; for so they are innocent: but in respect of the evils of their nature derived from their original, and in respect of future sins in the whole state of their life, it is necessary they be put into a state of pardon before they sin; because some sin early, some sin later; and therefore, unless they be baptized so early as to prevent the first sins, they may chance die in a sin, to a pardon of which they have yet derived no title from Christ.

19. Sixthly: The next great effect of baptism which children can have, is the spirit of sanctification; and if they can be "baptized with water and the Spirit," it will be sacrilege to rob them of so holy treasures. And concerning this, although it be with them as St. Paul says of heirs, "The heir, so long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all;" and children, although they receive the Spirit of promise, and the Spirit of grace, yet in respect of actual exercise they differ not from them that have them not at all: yet this hinders not, but they may have them. For as the reasonable soul and all its faculties are in children, will and understanding, passions, and powers of attraction and propulsion; yet these faculties do not operate or come abroad, till time and art, observation and experience, have drawn them forth into action: so may the Spirit of grace, the principle of christian life, be infused, and yet lie without action, till, in its own day, it is drawn forth. For in every christian there are three parts concurring to his integral constitution, body, and soul, and spirit; and all these have their proper activities and times; but "every one in his own order, first that which is natural, then that which is spiritual." And what Aristotle said, "A man first lives the life of a plant, then of a beast, and lastly of a man," is true in this sense: and the more spiritual the principle is, the longer it is before it operates, because more things concur to spiritual actions than to natural: and these are necessary, and therefore first; the other are perfect, and therefore last. And who is he that so well understands the philosophy of this third principle of a christian's life, the Spirit, as to know how or when it is infused, and how it operates in all its periods, and what it is in its being and proper nature; and whether it be like the soul, or like the faculty, or like a habit; or how, or to what purposes, God, in all varieties, does dispense it? These are secrets, which none but bold people use to decree, and build propositions upon their own dreams. That which is certain is, That the Spirit is the principle of a new life, or a new birth: That baptism is the laver of this new birth: That it is the seed of God, and may lie long in the furrows before it springs up: That from the faculty to the act, the passage is not always sudden and quick: That the Spirit is "the earnest of our inheritance," that is, of resurrection to eternal life; which inheritance, because children we hope shall have, they cannot be denied to have its seal and earnest; that is, if they shall have all, they are not to be denied a part. That children have some effects of the Spirit, and therefore do receive it, and are "baptized with the Spirit," and therefore may with water; which thing is therefore true and evident, because some children are sanctified, as Jeremiah and the Baptist, and therefore all may. And because all sanctification of persons is an effect of the Holy Ghost, there is no peradventure but they, that can be sanctified by God, can, in that capacity, receive the Holy Ghost. And all the ground of dissenting here, is only upon a mistake; because infants do no act of holiness, they suppose them incapable of the grace of sanctification. Now sanctification of children is their adoption to the inheritance of sons, their presentation to Christ, their consignation to Christ's service and to resurrection, their

[l] Lib. iii. adv. Pelag. [m] Lib. i. in initio.

[n] Lib de Baptis. c. 18.

being put into a possibility of being saved, their restitution to God's favour, which naturally, that is, as our nature is depraved and punished, they could not have. And in short the case is this. Original righteousness was in Adam after the manner of nature, but it was an act or effect of grace; and by it men were not made, but born, righteous. The inferior faculties obeyed the superior, the mind was whole and right, and conformable to the Divine image, the reason and the will always concurring, the will followed reason, and reason followed the laws of God;[o] and so long as a man had not lost this, he was pleasing to God, and should have passed to a more perfect state. Now because this, if Adam had stood, should have been born with every child, there was in infants a principle, which was the seed of holy life here, and a blessed hereafter; and yet the children should have gone in the road of nature then as well as now, and the Spirit should have operated at nature's leisure; God, being the giver of both, would have made them instrumental to and perfective of each other, but not destructive. Now, what was lost by Adam[p] is restored by Christ; the same righteousness, only it is not born, but superinduced; not integral, but interrupted; but such as it is, there is no difference, but that the same or the like principle may be derived to us from Christ, as there should have been from Adam, that is, a principle of obedience, a regularity of faculties, a beauty in the soul, and a state of acceptation with God. And we see also in men of understanding and reason, "the Spirit of God dwells in them," which Tatianus describing, uses these words: ἡ δὲ ψυχὴ ὥσπερ ἔνανσμα τῆς δυνάμεως ἀυτοῦ [Πνεύματος] κεκτημένη, "The soul is possessed with sparks, or materials, of the power of the Spirit;" and yet it is sometimes ineffective and unactive, sometimes more, sometimes less, and does no more do its work at all times, than the soul does at all times understand. Add to this, that if there be in infants naturally an evil principle, a proclivity to sin, an ignorance and pravity of mind, a disorder of affections, (as experience teacheth us there is, and the perpetual doctrine of the church, and the universal mischiefs issuing from mankind, and the sin of every man, does witness too much,) why cannot infants have a good principle in them, though it works not till its own season, as well as an evil principle? If there were not, by nature, some evil principle, it is not possible that all the world should choose sin. In free agents it was never heard, that all individuals loved and chose the same thing, to which they were not naturally inclined. Neither do all men choose to marry, neither do all choose to abstain; and in this instance there is a natural inclination to one part. But of all the men and women in the world, there is no one that hath never sinned: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us,"[q] said an apostle. If, therefore, nature hath in infants an evil principle, which operates when the child can choose, but is all the while within the soul; either infants have by grace a principle put into them, or else "sin abounds, where grace does not super-abound," expressly against the doctrine of the apostle. The event of this discourse is, That if infants be capable of the Spirit of grace, there is no reason but they may and ought to be baptized, as well as men and women; unless God had expressly forbidden them, which cannot be pretended: and that infants are capable of the Spirit of grace, I think is made very credible. "Christus infantibus infans factus, sanctificans infantes," said Irenæus; "Christ became an infant among the infants, and does sanctify infants:"[r] and St. Cyprian affirms, "Esse apud omnes, sive infantes sive majores natu, unam divini muneris æquitatem: There is the same dispensation of the Divine grace to all alike, to infants as well as to men." And in this royal priesthood, as it is in the secular, kings may be anointed in their cradles. "Dat (Deus) sui Spiritûs occultissimam gratiam, quam etiam latenter infundit in parvulis:[s] God gives the most secret grace of his Spirit, which he also secretly infuses into infants." And if a secret infusion be rejected, because it cannot be proved at the place and at the instant, many men, that hope for heaven, will be very much to seek for a proof of their earnest, and need an earnest of the earnest. For all that have the Spirit of God, cannot in all instants prove it, or certainly know it: neither is it defined, by how many indices the Spirit's presence can be proved or signified. And they limit the Spirit too much, and understand it too little, who take accounts of his secret workings, and measure them by the material lines and methods of natural and animal effects. And yet, because whatsoever is holy, is made so by the Holy Spirit, we are certain that the children of believing, that is, of christian parents, are holy. St. Paul affirmed it, and by it hath distinguished ours from the children of unbelievers, and our marriages from theirs. And because the children of the heathen, when they come to choice and reason, may enter into baptism and the covenant, if they will; our children have no privilege beyond the children of Turks or heathens, unless it be in the present capacity, that is, either by receiving the Holy Ghost immediately, and the promises, or at least having a title to the sacrament, and entering by that door. If they have the Spirit, nothing can hinder them from a title to the water; and if they have only a title to the water of the sacrament, then they shall receive the promise of the Holy Spirit, the benefits of the sacrament: else their privilege is none at all, but a dish of cold water, which every village nurse can provide for her new-born babe.

20. But it is in our case, as it was with the Jews' children: our children are a holy seed; for if it

[o] Τὴν ἀνθρωπείαν φύσιν ἀρχῆθεν ἀπὸ τῶν θείων ἀγαθῶν ἀνοήτως ἐξολισθήσασαν ἡ πολυπαθεστάτη ζωὴ διαδέχεται, καὶ τοῦ φθοροποιοῦ θανάτου πέρας.—Dionys. Areop. Eccles. Hier. c. 3. par. 3.

[p] Ut quod perdideramus in Adam, i. e. secundùm imaginem et similitudinem esse Dei, hoc in Jesu Christo reciperemus.—Irenæus, lib. iii. c. 30.

[q] 1 John i. 8.

[r] Ep. ad Fiden. lib. iii. ep. 8.

[s] S. Aug. lib. de Pec. Mer. et Remiss. c. 9.

were not so with christianity, how could St. Peter move the Jews to christianity, by telling them "the promise was to them and their children?" For if our children be not capable of the Spirit of promise and holiness, and yet their children were holy, it had been a better argument to have kept them in the synagogue, than to have called them to the christian church. Either therefore, 1. There is some holiness in a reasonable nature, which is not from the Spirit of holiness; or else, 2. Our children do receive the Holy Spirit, because they are holy; or if they be not holy, they are in worse condition under Christ than under Moses: or if none of all this be true, then our children are holy by having received the Holy Spirit of promise; and, consequently, nothing can hinder them from being baptized.

21. And, indeed, if the christian Jews, whose children are circumcised, and made partakers of the same promises, and title, and inheritance, and sacraments, which themselves had at their conversion to the faith of Christ, had seen their children now shut out from these new sacraments, it is not to be doubted, but they would have raised a storm greater than could easily have been suppressed, since about their circumcisions they had raised such tragedies and implacable disputations. And there had been great reason to look for a storm; for their children were circumcised, and if not baptized, then they were left under a burden, which their fathers were quit of; for St. Paul said, "Whosoever is circumcised, is a debtor to keep the whole law." These children, therefore, that were circumcised, stood obliged, for want of baptism, to perform the law of ceremonies, to be presented into the temple, to pay their price, to be redeemed with silver and gold, to be bound by the law of pollutions and carnal ordinances; and therefore, if they had been thus left, it would be no wonder, if the Jews had complained and made a tumult: they used to do it for less matters.

22. To which let this be added: That the first book of the New Testament was not written till eight years after Christ's ascension, and St. Mark's Gospel twelve years. In the mean time, to what scriptures did they appeal? By the analogy or proportion of what writings did they end their questions? Whence did they prove their articles? They only appealed to the Old Testament, and only added what their Lord superadded. Now, either it must be said, that our blessed Lord commanded that infants should not be baptized, which is no where pretended; and if it were, cannot at all be proved: or, if by the proportion of scriptures they did serve God, and preach the religion, it is plain, that by the analogy of the Old Testament, that is, of those scriptures by which they proved Christ to be come and to have suffered, they also approved the baptism of infants, or the admitting them to the society of the faithful Jews, of which also the church did then principally consist.

23. Seventhly: That baptism, which consigns men and women to a blessed resurrection, doth also equally consign infants to it, hath nothing, that I know of, pretended against it; there being the same signature and the same grace, and in this thing all being alike passive, and we no way co-operating to the consignation and promise of grace. And infants have an equal necessity, as being liable to sickness and groaning with as sad accents, and dying sooner than men and women, and less able to complain, and more apt to be pitied, and broken with the unhappy consequents of a short life and a speedy death, "et infelicitate priscorum hominum," with the infelicity and folly of their first parents; and therefore have as great need as any: and that is capacity enough to receive a remedy for the evil, which was brought upon them by the fault of another.

24. Eighthly: And after all this, if baptism be that means, which God hath appointed to save us, it were well, if we would do our parts towards infants' final interest: which, whether it depends upon the sacrament and its proper grace, we have nothing to rely upon but those texts of Scripture, which make baptism the ordinary way of entering into the state of salvation: save only we are to add this, that because of this law, since infants are not personally capable, but the church for them, as for all others indefinitely, we have reason to believe, that their friends' neglect shall by some way be supplied; but hope hath in it nothing beyond a probability. This we may be certain of, that naturally we cannot be heirs of salvation, for "by nature we are children of wrath;" and therefore an eternal separation from God is an infallible consequent to our evil nature: either, therefore, children must be put into the state of grace, or they shall dwell for ever where God's face does never shine. Now there are but two ways of being put into the state of grace and salvation, the inward by the Spirit, and the outward by water; which regularly are together. If they be renewed by the Spirit, "what hinders them to be baptized, who receive the Holy Ghost as well as we?" If they are not capable of the Spirit, they are capable of water; and if of neither, where is their title to heaven,[t] which is neither internal nor external, neither spiritual nor sacramental, neither secret nor manifest, neither natural nor gracious, neither original nor derivative? And well may we lament the death of poor babes, that are ἄβαπτοι, concerning whom, if we neglect what is regularly prescribed to all that enter heaven, without any difference expressed or case reserved, we have no reason to be comforted over our dead children, but may "weep as they that have no hope." We may hope when our neglect was not the hinderance, because God hath wholly taken the matter into his own hand, and then it cannot miscarry; and though we know nothing of the children, yet we know much of God's goodness: but when God hath permitted it to us, that is, offered and permitted children to our ministry, whatever happens to the innocents, we may well fear, lest God will require the souls at our hands: and we cannot be otherwise secure, but that it will be said concerning our children, which St. Ambrose

[t] Nisi quis renatus fuerit, &c. Utique nullum excipit, non infantem, non aliquâ præventum necessitate.—AMBR. de Abrah. Patr. lib. ii. c. 11.

used in a case like this: "Anima illa potuit salva fieri, si habuisset purgationem :[u] This soul might have gone to God, if it had been purified and washed." We know God is good, infinitely good; but we know it is not at all good to tempt his goodness: and he tempts him that leaves the usual way, and pretends it is not made for him, and yet hopes to be at his journey's end, or expects to meet his child in heaven, when himself shuts that door against him, which, for aught he knows, is the only one that stands open. St. Austin was severe in this question against unbaptized infants; therefore he is called, "durus pater infantum;" though I know not why the original of that opinion should be attributed to him, since St. Ambrose said the same before him, as appears in his words before quoted.

25. And now that I have enumerated the blessings which are consequent to baptism, and have also made apparent, that infants can receive these blessings, I suppose I need not use any other persuasions to bring children to baptism. If it be certain they may receive these good things by it, it is certain they are not to be hindered of them, without the greatest impiety, and sacrilege, and uncharitableness in the world. Nay, if it be only probable that they receive these blessings, or if it be but possible they may, nay, unless it be impossible they should, and so declared by revelation or demonstratively certain; it were intolerable unkindness and injustice to our pretty innocents to let their crying be unpitied, and their natural misery eternally irremediable, and their sorrows without remedy, and their souls no more capable of relief than their bodies of physic, and their death left with the sting in, and their souls without spirits to go to God, and no angel-guardian to be assigned them in the assemblies of the faithful, and they not to be reckoned in the accounts of God and God's church. All these are sad stories.

26. There are in Scripture very many other probabilities to persuade the baptism of infants; but because the places admit of divers interpretations, the arguments have so many diminutions, and the certainty that is in them is too fine for easy understandings, I have chosen to build the ancient doctrines upon such principles, which are more easy and certain, and have not been yet sullied and rifled with the contentions of an adversary. This only I shall observe, that the words of our blessed Lord, "Unless a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven," cannot be expounded to the exclusion of children, but the same expositions will also make baptism not necessary for men: for if they be both necessary ingredients, water and the Spirit, then let us provide water, and God will provide the Spirit; if we bring wood to the sacrifice, he will provide a lamb. And if they signify distinctly, one is ordinarily as necessary as the other; and then infants must be baptized, or not be saved. But if one be exegetical and explicative of the other, and by "water and the Spirit" is meant only the purification of the Spirit, then where is the necessity of baptism for men? It will be, as the other sacrament, at most but highly convenient, not simply necessary; and all the other places will easily be answered, if this be avoided. But, however, these words being spoken in so decretory a manner, are to be used with fear and reverence; and we must be infallibly sure, by some certain infallible arguments, that infants ought not to be baptized, or we ought to fear concerning the effect of these decretory words. I shall only add two things, by way of corollary to this discourse.

27. That the church of God, ever since her numbers were full, hath, for very many ages, consisted almost wholly of assemblies of them, who have been baptized in their infancy: and although, in the first callings of the gentiles, the chiefest and most frequent baptisms were of converted and repenting persons and believers; yet, from the beginning also, the church hath baptized the infants of christian parents; according to the prophecy of Isaiah: "Behold, I will lift up my hands to the gentiles, and set up a standard to the people; and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders."[x] Concerning which I shall not only bring the testimonies of the matter of fact, but either a report of an apostolical tradition, or some argument from the fathers, which will make their testimony more effectual in all that shall relate to the question.

28. The author of the book of ecclesiastical hierarchy, attributed to St. Denis the Areopagite, takes notice, that certain unholy persons and enemies to the christian religion think it a ridiculous thing, that infants, who as yet cannot understand the Divine mysteries, should be partakers of the sacraments; and that professions and abrenunciations should be made by others for them and in their names. He answers, that "Holy men, governors of churches, have so taught, having received a tradition from their fathers and elders in Christ." By which answer of his, as it appears that he himself was later than the Areopagite; so it is so early by him affirmed, that even then there was an ancient tradition for the baptism of infants, and the use of godfathers in the ministry of the sacrament. Concerning which, it having been so ancient a constitution of the church, it were well if men would rather humbly and modestly observe, than, like scorners, deride it; in which they show their own folly, as well as immodesty. For what indecency or incongruity is it, that our parents, natural or spiritual, should stipulate for us, when it is agreeable to the practice of all the laws and transactions of the world, an effect of the communion of saints, and of christian economy? For why may not infants be stipulated for, as well as we? All were included in the stipulation made with Adam; he made a losing bargain for himself, and we smarted for his folly: and if the faults of parents, and kings, and relatives, do bring evil upon their children, and subjects, and correlatives, it is but equal, that our children may have benefit also by our charity and piety. But concerning making an agreement for them, we find that God

[u] Lib. ii. c. 11. de Abrah. Patriarc.

[x] Isa. xlix. 22.

was confident concerning Abraham, that "he would teach his children:" and there is no doubt but parents have great power, by strict education and prudent discipline, to efform the minds of their children to virtue. Joshua did expressly undertake for his household: "I and my house will serve the Lord." And for children we may better do it, because, till they are of perfect choice, no government in the world is so great as that of parents over their children, in that which can concern the parts of this question; for they rule over their understandings, and children know nothing but what they are told, and they believe it infinitely. And it is a rare art of the Spirit, to engage parents to bring them up well, "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;" and they are persons obliged by a superinduced band; they are to give them instructions and holy principles, as they give them meat. And it is certain, that parents may better stipulate for their children, than the church can for men and women: for they may be present impostors and hypocrites, as the church story tells of some, and consequently are παραβαπτίσται, not really converted, and ineffectually baptized; and, the next day, they may change their resolution, and grow weary of their vow. And that is the most that children can do, when they come to age; and it is very much in the parents, whether the children shall do any such thing or no.

——— purus et insons
(Ut me collaudem,) si vivo et charus amicis,
Causa fuit Pater his ———
Ipse mihi custos incorruptissimus omnes
Circum doctores aderat. Quid multa? pudicum
(Qui primus virtutis honos) servavit ab omni
Non solùm facto, verùm opprobrio quoque turpi:
——— ob hoc nunc
Laus illi debetur, et à me gratia major.[y]

For education can introduce a habit and a second nature, against which children cannot kick, unless they do some violence to themselves and their inclinations. And although it fails too often whenever it fails, yet we pronounce prudently concerning future things, when we have a less influence into the event than in the present case, (and, therefore, are more unapt persons to stipulate,) and less reason in the thing itself (and therefore have not so much reason to be confident). Is not the greatest prudence of generals instanced in their foreseeing future events, and guessing at the designs of their enemies? concerning which they have less reason to be confident, than parents of their children's belief of the christian creed. To which I add this consideration: That parents or godfathers may therefore safely and prudently promise, that their children shall be of the christian faith; because we not only see millions of men and women, who believe the whole creed only upon the stock of their education, but there are none that ever do renounce the faith of their country and breeding, unless they be violently tempted by interest or weakness, antecedent or consequent. He that sees all men almost to be christians, because they are bid to be so, needs not question the fittingness of godfathers promising in behalf of the children, for whom they answer.

29. And however the matter be for godfathers, yet the tradition of baptizing infants passed through the hands of Irenæus: "Omnem ætatem sanctificans per illam quæ ad ipsam erat similitudinem. Omnes enim venit per semetipsum salvare, omnes, inquam, qui per eum renascuntur in Deum, infantes, et parvulos, et pueros, et juvenes, et seniores. Ideo per omnem venit ætatem, et infantibus infans factus, sanctificans infantes; in parvulis parvulus,"[z] &c. "Christ did sanctify every age by his own susception of it, and similitude to it. For he came to save all men by himself; I say, all who by him are born again unto God, infants, and children, and boys, and young men, and old men. He was made an infant to infants, sanctifying infants; a little one to the little ones," &c. And Origen is express: "Ecclesia traditionem ab apostolis suscepit etiam parvulis dare baptismum;[a] The church hath received a tradition from the apostles, to give baptism to children." And St. Cyprian, in his epistle to Fidus, gives account of this article; for being questioned by some less skilful persons, whether it were lawful to baptize children before the eighth day, he gives account of the whole question: and a whole council of sixty-six bishops, upon very good reason, decreed, that their baptism should at no hand be deferred; though whether six, or eight, or ten days, was no matter, so there be no danger or present necessity. The whole epistle is worth the reading.

30. But besides these authorities of such, who writ before the starting of the Pelagian questions, it will not be useless to bring the discourses of them and others, I mean the reason upon which the church did it both before and after.

31. Irenæus's argument was this:[a] Christ took upon him our nature, to sanctify and to save it; and passed through the several periods of it, even unto death, which is the symbol and effect of old age; and therefore it is certain he did sanctify all the periods of it: and why should he be an infant, but that infants should receive the crown of their age, the purification of their stained nature, the sanctification of their persons, and the saving of their souls by their infant Lord and elder Brother?

32. Omnis enim anima eousque in Adam censetur, donec in Christo recenseatur; tamdiu immunda, quamdiu recenseatur:"[b] Every soul is accounted in Adam, till it be new accounted in Christ; and so long as it is accounted in Adam, so long it is unclean; and we know, "no unclean thing can enter into heaven;" and therefore our Lord hath defined it, "Unless ye be born of water and the Spirit, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven;" that is, ye cannot be holy. It was the argument of Tertullian:[c] which the rather is to be received, because he was one less favourable to the custom of the church, in his time, of baptizing infants, which cus-

[y] Horat. lib. i. Sat. 6.
[z] Lib. ii. c. 39. V. etiam Constitut. Clementis. βαπτίζετε δὲ ὑμῶν, καὶ ἐκτρέφετε αὐτὰ ἐν παιδείᾳ καὶ νουθεσίᾳ θεοῦ.

[a] Lib. v. ad Rom. c. 6. Idem Hom. 14. in Lucam, et lib. 8. Hom. 8. in Levitic.
[a] Irenæus. [b] Tertullian. [c] Lib. de Anima, c. 39. et 42.

tom he noted and acknowledged, and hath also, in the preceding discourse, fairly proved. And indeed, (that St. Cyprian[d] may superadd his symbol,) "God, who is no accepter of persons, will also be no accepter of ages. For if to the greatest delinquents, sinning long before against God, remission of sins be given, when afterwards they believe, and from baptism and from grace no man is forbidden; how much more ought not an infant be forbidden, who, being new born, hath sinned nothing, save only that being in the flesh, born of Adam, in his first birth he hath contracted the contagion of an old death! who therefore comes the easier to obtain remission of sins, because to him are forgiven not his own, but the sins of another man. None ought to be driven from baptism and the grace of God, who is merciful, and gentle, and pious unto all; and therefore much less infants, who more deserve our aid, and more need the Divine mercy, because, in the first beginning of their birth, crying and weeping, they can do nothing but call for mercy and relief." "For this reason it was," saith Origen,[e] "that they, to whom the secrets of the Divine mysteries were committed, did baptize their infants, because there were born with them the impurities of sin," which did need material ablution, as a sacrament of spiritual purification. For that it may appear, that our sins have a proper analogy to this sacrament, the body itself is called the "body of sin:" and therefore the washing of the body is not ineffectual towards the great work of pardon and abolition. Indeed, after this ablution there remains concupiscence, or the material part of our misery and sin; for Christ, by his death, only took away that which, when he did die for us, he bare in his own body upon the tree. Now Christ only bare the punishment of our sin, and therefore we shall not die for it; but the material part of the sin Christ bare not: sin could not come so near him; it might make him sick and die, but not disordered and stained. He was pure from original and actual sins; and therefore that remains in the body, though the guilt and punishment be taken off, and changed into advantages and grace; and the actual are relieved by the Spirit of grace descending afterwards upon the church, and sent by our Lord to the same purpose.

33. But it is not rationally to be answered what St. Ambrose says,[f] "Quia omnis peccato obnoxia, ideo omnis ætas sacramento idonea:" for it were strange that sin and misery should seize upon the innocent and most unconsenting persons; and that they only should be left without a sacrament, and an instrument of expiation. And although they cannot consent to the present susception, yet neither do they refuse; and yet they consent as much to the grace of the sacrament as to the prevarication of Adam; and because they suffer under this, it were but reason they should be relieved by that. And "it were better," as Gregory Nazianzen affirms,[g] "that they should be consigned and sanctified without their own knowledge, than to die without their being sanctified;" for so it happened to the circumcised babes of Israel: and if the conspersion and washing the door-posts with the blood of a lamb did sacramentally preserve all the first-born of Goshen; it cannot be thought impossible or unreasonable, that the want of understanding in children should hinder them from the blessing of a sacrament, and from being redeemed and washed with the blood of the Holy Lamb, "who was slain for all from the beginning of the world."

34. After all this, it is not inconsiderable, that we say the church hath great power and authority about the sacraments: which is observable in many instances. She appointed what persons she pleased, and in equal power made an unequal dispensation and ministry. The apostles first dispensed all things, and then they left off exterior ministries to attend to "the word of God and prayer:" and St. Paul accounted it no part of his office to baptize, when he had been separated by imposition of hands at Antioch to the work of preaching and greater ministries; and accounted that act of the church the act of Christ, saying, "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel." They used various forms in the ministration of baptism; sometimes baptizing "in the name of Christ," sometimes expressly invocating the holy and ever-blessed Trinity; one while, "I baptize thee," as in the Latin church, but in the Greek, "Let the servant of Christ be baptized." And, in all ecclesiastical ministries, the church invented the forms, and in most things hath often changed them, as in absolution, excommunication. And sometimes they baptized people under their profession of repentance, and then taught them; as it happened to the gaoler and his family; in whose case there was no explicit faith aforehand in the mysteries of religion, so far as appears; and yet he, and not only he, but all his house, were baptized at that hour of the night when the earthquake was terrible, and the fear was pregnant upon them; and this upon their master's account, as it is likely: but others were baptized in the conditions of a previous faith, and a new-begun repentance.[h] They baptized in rivers or in lavatories, by dipping or by sprinkling: for so we find that St. Laurence did, as he went to martyrdom; and so the church did sometimes to clinics; and so it is highly convenient to be done in northern countries; according to the prophecy of Isaiah,[i] "So shall he sprinkle many nations," according as the typical expiations among the Jews were usually by sprinkling. And it is fairly relative to the mystery, to the "sprinkling with the blood of Christ,"[k] and the watering of the furrows of our souls with the dew of heaven, to make them to bring forth fruit unto the Spirit and unto holiness.[l] The church sometimes dipt the catechumen three times, some-

[d] S. Cyprian, ep. ad Fidum.
[e] Origen, lib. v. ad Rom. c. 6.
[f] S. Ambros. de Abraham. Patriar. lib. ii. c. 11.
[g] Greg. Naz. Κρεῖσσον γὰρ ἀναισθήτως ἁγιασθῆναι, ἢ ἀπελθεῖν ἀσφράγιστα καὶ ἀτέλεστα.—Orat. xl. in S. Bapt.

[h] Non ut delinquere desinant, sed quia desierunt, as Tertul. phraseth it.
[i] Isaiah lii. 15.
[k] 1 Peter i. 2.
[l] Aqua refectionis, et baptismi lavacrum, quo anima sterilis ariditate peccati ad bonos fructus inferendos divinis muneribus irrigatur.—CASSIODOR. m. xxiii. ps. 2.

times but once.[m] Some churches use fire in their baptisms; so do the Ethiopians; and the custom was ancient in some places. And so in the other sacrament: sometimes they stood, and sometimes kneeled; and sometimes received it in the mouth, and sometimes in the hand; one while in leavened, another while in unleavened bread: sometimes the wine and water were mingled, sometimes they were pure; and they admitted some persons to it sometimes, which at other times they rejected: sometimes the consecration was made by one form, sometimes by another: and, to conclude, sometimes it was given to infants, sometimes not. And she had power so to do; for in all things, where there was not a commandment of Christ, expressed or implied in the nature and in the end of the institution, the church had power to alter the particulars as was most expedient, or conducing to edification. And although the after-ages of the church, which refused to communicate infants, have found some little things against the lawfulness, and those ages that used it found out some pretences for its necessity; yet both the one and the other had liberty to follow their own necessities, so in all things they followed Christ. Certainly there is infinitely more reason, why infants may be communicated, than why they may not be baptized. And, that this discourse may revert to its first intention, although there is no record extant of any church in the world, which, from the apostles' days inclusively to this very day, ever refused to baptize their children; yet if they had upon any present reason, they might also change their practice, when the reason should be changed: and therefore, if there were nothing else in it, yet the universal practice of all churches, in all ages, is abundantly sufficient to determine us, and to legitimate the practice, since Christ hath not forbidden it. It is a sufficient confutation to disagreeing people, to use the words of St. Paul, "We have no such custom, nor the churches of God," to suffer children to be strangers from the covenant of promise, till they shall enter into it as Jews or Turks may enter; that is, by choice and disputation. But although this alone, to modest and obedient, that is, to christian spirits, be sufficient; yet this is more than the question did need: it can stand upon its proper foundation.

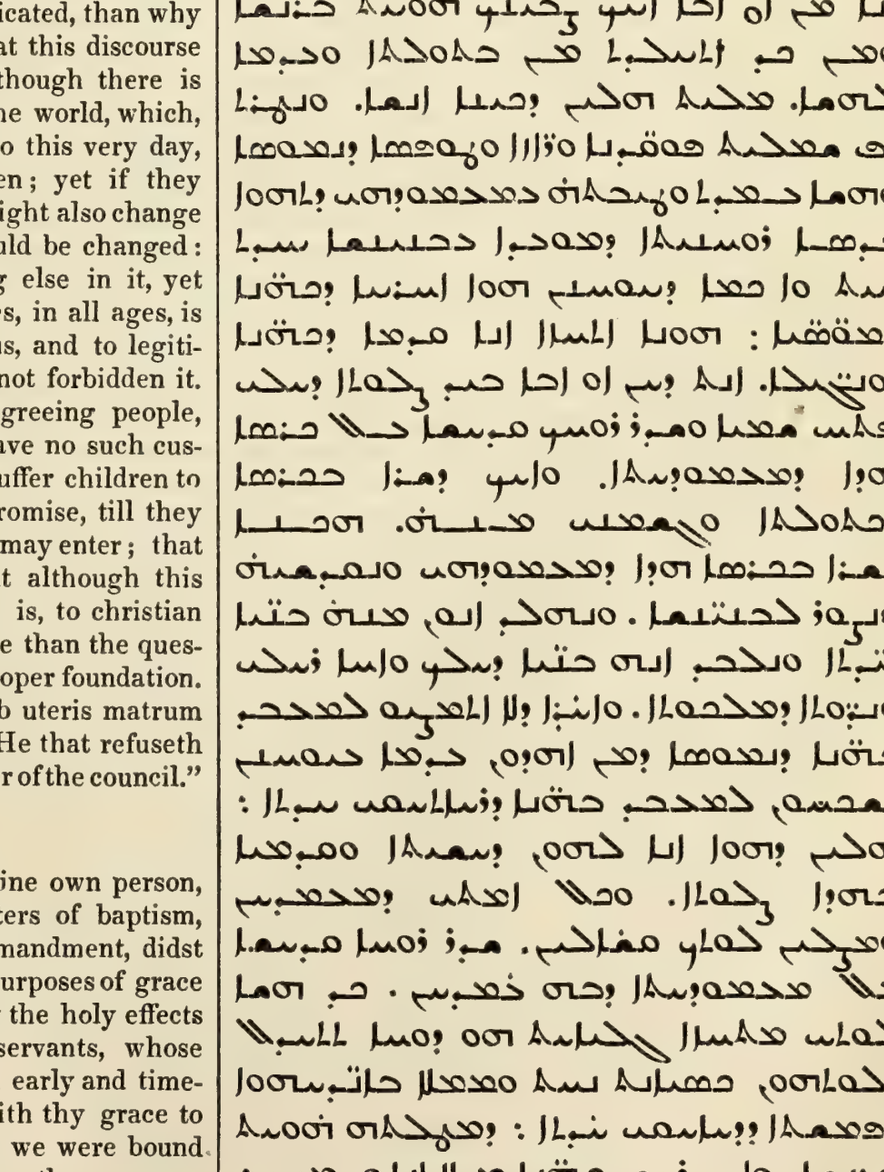
"Quicunque parvulos recentes ab uteris matrum baptizandos negat, anathema esto.[n] He that refuseth to baptize his infants, shall be in danger of the council."

THE PRAYER.

O holy and eternal Jesus, who, in thine own person, wert pleased to sanctify the waters of baptism, and, by thy institution and commandment, didst make them effectual to excellent purposes of grace and remedy; be pleased to verify the holy effects of baptism to me and all thy servants, whose names are dedicated to thee in an early and timely presentation, and enable us with thy grace to verify all our promises, by which we were bound then, when thou didst first make us thy own portion and relatives in the consummation of a holy covenant. O be pleased to pardon all those indecencies and unhandsome interruptions of that state of favour, in which thou didst plant us by thy grace, and admit us by the gates of baptism: and let that Spirit, which moved upon those holy waters, never be absent from us, but call upon us, and invite us, by a perpetual argument and daily solicitations and inducements to holiness; that we may never return to the filthiness of sin, but, by the answer of a good conscience, may please thee, and glorify thy name, and do honour to thy religion and institution in this world, and may receive the blessings and the rewards of it in the world to come, being presented to thee pure and spotless in the day of thy power, when thou shalt lead thy church to a kingdom and endless glories. Amen.

APPENDIX AD SECT. IX. No. 3. OF JESUS BEING BAPTIZED.

Christ's Prayer at his Baptism.[a]



[m] Ἔνιοι ὥτὰ τα τῶν σφραγισαμένων κατεσημήναντο, dixit Heracleon apud Clem. Alex. [n] Conc. Milevit. can. 2.

[a] Hanc orationem transcripsit et transmisit eruditissimus vir, et linguarum Orientalium apprimè gnarus, Dud. Loftus, J. U. D. et Jur. Civil. Prof. publicus in Acad. Dublin. apud Hibernos, professor linguarum Orientalium apud eosdem.

Christ's Prayer at his Baptism.

O Father, according to the good pleasure of thy will, I am made a man; and from the time, in which I was born of a virgin, unto this day, I have finished those things which are agreeing to the nature of man; and, with due observance, have performed all thy commandments, the mysteries and types of the law: and now truly I am baptized; and so have I ordained baptism, that from thence, as from the place of spiritual birth, the regeneration of men may be accomplished: and as John was the last of the legal priests, so am I the first of the evangelical. Thou therefore, O Father, by the mediation of my prayer, open the heavens, and from thence send thy Holy Spirit upon this womb of baptism; that as he did untie the womb of the virgin, and thence form me, so also he would loose this baptismal womb, and so sanctify it unto men, that from thence new men may be begotten, who may become thy sons, and my brethren, and heirs of thy kingdom. And what the priests under the law, until John, could not do, grant unto the priests of the New Testament, (whose chief I am in the oblation of this prayer,) that whensoever they shall celebrate baptism, or pour forth prayers unto thee, as the Holy Spirit is seen with me in open vision, so also it may be made manifest, that the same Spirit will adjoin himself in their society a more secret way, and will by them perform the ministries of the New Testament, for which I am made a man; and as the high priest, I do offer these prayers in thy sight.

This prayer was transcribed out of the Syriac Catena, upon the third chapter of St. Luke's Gospel, and is, by the author of that Catena, reported to have been made by our blessed Saviour immediately before the opening of the heavens at his baptism: and that the Holy Spirit did descend upon him while he was thus praying: and for it he cites the authority of St. Philoxenus. I cannot but foresee, that there is one clause in it, which will be used as an objection against the authority of this prayer; viz. "as John was the last of the legal priests;" for he was no priest at all, nor ever officiated in the temple, or at the Mosaic rites. But this is nothing: because, that the Baptist was of the family of the priests, his father Zachary is a demonstration; that he did not officiate, his being employed in another ministry is a sufficient answer; that he was the last of the priests is to be understood in this sense, that he was the period of the law, the common term between the law and the gospel: by him the gospel was first preached solemnly, and therefore in him the law first ended. And as he was the last of the prophets, so he was the last of the priests: not but that, after him, many had the gift of prophecy, and some did officiate in the Mosaical priesthood; but that his office put the first period to the solemnity of Moses's law; that is, at him the dispensation evangelical did first enter.

That the ministers of the gospel are here called priests, ought not to be a prejudice against this prayer in the persuasions of any men; because it was usual with our blessed Saviour to retain the words of the Jews, his countrymen, before whom he spake, that they might, by words to which they were used, be instructed in the notice of persons and things, offices and ministries evangelical, which afterwards were to be represented under other, that is, under their proper names.

And now all that I shall say of it is this: 1. That it is not unlikely but our blessed Saviour prayed, when he was baptized, and when the Holy Ghost descended upon him; not only because it was an employment symbolical to the grace he was to receive, but also to become to us a precedent by what means we are to receive the Holy Spirit of God. 2. That it is very likely our blessed Lord would consecrate the waters of baptism to those mysterious ends whither he designed them, as well as the bread and chalice of the holy supper. 3. That it is most likely the Easterlings did preserve a record of many words and actions of the holy Jesus, which are not transmitted to us. 4. It is certain that our blessed Lord did do and say many more things than are in the holy Scriptures; and that this was one of them, we have the credit of this ancient author, and the authority of St. Philoxenus. However, it is much better to make such good use of it as the matter and piety of the prayer will minister, than to quarrel at it by the imperfection of uncertain conjectures.

THE

HISTORY

OF

THE LIFE AND DEATH

OF THE

HOLY JESUS.

PART II.

BEGINNING AT THE TIME OF HIS FIRST MIRACLE, UNTIL THE SECOND YEAR OF HIS PREACHING.

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE AND EXCELLENT LADY,

THE

LADY MARY,

COUNTESS DOWAGER OF NORTHAMPTON.

I AM now to present to your Honour part of that production, of which your great love to sanctity was parent; and which was partly designed to satisfy those great appetites to virtue, which have made you hugely apprehensive and forward to entertain any instrument, whereby you may grow and increase in the service of God, and the communion and charities of holy people. Your Honour best knows, in what soil the first design of these papers grew; and, but that the excellent personage who was their first root, is transplanted for a time, that he might not have his righteous soul vexed with the impurer conversation of ill-minded men, I am confident you would have received the fruits of his abode to more excellent purposes. But because he was pleased to leave the managing of this to me, I hope your Honour will, for his sake, entertain what that rare person "conceived," though I was left to the pains and danger of "bringing forth;" and that it may dwell with you for its first relation, rather than be rejected for its appendant imperfections, which it contracted not in the fountain, but in the channels of its progress and emanation. Madam, I shall beg of God that your Honour may receive as great increment of piety and ghostly strength in the reading this book, as I receive honour if you shall be pleased to accept and own this as a confession of your great worthiness, and a testimony of the service, which ought to be paid to your Honour, by,

MADAM,

Your Honour's most humble

And most obliged Servant,

JER. TAYLOR.

PART II.

BEGINNING AT THE TIME OF HIS FIRST MIRACLE, UNTIL THE SECOND YEAR OF HIS PREACHING.

SECTION X.

Of the first Manifestation of Jesus, by the Testimony of John, and a Miracle.

1. AFTER that the Baptist, by a sign from heaven, was confirmed in spirit and understanding that Jesus was the Messias, he immediately published to the Jews what God had manifested to him; and first to the priests and Levites, sent in legation from the sanhedrim, he professed indefinitely, in answer to their question, that himself was "not the Christ, nor Elias, nor that Prophet," whom they, by a special tradition, did expect to be revealed, they knew not when. And concerning himself definitely he said nothing, but that he was "the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord." He it was who was then "amongst them," but "not known," a person of great dignity, to whom the Baptist was "not worthy" to do the office of the lowest ministry, "who, coming after John, was preferred far before him,"[a] who was to increase,[b] and the Baptist was to decrease, who did "baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire."[c]

2. This was the character of his personal prerogatives; but as yet no demonstration was made of his person, till after the descent of the Holy Ghost upon Jesus, and then whenever the Baptist saw Jesus, he points him out with his finger, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world; this is he."[d] Then he shows him to Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, with the same designation, and to another disciple with him, "who both followed Jesus, and abode with him all night:"[e] Andrew brings his brother Simon with him, and then Christ changes his name from Simon to Peter, or Cephas, which signifies a stone. Then Jesus himself finds out Philip of Bethsaida, and bade him follow him; and Philip finds out Nathanael, and calls him to see. Thus persons bred in a dark cell, upon their first ascent to the chambers of light, all run staring upon the beauties of the sun, and call the partners of their darkness to communicate in their new and stranger revelation.

3. When Nathanael was come to Jesus, Christ saw his heart, and gave him a testimony to be truly honest, and full of holy simplicity, "a true Israelite, without guile." And Nathanael, being overjoyed that he had found the Messias, believing out of love, and loving by reason of his joy, and no suspicion, took that for a proof and verification of his person, which was very insufficient to confirm a doubt, or ratify a probability: but so we believe a story which we love, taking probabilities for demonstrations, and casual accidents for probabilities, and any thing creates vehement presumptions; in which cases our guides are not our knowing faculties, but our affections; and if they be holy, God guides them into the right persuasions, as he does little birds to make rare nests, though they understand not the mystery of operation, nor the design and purpose of the action.

4. But Jesus took his will and forwardness of affections in so good part, that he promised him greater things; and this gave occasion to the first prophecy which was made by Jesus. For "Jesus said unto him, Because I said I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou? Thou shalt see greater things than these:" and then he prophesied, that he should see "heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." But, being a doctor of the law, Christ chose him not at all to the college of apostles.[f]

5. Much about the same time, there happened to be a marriage in Cana of Galilee, in the vicinage of his dwelling, where John the evangelist is, by some, supposed to have been the bridegroom; (but of this there is no certainty;) and thither Jesus being, with his mother, invited, he went to do civility to the persons espoused, and to do honour to the holy rite of marriage. The persons then married were but of indifferent fortunes, richer in love of neighbours than in the fulness of rich possessions; they had more company than wine. For the master of the feast (whom, according to the order and piety of the nation, they chose from the order of priests, to be the president of the feast,[g] by the reverence of his person to restrain all inordination, by his discretion to govern and order the circumstances, by his religious knowledge to direct the solemnities of marriage, and to retain all the persons and actions in the bounds of prudence and modesty) complained to the bridegroom that the guests wanted wine.

6. As soon as the holy Virgin-mother had notice of the want, out of charity, that uses to be employed in supplying even the minutest and smallest articles of necessity, as well as the clamorous importunity of extremities and great indigences, she complained to her son by an indefinite address; not desiring him

[a] John i. 15, 20, 21, 23, 26, 27, 30. [b] John iii. 30.
[c] Matt. iii. 11. [d] John i. 29, 36. [e] John i. 37, 39.
[f] S. Aug. tra. xvii. c. 1. in Joan.
[g] Hujusmodi fuerunt modesta illa Sertorii convivia quæ descripsit Plutarchus.—GAUDENT. Brixian.

Δεῖπνα πολλὴν ἔχοντα αἰδῶ καὶ κόσμον· οὐδὲ ὁρᾶν τι τῶν αἰσχρῶν ὄντε ἀκούειν ὑπομένοντος· ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς συνόντας ἐυτάκτοις καὶ ἀνυβρίστοις παιδείαις χρῆσθαι καὶ φιλοφροσύναις ἐθίζοντος.—PLUT. in Sertor.

to make supply, for she knew not how he should; but either, out of an habitual commiseration, she complained without hoping for remedy, or else she looked on him, who was the fountain of holiness and of plenty, as expecting a derivation from him, either of discourses or miracles. But "Jesus answered her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come." By this answer intending no denial to the purpose of his mother's intimation, to whom he always bore a religious and pious reverence; but to signify, that he was not yet entered into his period and years of miracles; and when he did, it must be not for respect of kindred or civil relations, but as it is a derivation of power from above, so it must be in pursuit of that service and design, which he had received in charge together with his power.

7. And so his mother understood him, giving express charge to the ministers to do whatsoever he commanded. Jesus, therefore, bade them "fill the water-pots," which stood there for the use of frequent washings, which the Jews did use in all public meetings, for fear of touching pollutions, or contracting legal impurities: which they did with a curiousness next to superstition, washing the very beds and tables used at their feasts. The ministers "filled them to the brim;" and, as they were commanded, "drew out, and bare unto the governor of the feast," who "knew not of it," till the miracle grew public, and like light, showed itself; for while they wondered at the economy of that feast, in "keeping the best wine till the last," it grew apparent, that he who was the Lord of the creatures, who, in their first seeds, have an obediential capacity to receive the impresses of what forms he pleases to imprint, could give new natures and produce new qualities in that subject, in which he chooses to glorify his Son.

8. "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee." For all those miracles, which are reported to be done by Christ in his infancy, and interval of his younger years, are apocryphal and spurious, feigned by trifling understandings, (who think to serve God with a well-meant lie,) and promoted by the credulity of such persons, in whose hearts easiness, folly, and credulity are bound up, and tied fast with silken thread, and easy softnesses of religious affections, not made severe by the rigours of wisdom and experience. This first miracle "manifested his glory, and his disciples believed in him."

Ad SECTION X.

Considerations touching the Vocation of five Disciples, and of the first miracle of Jesus, done at Cana in Galilee.

1. As soon as ever John the Baptist was taught, by the descent of the Holy Spirit, that this was Jesus, he instantly preaches him to all that came near him. For the Holy Ghost was his commission and instruction; and now he was a minister evangelical, and taught all those that have the honour to be servants in so sacred employment, that they must not go till they be sent, nor speak till they be instructed, nor yet hold their peace when their commission is signed by the consignation of the Spirit in ordinary ministry. For "all power and all wisdom is from above," and in spiritual ministrations is a direct emanation from the Holy Spirit: that as no man is fit to speak the mysteries of godliness, be his person never so holy, unless he derive wisdom in order to such ministries; so, be he never so instructed by the assistance of art or infused knowledge, yet, unless he also have derived power as well as skill, authority as well as knowledge, from the same Spirit, he is not enabled to minister in public in ordinary ministrations. The Baptist was sent by a prime designation, "to prepare the way to Jesus," and was instructed be the same Spirit, which had sanctified or consecrated him in his mother's womb to this holy purpose.

2. When the Baptist had showed Jesus to Andrew and another disciple, they immediately followed him, with the distances and fears of the first approach, and the infirmities of new converts; but Jesus seeing them follow their first light, invited them to see the Sun: for God loves to cherish infants in grace; and having sown the immortal seed in their hearts, if it takes root downwards, and springs out into the verdure of a leaf, he still waters it with the gentle rain of the Holy Spirit, in graces and new assistances, till it brings forth the fruits of a holy conversation. And God, who knows that infants have need of pleasant, and gentle, and frequent nutriment, hath given to them this comfort, that himself will take care of their first beginnings, and improve them to the strength of men, and give them the strengths of nature, and the wisdom of the Spirit, which ennoble men to excellencies and perfections. By the preaching of the Baptist they were brought to seek for Christ: and when they did, Christ found them, and brought them home, and made them "stay all night with him;" which was more favour than they looked for. For so God usually dispenses his mercies, that they may run over our thoughts and expectations, and they are given in no proportion to us, but according to God's measures; he considering not what we are worthy of, but what is fit for him to give; he only requiring of us capacities to receive his favour, and fair reception and entertainment of his graces.

3. When Andrew had found Jesus, he calls his brother Simon to be partaker of his joys, which (as it happens in accidents of greatest pleasure) cannot be contained within the limits of the possessor's thoughts. But this calling of Peter was not to a beholding, but to a participation of his felicities; for he is strangely covetous, who would enjoy the sun, or the air, or the sea, alone: here was treasure for him and all the world; and, by lighting his brother Simon's taper, he made his own light the greater and more glorious. And this is the nature of grace, to be diffusive of its own excellencies; for here no envy can inhabit: the proper and personal ends of holy persons, in the contract and

transmissions of grace, are increased by the participation and communion of others. For our prayers are more effectual, our aids increased, our encouragement and examples more prevalent, God more honoured, and the rewards of glory have accidental advantages, by the superaddition of every new saint and beatified person: the members of the mystical body, when they have received nutriment from God and his holy Son, supplying to each other the same which themselves received, and live on, in the communion of saints. Every new star gilds the firmament, and increases its first glories: and those who are instruments of the conversion of others, shall not only introduce new beauties, but when themselves "shine like the stars in glory," they shall have some reflections from the light of others, to whose fixing in the orb of heaven themselves have been instrumental. And this consideration is not only of use in the exaltations of the dignity apostolical and clerical, but for the enkindling even of private charities; who may do well to promote others' interests of piety, in which themselves also have some concernment.

4. These disciples asked of Christ where he dwelt: Jesus answered, "Come and see." It was an answer very expressive of our duty in this instance. It is not enough for us to understand where Christ inhabits, or where he is to be found; for our understandings may follow him afar off, and we receive no satisfaction unless it be to curiosity; but we must go where he is, eat of his meat, wash in his lavatory, rest on his beds, and dwell with him: for the holy Jesus hath no kind influence upon those who stand at distance, save only the affections of a loadstone, apt to draw them nigher, that he may transmit his virtues by union and confederations; but if they persist in a sullen distance, they shall learn his glories, as Dives understood the peace of Lazarus, of which he was never to participate. Although "the Son of man hath not where to lay his head," yet he hath many houses where to convey his graces; he hath nothing to cover his own, but he hath enough to sanctify ours: and as he dwelt in such houses which the charity of good people then afforded for his entertainment; so now he loves to abide in places, which the religion of his servants hath avowed to his honour, and the advantages of evangelical ministrations. Thither we must come to him, or anywhere else where we may enjoy him: he is to be found in a church, in his ordinances, in the communion of saints, in every religious duty, in the heart of every holy person; and if we go to him by the addresses of religion in holy places, by the ministry of holy rites, by charity, by the adherences of faith, and hope, and other combining graces, the graces of union and society, or prepare a lodging for him within us, that he may come to us, then shall we see such glories and interior beauties, which none know, but they that dwell with him. The secrets of spiritual benediction are understood only by them, to whom they are conveyed, even by the children of his house.[a] "Come and see."

[a] Secreta mea mihi et filiis domûs meæ.—CLEM. ALEX. Str.

5. St. Andrew was first called, and that by Christ immediately; his brother Simon next, and that by Andrew; but yet Jesus changed Simon's name, and not the other's; and by this change designed him to an eminency of office, at least in signification, principally above his brother, or else separately and distinctly from him: to show that these graces and favours, which do not immediately co-operate to eternity, but are gifts and offices, or impresses of authority, are given to men irregularly, and without any order of predisponent causes, or probabilities on our part, but are issues of absolute predestination; and as they have efficacy from those reasons which God conceals, so they have some purposes as concealed as their causes; only if God pleases to make us vessels of fair employment and of great capacity, we shall bear a greater burden, and are bound to glorify God with special offices. But as these exterior and ineffective graces are given upon the same good will of God, which made this matter to be a human body, when, if God had so pleased, it was capable of being made a fungus or a sponge; so they are given to us with the same intentions as are our souls, that we might glorify God in the distinct capacity of grace, as before of a reasonable nature. And, besides that it teaches us to magnify God's free mercy, so it removes every such exalted person from being an object of envy to others, or from pleasing himself in vainer opinions: for God hath made him of such an employment, as freely and voluntarily as he hath made him a man, and he no more co-operated to this grace than to his own creation, and may as well admire himself for being born in Italy, or from rich parents, or for having two hands or two feet, as for having received such a designation extraordinary. But these things are never instruments of reputation among severe understandings, and never but in the sottish and unmanly apprehensions of the vulgar. Only this, when God hath imprinted an authority upon a person, although the man hath nothing to please himself withal but God's grace, yet others are to pay the duty, which that impression demands; which duty, because it rapports to God, and touches not the man, but as it passes through him to the fountain of authority and grace, it extinguishes all pretences of opinion and pride.

6. When Jesus espied Nathanael (who also had been called by the first disciples) coming towards him, he gave him an excellent character, calling him "a true Israelite, in whom was no guile," and admitted him amongst the first disciples of the institution; by this character in one of the first of his scholars hallowing simplicity of spirit, and receiving it into his discipline, that it might now become a virtue and duty evangelical. For although it concerns us, as a christian duty, to be prudent, yet the prudence of christianity is a duty of spiritual effect, and in instances of religion with no other purposes than to avoid giving offence to those, that are without and within; that we cause no disreputation to christianity; that we do nothing that may encourage enemies to the religion; and that those that are within the communion and obedience of the church, may not suffer as great inconveniences by the in-

discreet conduct of religious actions, as by direct temptations to a sin. These are the purposes of private prudence, to which, in a greater measure, and upon more variety of rules, the governors of churches are obliged. But that which christian simplicity prohibits, is the mixing arts and unhandsome means for the purchase of our ends; witty counsels that are underminings of our neighbour, destroying his just interest to serve our own; stratagems to deceive, indefinite and insignificant answers, with fraudulent design; unjust and unlawful concealment of our purposes; fallacious promises and false pretences; flattery, and unjust, and unreasonable praise; saying one thing and meaning the contrary; pretending religion to secular designs; breaking faith; taking false oaths; and such other instruments of human purposes framed by the devil, and sent into the world to be perfected by man. Christian simplicity speaks nothing but its thoughts; and when it concerns prudence that a thought or purpose should be concealed, it concerns simplicity that silence be its cover, and not a false vizor; it rather suffers inconvenience than a lie; it destroys no man's right, though it be inconsistent with my advantages; it reproves freely, palliates no man's wickedness; it intends what it ought, and does what is bidden; and uses courses regular and just, sneaks not in corners, and walks always in the eye of God and the face of the world.

7. Jesus told Nathanael that he knew him, when he saw him "under the fig-tree;" and Nathanael took that to be probation sufficient that he was the Messias, and believed rightly upon an insufficient motive: which, because Jesus did accept, it gives testimony to us, that however faith be produced, by means regular, or by arguments incompetent, whether it be proved or not proved, whether by chance or deliberation, whether wisely or by occasion, so that faith be produced by the instrument, and love by faith, God's work is done, and so is ours. For if St. Paul rejoiced that Christ was preached, though by the envy of peevish persons; certainly God will not reject an excellent product, because it came from a weak and sickly parent: and he that brings good out of evil, and rejoices in that good, having first triumphed upon the evil, will certainly take delight in the faith of the most ignorant persons, which his own grace hath produced out of innocent, though insufficient, beginnings. It was folly in Naaman to refuse to be cured, because he was to recover only by washing in Jordan. The more incompetent the means is, the greater is the glory of God, who hath produced waters from a rock, and fire from the collision of a sponge and wool; and it is certain, the end, unless it be in products merely natural, does not take its estimate and degrees from the external means. Grace does miracles, and the productions of the Spirit in respect of its instruments are equivocal, extraordinary, and supernatural; and ignorant persons believe as strongly, though they know not why, and love God as heartily, as greater spirits and more excellent understandings: and when God pleases, or if he sees it expedient, he will do to others as to Nathanael, give them greater arguments and better instruments for the confirmation and heightening of their faith, than they had for the first production.

8. When Jesus had chosen these few disciples to be witnesses of succeeding accidents, every one of which was to be a probation of his mission and divinity, he entered into the theatre of the world at a marriage feast, which he now first hallowed to a sacramental signification, and made to become mysterious: he now began to choose his spouse out from the communities of the world, and did mean to endear her by unions ineffable and glorious, and consign the sacrament by his blood, which he first gave in a secret representment, and afterwards in letter and apparent effusion. And although the holy Jesus did in his own person consecrate celibate, and abstinence, and chastity in his mother's; yet, by his presence, he also hallowed marriage, and made it honourable, not only in civil account and the rites of heraldry, but in a spiritual sense, he having new sublimed it by making it a sacramental representment of the union of Christ and his spouse, the church. And all married persons should do well to remember what the conjugal society does represent, and not break the matrimonial bond, which is a mysterious ligament of Christ and his church; for whoever dissolves the sacredness of the mystery, and unhallows the vow by violence and impurity, he dissolves his relation to Christ. To break faith with a wife or husband is a divorce from Jesus, and that is a separation from all possibilities of felicity. In the time of the Mosaical statutes, to violate marriage was to do injustice and dishonour, and a breach to the sanctions of nature, or the first constitutions: but two bands more are added in the gospel, to make marriage more sacred. For now our bodies are made "temples of the Holy Ghost," and the rite of marriage is made significant and sacramental, and every act of adultery is profanation and irreligion; it desecrates a temple, and deflours a mystery.

9. The married pair were holy but poor, and they wanted wine; and the blessed Virgin-mother, pitying the affront of the young man, complained to Jesus of the want; and Jesus gave her an answer, which promised no satisfaction to her purposes. For now that Jesus had lived thirty years, and done in person nothing answerable to his glorious birth, and the miraculous accidents of his person, she longed till the time came, in which he was to manifest himself by actions as miraculous as the star of his birth: she knew, by the rejecting of his trade, and his going abroad, and probably by his own discourse to her, that the time was near; and the forwardness of her love and holy desires possibly might go some minutes before his own precise limit. However, Jesus answered to this purpose, to show, that the work he was to do, was done not to satisfy her importunity, which is not occasion enough for a miracle, but to prosecute the great work of Divine designation. For, in works spiritual and religious, all exterior relation ceases. The world's order, and the manner of our nature, and the infirmities of our person, have produced societies, and they have been the parents of relation; and God hath tied them

fast by the knots of duty, and made the duty the occasion and opportunities of reward: but in actions spiritual, in which we relate to God, our relations are founded upon the Spirit, and therefore we must do our duties upon considerations separate and spiritual, but never suffer temporal relations to impede our religious duties. Christian charity is a higher thing than to be confined within the terms of dependence and correlation,[b] and those endearments, which leagues, or nature, or society have made, pass into spiritual, and, like stars in the presence of the sun, appear not, when the heights of the Spirit are in place. Where duty hath prepared special instances, there we must, for religion's sake, promote them; but, even to our parents or our children, the charities of religion ought to be greater than the affections of society: and though we are bound, in all offices exterior, to prefer our relatives before others, because that is made a duty; yet to purposes spiritual, all persons eminently holy put on the efficacy of the same relations, and pass a duty upon us of religious affections.

10. At the command of Jesus the water-pots were filled with water, and the water was, by his Divine power, turned into wine; where the different economy of God and the world is highly observable. "Every man sets forth good wine at first, and then the worse;" but God not only turns the water into wine, but into such wine, that the last draught is most pleasant. The world presents us with fair language, promising hopes, convenient fortunes, pompous honours, and these are the outsides of the bole; but when it is swallowed, these dissolve in the instant, and there remains bitterness, and the malignity of coloquinteda. Every sin smiles in the first address, and carries light in the face, and honey in the lip; but "when we have well drunk, then comes that which is worse," a whip with six strings, fears and terrors of conscience, and shame and displeasure, and a caitive disposition, and diffidence in the day of death. But when, after the manner of the purifying of the christians, we fill our water-pots with water, watering our couch with our tears, and moistening our cheeks with the perpetual distillations of repentance; then Christ turns our water into wine; first penitents, and then communicants; first waters of sorrow, and then the wine of the chalice; first the justifications of correction, and then the sanctifications of the sacrament, and the effects of the Divine power, joy, and peace, and serenity, hopes full of confidence, and confidence without shame, and boldness without presumption: for "Jesus keeps the best wine till the last;" not only because of the direct reservations of the highest joys till the nearer approaches of glory, but also because our relishes are higher after a long fruition than at the first essays; such being the nature of grace, that it increases in relish as it does in fruition, every part of grace being new duty and new reward.

[b] Συγγένεια γὰρ οἰκειοτέρα ἡ πρὸς δίκαιοσύνην καὶ πᾶσαν ἄλλην ἀρετὴν ὁμιλία.—PHILO in Exposit. General.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal and ever-blessed Jesu, who didst choose disciples to be witnesses of thy life and miracles, so adopting man into a participation of thy great employment of bringing us to heaven by the means of a holy doctrine; be pleased to give me thy grace, that I may love and revere their persons, whom thou hast set over me, and follow their faith, and imitate their lives, while they imitate thee; and that I also, in my capacity and proportion, may do some of the meaner offices of spiritual building, by prayers, and by holy discourses, and fraternal correption, and friendly exhortations, doing advantages to such souls with whom I shall converse. And since thou wert pleased to enter upon the stage of the world with the commencement of mercy and a miracle, be pleased to visit my soul with thy miraculous grace, turn my water into wine, my natural desires into supernatural perfections, and let my sorrows be turned into joys, my sins into virtuous habits, the weaknesses of humanity into communications of the Divine nature; that since thou "keepest the best unto the last," I may, by thy assistance, grow from grace to grace, till thy gifts be turned to reward, and thy graces to participation of thy glory, O eternal and ever-blessed Jesu. Amen.

DISCOURSE VII.

Of Faith.

1. NATHANAEL'S faith was produced by an argument not demonstrative, not certainly concluding; Christ knew him when he saw him first, and he believed him to be the Messias: his faith was excellent, whatever the argument was. And I believe a God, because the sun is a glorious body; or because of the variety of plants, or the fabric and rare contexture of a man's eye: I may as fully assent to the conclusion, as if my belief dwelt upon the demonstrations made by the prince of philosophers in the eighth of his physics and twelfth of his metaphysics. This I premise as an inlet into the consideration concerning the faith of ignorant persons. For if we consider, upon what easy terms most of us now are christians, we may possibly suspect that either faith hath but little excellence in it, or we but little faith, or that we are mistaken generally in its definition. For we are born of christian parents, made christians at ten days old, interrogated concerning the articles of our faith by way of anticipation, even then when we understand not the difference between the sun and a tallow-candle: from thence we are taught to say our catechism, as we are taught to speak, when we have no reason to judge, no discourse to discern, no arguments to contest against a proposition, in case we be catechized into false doctrine; and all that

is put to us we believe infinitely, and without choice, as children use not to choose their language. And as our children are made christians, just so are thousand others made Mahometans, with the same necessity, the same facility. So that, thus far, there is little thanks due to us for believing the christian creed; it was indifferent to us at first, and at last our education had so possessed us, and our interest, and our no temptation to the contrary, that as we were disposed into this condition by Providence, so we remain in it without praise or excellence. For as our beginnings are inevitable, so our progress is imperfect and insufficient; and what we begun by education, we retain only by custom: and if we be instructed in some slighter arguments to maintain the sect or faction of our country-religion, as it disturbs the unity of christendom; yet, if we examine and consider the account, upon what slight arguments we have taken up christianity itself, (as that it is the religion of our country, or that our fathers before us were of the same faith, or because the priest bids us, and he is a good man, or for something else, but we know not what,) we must needs conclude it the good providence of God, not our choice, that made us christians.

2. But if the question be, Whether such a faith be in itself good and acceptable, that relies upon insufficient and unconvincing grounds? I suppose this case of Nathanael will determine us: and when we consider that faith is an infused grace, if God pleases to behold his own glory in our weakness of understanding, it is but the same thing he does in the instances of his other graces. For as God enkindles charity upon variety of means and instruments, by a thought, by a chance, by a text of Scripture, by a natural tenderness, by the sight of a dying or a tormented beast; so also he may produce faith by arguments of a different quality, and by issues of his providence he may engage us in such conditions, in which, as our understanding is not great enough to choose the best, so neither is it furnished with powers to reject any proposition; and to believe well is an effect of a singular predestination, and is a gift in order to a grace, as that grace is in order to salvation. But the insufficiency of an argument, or disability to prove our religion, is so far from disabling the goodness of an ignorant man's faith, that as it may be as strong as the faith of the greatest scholar, so it hath full as much excellence, not of nature, but in order to Divine acceptance. For as he who believes upon the only stock of education, made no election of his faith; so he who believes what is demonstrably proved, is forced by the demonstration to his choice. Neither of them did choose, and both of them may equally love the article.

3. So that since a small argument in a weak understanding, does the same work that a strong argument in a more sober and learned, that is, it convinces and makes faith, and yet neither of them is matter of choice; if the thing believed be good, and matter of duty or necessity, the faith is not rejected by God upon the weakness of the first, nor accepted upon the strength of the latter principles; when we are once in, it will not be inquired by what entrance we passed thither; whether God leads us or drives us in, whether we come by discourse or by inspiration, by the guide of an angel or the conduct of Moses, whether we be born or made christians, it is indifferent, so we be there, where we should be; for this is but the gate of duty, and the entrance to felicity. For thus far faith is but an act of the understanding, which is a natural faculty, serving indeed as an instrument to godliness, but of itself no part of it; and it is just like fire producing its act inevitably, and burning as long as it can, without power to interrupt or suspend its action; and therefore we cannot be more pleasing to God for understanding rightly, than the fire is for burning clearly: which puts us evidently upon this consideration, that christian faith, that glorious duty, which gives to christians a great degree of approximation to God by Jesus Christ, must have a great proportion of that ingredient, which makes actions good or bad, that is, of choice and effect.

4. For the faith of a christian hath more in it of the will than of the understanding. Faith is that great mark of distinction, which separates and gives formality to the covenant of the gospel, which is a "law of faith." The faith of a christian is his religion, that is, it is that whole conformity to the institution or discipline of Jesus Christ, which distinguishes him from the believers of false religions. And to be one of the faithful signifies the same with being a disciple; and that contains obedience as well as believing. For to the same sense are all those appellatives in Scripture, "the faithful, brethren, believers, the saints, disciples," all representing the duty of a christian. A believer and a saint, or a holy person, is the same thing; brethren signifies charity, and believers, faith in the intellectual sense: the faithful and disciples signify both; for besides the consent to the proposition, the first of them is also used for perseverance and sanctity, and the greatest of charity mixed with a confident faith up to the height of martyrdom. "Be faithful unto the death, (said the Holy Spirit,) and I will give thee the crown of life."[a] And when the apostles, by way of abbreviation, express all the body of christian religion, they call it "faith working by love;"[b] which also St. Paul, in a parallel place, calls a "new creature;"[c] it is "a keeping of the commandments of God:"[d] that is the faith of a christian, into whose definition charity is ingredient, whose sense is the same with keeping of God's commandments; so that if we define faith, we must first distinguish it. The faith of a natural person, or the faith of devils, is a mere believing a certain number of propositions upon conviction of the understanding; but the faith of a christian, the faith that justifies and saves him, is "faith working by charity," or "faith keeping the commandments of God."[e] They are distinct faiths, in order to different ends, and therefore of different constitution; and the instrument of distinction is charity or obedience.

5. And this great truth is clear in the perpetual testimony of holy Scripture. For Abraham is called

[a] Rev. ii. 10. [b] Gal. v. 6. [c] Gal. vi. 15. [d] 1 Cor. vii. 19. [e] Gal. v. 6.

the "father of the faithful;" and yet our blessed Saviour told the Jews, that if they had been "the sons of Abraham, they would have done the works of Abraham;"[f] and therefore good works are, by the apostle, called the "footsteps of the faith of our father Abraham."[g] For faith, in every of its stages, at its first beginning, at its increment, at its greatest perfection, is a duty made up of the concurrence of the will and the understanding, when it pretends to the Divine acceptance; faith and repentance begin the christian course. "Repent and believe the gospel," was the sum of the apostle's sermons; and all the way after it is, "faith working by love." Repentance puts the first spirit and life into faith, and charity preserves it, and gives it nourishment and increase; itself also growing by a mutual supply of spirits and nutriment from faith. Whoever does heartily believe a resurrection and life eternal, upon certain conditions, will certainly endeavour to acquire the promises, by the purchase of obedience and observation of the conditions. For it is not in the nature or power of man directly to despise and reject so infinite a good: so that faith supplies charity with argument and maintenance, and charity supplies faith with life and motion; faith makes charity reasonable, and charity makes faith living and effectual. And therefore, the old Greeks called faith and charity a miraculous chariot or yoke,[h] they bear the burden of the Lord with an equal confederation: these are like Hippocrates's twins, they live and die together. Indeed faith is the first born of the twins; but they must come both at a birth, or else they die, being strangled at the gates of the womb. But if charity, like Jacob, lays hold upon his elder brother's heel, it makes a timely and a prosperous birth, and gives certain title to the eternal promises. For let us give the right of primogeniture to faith, yet the blessing, yea, and the inheritance too, will at last fall to charity. Not that faith is disinherited, but that charity only enters into the possession. The nature of faith passes into the excellency of charity before they can be rewarded; and that both may have their estimate, that which justifies and saves us, keeps the name of faith, but doth not do the deed till it hath the nature of charity. For to think well, or to have a good opinion, or an excellent or a fortunate understanding, entitles us not to the love of God, and the consequent inheritance;[i] but to choose the ways of the Spirit, and to relinquish the paths of darkness, this is the way of the kingdom, and the purpose of the gospel, and the proper work of faith.

6. And if we consider upon what stock faith itself is instrumental and operative of salvation, we shall find it is, in itself, acceptable, because it is a duty, and commanded; and therefore it is an act of obedience, a work of the gospel, a submitting the understanding, a denying the affections, a laying aside all interests, and a bringing our thoughts under the obedience of Christ. This the apostle calls "the obedience of faith."[k] And it is of the same condition and constitution with other graces, all which equally relate to Christ, and are as firm instruments of union, and are washed by the blood of Christ, and are sanctified by his death, and apprehend him in their capacity and degrees, some higher, and some not so high; but hope and charity apprehend Christ in a measure and proportion greater than faith, when it distinguishes from them. So that if faith does the work of justification, as it is a mere relation to Christ, then so also does hope and charity; or if these are duties and good works, so also is faith: and they all being alike commanded in order to the same end, and encouraged by the same reward, are also accepted upon the same stock, which is, that they are acts of obedience and relation too; they obey Christ, and lay hold upon Christ's merits, and are but several instances of the great duty of a christian, but the actions of several faculties of the new creature. But because faith is the beginning of grace, and hath influence and causality in the production of the other, therefore all the other, as they are united in duty, are also united in their title and appellative; they are all called by the name of faith, because they are parts of faith, as faith is taken in the larger sense; and when it is taken in the strictest and distinguishing sense, they are effects and proper products by way of natural emanation.

7. That a good life is the genuine and true-born issue of faith, no man questions, that knows himself the disciple of the holy Jesus; but that obedience is the same thing with faith,[l] and that all christian graces are parts of its bulk and constitution, is also the doctrine of the Holy Ghost, and the grammar of Scripture, making faith and obedience to be terms coincident and expressive of each other. For faith is not a single star, but a constellation, a chain of graces, called by St. Paul, "the power of God unto salvation to every believer;"[m] that is, faith is all that great instrument, by which God intends to bring us to heaven: and he gives this reason, "In the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith;" for "it is written, The just shall live by faith." Which discourse makes faith to be a course of sanctity and holy habits, a continuation of a christian's duty, such a duty as not only gives the first breath, but by which a man lives the life of grace. "The just shall live by faith;" that is, such a faith as grows from step to step, till the whole righteousness of God be fulfilled in it. "From faith to faith" (saith the apostle); which St. Austin expounds, from faith believing, to faith obeying;[n] from imperfect faith, to faith made

[f] John viii. 39. [g] Rom. iv. 12.

[h] Θαυμαστὴν ξυνωρίδα.

[i] Τὸ ἀγαθοὺς μὲν εἶναι ἡμᾶς ἢ κακοὺς, ὁ Θεὸς οὐκ ἐν τῇ γνώσει ἔθηκη γινωσκομένων, ἀλλὰ ἐν τῇ αἱρέσει τῶν αἱρουμένων.—Just. M. Resp. ad Orthod.

Οὐδὲν κέρδος ὑγιοῦς πίστεως, τῆς πολιτείας διεφθαρμένης. —Chrys. lib. iv. de Sacerd.

[k] Rom. xvi. 26.

[l] Fides (auctore Cicerone) est firma opinio, et est fida mandatorum executio. Dicta est autem fides (ut ait idem Cicero de Officiis) à *fio*, quòd id *fieri* debeat, quod dictum et promissum est.

[m] Rom. i. 16, 17.

[n] Ex fide annunciantium Evangelium in fidem obedientium Evangelio.—S. Aug.

perfect by the animation of charity; that "he who is justified, may be justified still." For as there are several degrees and parts of justification, so there are several degrees of faith answerable to it; that in all senses it may be true, that "by faith we are justified, and by faith we live, and by faith we are saved." For if we proceed "from faith to faith," from believing to obeying, from faith in the understanding to faith in the will, from faith barely assenting to the revelations of God to faith obeying the commandments of God, from the body of faith to the soul of faith, that is, to faith formed and made alive to charity; then we shall proceed from justification to justification, that is, from remission of sins to become the sons of God, and at last to an actual possession of those glories, to which we were here consigned by the fruits of the Holy Ghost.

8. And in this sense the holy Jesus is called by the apostle "the author and finisher of our faith:"[o] he is the principle, and he is the promoter; he begins our faith in revelations, and perfects it in commandments; he leads us by the assent of our understanding, and finishes the work of his grace by a holy life: which St. Paul there expresses by its several constituent parts; as "laying aside every weight, and the sin that so easily besets us, and running with patience the race that is set before us, resisting unto blood, striving against sin:"[p] for in these things, Jesus is therefore made our example, because he is "the author and finisher of our faith;" without these faith is imperfect. But the thing is something plainer yet, for St. James says, that faith lives not but by charity;[q] and the life or essence of a thing is certainly the better part of its constitution, as the soul is to a man. And if we mark the manner of his probation, it will come home to the main point. For he proves, that "Abraham's faith was therefore imputed to him for righteousness, because he was justified by works: was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he offered up his son? And the scripture was fulfilled, saying, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness. For faith wrought with his works, and made his faith perfect." It was a dead and an imperfect faith, unless obedience gave it being, and all its integral or essential parts. So that faith and charity, in the sense of a christian, are but one duty, as the understanding and the will are but one reasonable soul; only they produce several actions in order to one another, which are but "divers operations, and the same spirit."

9. Thus St. Paul, describing the faith of the Thessalonians, calls it that whereby they "turned from idols," and whereby they "served the living God;"[r] and the faith of the patriarchs "believed the world's creation, received the promises, did miracles, wrought righteousness,"[s] and did and suffered so many things as make up the integrity of a holy life. And therefore, disobedience and unrighteousness is called "want of faith;"[t] and heresy, which is opposed to faith, is "a work of the flesh,"[u] because faith itself is a work of righteousness. And, that I may enumerate no more particulars, the thing is so known, that the word ἀπείθεια,[x] which, in propriety of language, signifies mispersuasion, or infidelity, is rendered disobedience; and the "not providing for our families" is an act of infidelity, by the same reason and analogy that obedience, or charity, and a holy life, are the duties of a christian, of a justifying faith. And although, in the natural or philosophical sense, faith and charity are distinct habits; yet, in the sense of a christian, and the signification of duty, they are the same; for we cannot believe aright, as believing is in the commandment, unless we live aright; for our faith is put upon the account just as it is made precious by charity; according to that rare saying of St. Bartholomew, recorded by the supposed St. Denis, "Charity is the greatest and the least theology:"[y] all our faith, that is, all our religion, is completed in the duties of universal charity; as our charity or our manner of living is, so is our faith. If our life be unholy, it may be the faith of devils, but not the faith of christians. For this is the difference.

10. The faith of the devils hath more of the understanding in it, the faith of christians more of the will: the devils in their faith have better discourse, the christians better affections: they, in their faith, have better arguments, we more charity. So that charity or a good life is so necessary an ingredient into the definition of a christian's faith, that we have nothing else to distinguish it from the faith of devils; and we need no trial of our faith, but the examination of our lives. If you "keep the commandments of God," then have you the faith of Jesus; they are immediate, in St. John's expression:[z] but if you be importune and ungodly, you are in St. Paul's list,[a] amongst them that have no faith. Every vice, that rules amongst us, and sullies the fair beauty of our souls, is a conviction of infidelity.

11. For it was the faith of Moses that made him despise the riches of Egypt; the faith of Joshua, that made him valiant; the faith of Joseph, that made him chaste; Abraham's faith made him obedient; St. Mary Magdalen's faith made her penitent; and the faith of St. Paul made him travel so far, and suffer so much, till he became a prodigy, both of zeal and patience. Faith is a catholicon, and cures all the distemperatures of the soul; it "overcomes the world,"[b] saith St. John; it "works righteousness,"[c] saith St. Paul; it "purifies the heart,"[d] saith St. Peter; "it works miracles," saith our blessed Saviour; miracles in grace always, as it did miracles in nature at its first publication: and whatsoever is good, if it be a grace, it is an act of faith; if it be a reward, it is the fruit of faith. So that as all the actions of man are but the productions of the soul, so are all the actions of the new man

[o] Heb. xii. 2. [p] Heb. xii. 1, 4.
[q] Jam. ii. 20, 21, 22, 23, 26. [r] 1 Thess. i. 8, 9.
[s] Heb. xi. per totum. [t] Col. iii. 6. 2 Thess. iii. 2.
[u] Gal. v. 20. [x] Eph. ii. 2. et v. 6. 1 Tim. v. 8.

[y] ἡ ἀγάπη θεολογία πολλὴ, καὶ ἐλαχίστη. f. 1. de Myst. Theol.
[z] Apoc. xiv. 12. [a] 2 Thess. iii. 2.
[b] 1 John v. 4. [c] Heb. xi. 33. [d] Acts xv. 9.

the effects of faith. For faith is the life of christianity, and a good life is the life of faith.

12. Upon the grounds of this discourse, we may understand the sense of that question of our blessed Saviour: "When the Son of man comes, shall he find faith on earth?"[e] Truly, just so much as he finds charity and holy living, and no more. For then only we can be confident, that faith is not "failed from among the children of men," when we feel the heats of the primitive charity return, and the calentures of the first old devotion are renewed; when it shall be accounted honourable to be a servant of Christ, and a shame to commit a sin. Then, and then only, our churches shall be assemblies of the faithful, and the kingdoms of the world christian countries. But so long as it is notorious, that we have made the christian religion another thing than what the holy Jesus designed it to be; when it does not make us live good lives, but itself is made a pretence to all manner of impiety, a stratagem to serve ends, the ends of covetousness, of ambition, and revenge; when the christian charity ends in killing one another for conscience sake, so that faith is made to cut the throat of charity, and our faith kills more than our charity preserves; when the humility of a christian hath indeed a name amongst us, but it is like a mute person, talked of only; while ambition and rebellion, pride and scorn, self-seeking and proud undertakings, transact most of the great affairs of christendom; when the custody of our senses is to no other purposes, but that no opportunity of pleasing them pass away; when our oaths are like the fringes of our discourses, going round about them, as if they were ornaments and trimmings; when our blasphemies, profanation, sacrilege, and irreligion, are become scandalous to the very Turks and Jews; while our lusts are always habitual, sometimes unnatural; will any wise man think that we believe those doctrines[f] of humility and obedience, of chastity and charity, of temperance and justice, which the Saviour of the world made sacred by his sermon and example; or, indeed, any thing he either said or did, promised or threatened? For is it possible, a man with his wits about him, and believing that he should certainly be damned, (that is, be eternally tormented, in body and soul, with torments greater than can be in this world,) if he be a swearer, or liar, or drunkard, or cheats his neighbour; that this man should dare to do these things, to which the temptations are so small, in which the delight is so inconsiderable, and the satisfaction so none at all?

13. We see, by the experience of the whole world, that the belief of an honest man, in a matter of temporal advantage, makes us do actions of such danger and difficulty, that half so much industry and sufferance would ascertain us into a possession of all the promises evangelical. Now, let any man be asked, whether he had rather be rich or be saved? he will tell you, without all doubt, heaven is the better option by infinite degrees: for it cannot be that riches, or revenge, or lust, should be directly preferred; that is, be thought more eligible than the glories of immortality. That, therefore, men neglect so great salvation, and so greedily run after the satisfaction of their baser appetites, can be attributed to nothing but want of faith; they do not heartily believe that heaven is worth so much; there is upon them a stupidity of spirit, and their faith is dull, and its actions suspended most commonly, and often interrupted, and it never enters into the will: so that the propositions are considered nakedly and precisely in themselves, but not as referring to us or our interests; there is nothing of faith in it, but so much as is the first and direct act of understanding; there is no consideration or reflection upon the act, or upon the person, or upon the subject. So that, even as it is seated in the understanding, our faith is commonly lame, mutilous, and imperfect; and therefore much more is it culpable, because it is destitute of all co-operation of the rational appetite.

14. But let us consider the power and efficacy of worldly belief. If a man believes, that there is gold to be had in Peru for fetching, or pearls and rich jewels in India for the exchange of trifles, he instantly, if he be in capacity, leaves the wife of his bosom, and the pretty delights of children, and his own security, and ventures into the dangers of waters and unknown seas, and freezings and calentures, thirst and hunger, pirates and shipwrecks; and hath within him a principle strong enough to answer all objections, because he believes that riches are desirable, and by such means likely to be had. Our blessed Saviour, comparing the gospel to "a merchantman, that found a pearl of great price," and "sold all to buy it," hath brought this instance home to the present discourse. For if we did as verily believe, that in heaven those great felicities, which transcend all our apprehensions, are certainly to be obtained by leaving our vices and lower desires, what can hinder us but we should at least do as much for obtaining those great felicities as for the lesser, if the belief were equal? For if any man thinks he may have them without holiness, and justice, and charity, then he wants faith; for he believes not the saying of St. Paul: "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall ever see God."[g] If a man believes learning to be the only or chiefest ornament and beauty of souls, that which will ennoble him to a fair employment in his own time, and an honourable memory to succeeding ages; this if he believes heartily, it hath power to make him endure catarrhs, gouts, hypochondriacal passions, to read till his eyes almost fix in their orbs, to despise the pleasures of idleness, or tedious sports, and to undervalue whatsoever does not co-operate to the end of his faith, the desire of learning. Why is the Italian so abstemious in his drinkings, or the Helvetian so valiant in his fight, or so true to the prince that employs him, but that they believe it

[e] Luke xviii. 8.

[f] Τὸ ἀπιστεῖν ταῖς ἐντολαῖς ἐκ τοῦ πρὸς τὴν ἐκπλήρωσιν ἐκλελῦσθαι τῶν ἐντολῶν γίνεται.—S. Chrys. ad Demetr.

[g] Heb. xii. 14.

to be noble so to be? If they believed the same, and had the same honourable thoughts of other virtues, they also would be as national as these. For faith will do its proper work. And when the understanding is peremptorily and fully determined upon the persuasion of a proposition, if the will should then dissent, and choose the contrary, it were unnatural and monstrous, and possibly no man ever does so: for that men do things without reason, and against their conscience, is, because they have put out their light, and discourse their wills into the election of a sensible good, and want faith to believe truly all circumstances, which are necessary by way of predisposition, for choice of the intellectual.

15. But when men's faith is confident, their resolution and actions are in proportion: for thus the faith of Mahometans makes them to abstain from wine for ever; and therefore, if we had the christian faith, we should much rather abstain from drunkenness for ever; it being an express rule apostolical, "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess."[h] The faith of the Circumcellians made them to run greedily to violent and horrid deaths, as willingly as to a crown; for they thought it was the king's highway to martyrdom. And there was never any man zealous for his religion, and of an imperious bold faith, but he was also willing to die for it; and therefore, also, by as much reason to live in it, and to be a strict observer of its prescriptions. And the stories of the strict sanctity, and prodigious sufferings, and severe disciplines, and expensive religion, and complaint and laborious charity, of the primitive christians, is abundant argument to convince us, that the faith of christians is infinitely more fruitful and productive of its univocal and proper issues, than the faith of heretics, or the false religions of misbelievers, or the persuasions of secular persons, or the spirit of antichrist. And therefore, when we see men serving their prince with such difficult and ambitious services, because they believe him able to reward them, though of his will they are not so certain, and yet so supinely negligent and incurious of their services to God, of whose power and will to reward us infinitely, there is certainty absolute and irrespective; it is certain probation that we believe it not: for if we believe there is such a thing as heaven, and that every single man's portion of heaven is far better than all the wealth in the world, it is morally impossible we should prefer so little before so great profit.

16. I instance but once more. The faith of Abraham was instanced in the matter of confidence or trust in the Divine promises; and he being "the father of the faithful," we must imitate his faith by a clear dereliction of ourselves and our own interests, and an entire confident relying upon the Divine goodness, in all cases of our needs or danger. Now, this also is a trial of the verity of our faith, the excellency of our condition, and what title we have to the glorious names of christians, and faithful, and believers. If our fathers, when we were in pupilage and minority, or a true and an able friend, when we were in need, had made promises to supply our necessities; our confidence was so great, that our care determined. It were also well that we were as confident of God, and as secure of the event, when we had disposed ourselves to reception of the blessing, as we were of our friend or parents. We all profess that God is almighty, that all his promises are certain, and yet, when it comes to a pinch, we find that man to be more confident, that hath ten thousand pounds in his purse, then he that reads God's promises over ten thousand times.[i] "Men of a common spirit," saith St. Chrysostom, "of an ordinary sanctity, will not steal, or kill, or lie, or commit adultery; but it requires a rare faith, and a sublimity of pious affections, to believe that God will work a deliverance, which to me seems impossible." And indeed St. Chrysostom hit upon the right. He had need be a good man, and love God well, that puts his trust in him. For those we love, we are most apt to trust;[k] and although trust and confidence is sometimes founded upon experience, yet it is also begotten and increased by love, as often as by reason and discourse. And to this purpose it was excellently said by St. Basil, "That the knowledge which one man learneth of another, is made perfect by continual use and exercise; but that which, through the grace of God, is engrafted in the mind of man, is made absolute by justice, gentleness, and charity." So that if you are willing, even in death, not only to confess the articles, but in affliction and death to trust the promises; if, in the lowest nakedness of poverty, you can cherish yourselves with the expectation of God's promises and dispensation, being as confident of food and raiment, and deliverance or support, when all is in God's hand, as you are when it is in your own; if you can be cheerful in a storm, smile when the world frowns, be content in the midst of spiritual desertions and anguish of spirit, expecting all should work together for the best, according to the promise; if you can strengthen yourselves in God when you are weakest, believe when you see no hope, and entertain no jealousies or suspicions of God, though you see nothing to make you confident; then, and then only, you have faith, which, in conjunction with its other parts, is able to save your souls. For in this precise duty of trusting God, there are the rays of hope, and great proportions of charity and resignation.

17. The sum is that pious and most christian sentence of the author of the Ordinary Gloss. "To believe in God through Jesus Christ, is, by believing to love him, to adhere to him, to be united to him by charity and obedience, and to be incorporated into Christ's mystical body, in the communion of

[h] Ephes. v. 18.

[i] Clarè cognosceres non adeò esse facile Deo soli, re aliâ non assumptâ, credere, propter eam, quæ in nobis est, cum mortali compage cognationem. Ab his autem purgari omnibus——uni autem Deo confidere, magni et cœlestis animi est opus, et ejus qui nullis ampliùs capiatur earum quas videmus rerum illecebris.—PHIL. JUDÆUS, libr. Quis Rerum Div. Hæres.

[k] Ἔνεστι γὰρ πῶς τοῦτο τῇ τυραννίδι Νόσημα, τοῖς φίλοισι μὴ πεποιθέναι.—ÆSCHYL. Prometh.

saints."[l] I conclude this with a collation of certain excellent words of St. Paul, highly to the present purpose: "Examine yourselves, brethren, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves."[m] Well, but how? "Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" There is the touchstone of faith. If Jesus Christ dwells in us, then we are true believers; if he does not, we are reprobates, we have no faith. But how shall we know whether Christ be in us or no? St. Paul tells us that too: "If Christ be in you, the body is dead, by reason of sin; but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness."[n] That is the christian's mark, and the characteristic of a true believer; a death unto sin, and a living unto righteousness; a mortified body, and a quickened spirit. This is plain enough; and by this we see what we must trust to. A man of a wicked life does in vain hope to be saved by his faith; for indeed his faith is but equivocal and dead, which, as to his purpose, is just none at all; and therefore let him no more deceive himself. For, that I may still use the words of St. Paul, "This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good works."[o] For such, and such only, in the great scrutiny for faith in the day of doom, shall have their portion in the bosom of faithful Abraham.

THE PRAYER.

I.

O eternal God, fountain of all truth and holiness, in whom to believe is life eternal; let thy grace descend with a mighty power into my soul, beating down every strong hold and vainer imagination, and bringing every proud thought, and my confident and ignorant understanding, into the obedience of Jesus. Take from me all disobedience and refractoriness of spirit, all ambition, and private and baser interests; remove from me all prejudice and weakness of persuasion, that I may wholly resign my understanding to the persuasions of christianity, acknowledging thee to be the principle of truth, and thy word the measure of knowledge, and thy laws the rule of my life, and thy promises the satisfaction of my hopes, and an union with thee to be the consummation of charity, in the fruition of glory. Amen.

II.

Holy Jesus, make me to acknowledge thee to be my Lord and Master, and myself a servant and disciple of thy holy discipline and institution; let me love to sit at thy feet, and suck in with my ears and heart the sweetness of thy holy sermons. Let my soul be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, with a peaceable and docile disposition. Give me great boldness in the public confession of thy name, and the truth of thy gospel, in despite of all hostilities and temptations. And grant I may always remember, that thy name is called upon me, and I may so behave myself, that I neither give scandal to others, nor cause disreputation to the honour of religion; but that thou mayest be glorified in me, and I by thy mercies, after a strict observance of all the holy laws of christianity. Amen.

III.

O holy and ever-blessed Spirit, let thy gracious influences be the perpetual guide of my rational faculties: inspire me with wisdom and knowledge, spiritual understanding, and a holy faith; and sanctify my faith, that it may arise up to the confidence of hope, and the adherences of charity, and be fruitful in a holy conversation. Mortify in me all peevishness and pride of spirit, all heretical dispositions, and whatsoever is contrary to sound doctrine; that when the eternal Son of God, the "author and finisher of our faith," shall come to make scrutiny, and an inquest for faith, I may receive the promises laid up for them that believe in the Lord Jesus, and wait for his coming in holiness and purity: to whom, with the Father, and thee, O blessed Spirit, be all honour and eternal adoration paid, with all sanctity, and joy, and eucharist, now and for ever. Amen.

SECTION XI.

Of Christ's going to Jerusalem to the Passover, the first time after his Manifestation, and what followed, till the Expiration of the Office of John the Baptist.

1. IMMEDIATELY after this miracle, Jesus abode a few days in Capernaum, but because of the approach of the great feast of passover, he ascended to Jerusalem; and the first public act of record that he did, was an act of holy zeal and religion in behalf of the honour of the temple. For divers merchants and exchangers of money made the temple to be the market and the bank, and brought beasts thither to be sold for sacrifice, against the great paschal solemnity. At the sight of which, Jesus, being moved with zeal and indignation, "made a whip of cords, and drave the beasts out of the temple, overthrew the accounting tables, and commanded them that sold the doves, to take them from thence." For his anger was holy, and he would mingle no injury with it; and therefore the doves, which, if let loose, would be detrimental to the owners, he caused to be fairly removed; and pub-

[l] Credere in Deum est credendo amare, credendo diligere, credendo in eum ire, et membris ejus incorporari.—Gloss. Ord. in Rom. 4.

[m] 2 Cor. xiii. 5.
[n] Rom. viii. 10.
[o] Titus iii. 8.

lished the religion of holy places, establishing their sacredness for ever, by his first gospel sermon that he made at Jerusalem. "Take these things hence: make not my Father's house a house of merchandise; for it shall be called a house of prayer to all nations." And being required to give a sign of his vocation, (for this, being an action like the religion of the zealots among the Jews, if it was not attested by something extraordinary, might be abused into an excess of liberty,) he only foretold the resurrection of his body after three days' death, but he expressed it in the metaphor of the temple: "Destroy this temple, and I will build it again in three days. He spake of the temple of his body;" and they understood him of the temple at Jerusalem; and it was never rightly construed till it was accomplished.

2. At this public convention of the Jewish nation, Jesus did many miracles, published himself to be the Messias, and persuaded many disciples, amongst whom was Nicodemus, a doctor of the law, and a ruler of the nation: "he came by night to Jesus," and affirmed himself to be convinced by the miracles which he had seen; for "no man could do those miracles, except God be with him." When Jesus perceived his understanding to be so far disposed, he began to instruct him in the great secret and mysteriousness of regeneration, telling him, "that every production is of the same nature and condition with its parent; from flesh comes flesh and corruption, from the Spirit comes spirit, and life, and immortality; and nothing from a principle of nature could arrive to a supernatural end; and therefore the only door to enter into the kingdom of God, was water, by the manuduction of the Spirit; and by this regeneration we are put into a new capacity, of living a spiritual life, in order to a spiritual and supernatural end."

3. This was strange philosophy to Nicodemus; but Jesus bade him not to wonder: for this is not a work of humanity, but a fruit of God's Spirit, and an issue of predestination. For "the Spirit bloweth where it listeth," and is, as the wind, certain and notorious in the effects, but secret in the principle and in the manner of production. And, therefore, this doctrine was not to be estimated by any proportions to natural principles, or experiments of sense, but to the secrets of a new metaphysic, and abstracted, separate speculations. Then Christ proceeds in his sermon, telling him there are yet higher things for him to apprehend and believe; for this, in respect of some other mysteriousness of his gospel, was but as earth in comparison of heaven. Then he tells of his own descent from heaven, foretells his death and ascension, and the blessing of redemption, which he came to work for mankind; he preaches of the love of the Father, the mission of the Son, the rewards of faith, and the glories of eternity; he upbraids the unbelieving and impenitent, and declares the differences of a holy and a corrupt conscience, the shame and fears of the one, the confidence and serenity of the other. And this is the sum of his sermon to Nicodemus, which was the fullest of mystery and speculation, and abstracted senses, of any that he ever made, except that which he made immediately before his passion; all his other sermons being more practical.

4. From Jerusalem, Jesus goeth into the country of Judea, attended by divers disciples, whose understandings were brought into subjection and obedience to Christ, upon confidence of the divinity of his miracles. There his disciples did receive all comers, and baptized them, as John at the same time did; and by that ceremony admitted them to the discipline and institution, according to the custom of the doctors and great prophets among the Jews, whose baptizing their scholars was the ceremony of their admission. As soon as John heard it, he acquitted himself in public, by renewing his former testimony concerning Jesus; affirming him "to be the Messias, and now the time was come that Christ must increase, and the Baptist suffer diminution; for Christ came from above, was above all, and the sum of his doctrine was, that which he had heard and seen from the Father, whom God sent to that purpose, to whom God had set his seal that he was true, who spake the words of God, whom the Father loved, to whom he gave the Spirit without measure, and into whose hands God had delivered all things; this was he, whose testimony the world received not." And that they might know, not only what person they slighted, but how great salvation also they neglected, he sums up all his sermons and finishes his mission with this saying: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not on the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."[a]

5. For now that the Baptist had fulfilled his office of bearing witness unto Jesus, God was pleased to give him his writ of ease, and bring him to his reward upon this occasion. John, who had so learned to despise the world, and all its exterior vanities and impertinent relations, did his duty justly, and so without respect of persons, that as he reproved the people for their prevarications, so he spared not Herod for his; but abstaining from all expresses of the spirit of scorn and asperity, mingling no discontents, interests, nor mutinous intimations with his sermons, he told Herod, "it was not lawful for him to have his brother's wife."[b] For which sermon he felt the furies and malice of a woman's spleen, was cast into prison, and about a year after was sacrificed to the scorn and pride of a lustful woman and her immodest daughter; being, at the end of the second year of Christ's preaching, beheaded by Herod's command, who would not retract his promise, because of his honour, and a rash vow he made in the gaiety of his lust, and complacencies of his riotous dancings. His head was brought up in

[a] John iii. 36.

[b] Montanistæ, et cum his Tertul. adv. Marcion. lib. iv. c. 34, aiunt Philippum defunctum fuisse, et indè probare satagunt secundas nuptias illicitas esse. Sed hoc tam apertà fraude, ut agens adv. Catholicos Tertullianus abstineat abs tam iniquâ recitatione. Marcioni autem Evangelium neganti hoc obtrudere in facili erat.

a dish, and made a festival-present to the young girl, who gave it to her mother: a cruelty that was not known among the barbarisms of the worst of people, to mingle banquetings with blood and sights of death; an insolence and inhumanity, for which the Roman orators accused Q. Flaminius of treason, because, to satisfy the wanton cruelty of Placentia, he caused a condemned slave to be killed at supper; and which had no precedent but in the furies of Marius, who caused the head of the consul Antonius to be brought up to him in his feasts, which he handled with much pleasure and insolence.[c]

6. But God's judgments, which sleep not long,[d] found out Herod, and marked him for a curse. For the wife of Herod, who was the daughter of Aretas, a king of Arabia Petræa, being repudiated by paction with Herodias, provoked her father to commence a war with Herod; who prevailed against Herod in a great battle, defeating his whole army, and forcing him to an inglorious flight: which the Jews generally expounded to be a judgment on him, for the unworthy and barbarous execution and murder of John the Baptist; God, in his wisdom and severity, making one sin to be the punishment of another, and neither of them both to pass without the signature of a curse. And Nicephorus reports, that the dancing daughter of Herodias, passing over a frozen lake, the ice brake, and she fell up to the neck in water, and her head was parted from her body, by the violence of the fragments, shaken by the water and its own fall, and so perished; God having fitted a judgment to the analogy and representment of her sin. Herodias herself, with her adulterous paramour, Herod, were banished to Lyons, in France, by decree of the Roman senate,[e] where they lived ingloriously and died miserably; so paying dearly for her triumphal scorn, superadded to her crime of murder: for when she saw the head of the Baptist, which her daughter, Salome, had presented to her in a charger, she thrust the tongue through with a needle, as Fulvia had formerly done to Cicero. But herself paid the charges of her triumph.

Ad SECTION XI.

Considerations upon the first Journey of the Holy Jesus to Jerusalem, when he whipped the Merchants out of the Temple.

1. WHEN the feast came, and Jesus was ascended up to Jerusalem, the first place we find him in is the temple; where not only was the area and court of religion, but, by occasion of public conventions, the most opportune scene for transaction of his commission and his Father's business. And those christians who have been religious and affectionate, even in the circumstances of piety, have taken this for precedent, and accounted it a good express of the regularity of their devotion, and order of piety, at their first arrival to a city, to pay their first visits to God, the next to his servant, the president of religious rites. First, they went into the church, and worshipped; then to the angel of the church, to the bishop, and begged his blessing; and having thus commenced with the auspiciousness of religion they had better hopes their just affairs would succeed prosperously, which, after the rites of christian countries, had thus been begun with devotion and religious order.

2. When the holy Jesus entered the temple, and espied a mart kept in the holy sept, a fair upon holy ground, he, who suffered no transportations of anger in matters and accidents temporal, was borne high with an ecstasy of zeal, and, according to the custom of the zealots of the nation, took upon him the office of a private infliction of punishment in the cause of God, which ought to be dearer to every single person than their own interest and reputation. What the exterminating angel did to Heliodorus, who came into the temple upon design of sacrilege, that the meekest Jesus did to them who came with acts of profanation; he whipped them forth. And as usually good laws spring from ill manners, and excellent sermons are occasioned by men's iniquities; now also our great Master, upon this accident, asserted the sacredness of holy places, in the words of a prophet, which now he made a lesson evangelical: "My house shall be called a house of prayer to all nations."

3. The beasts and birds there sold, were brought for sacrifice; and the banks of money were for the advantage of the people that came from far, that their returns might be safe and easy, when they came to Jerusalem upon the employments of religion. But they were not yet fit for the temple; they who brought them thither purposed their own gain, and meant to pass them through an unholy usage, before they could be made "anathemata," vows to God: and when religion is but the purpose at the second hand, it cannot hallow a lay design, and make it fit to become a religious ministry, much less sanctify an unlawful action. When Rachel stole her father's gods, though possibly she might do it in zeal against her father's superstition, yet it was occasion of a sad accident to herself. For the Jews say, that Rachel died in child-birth of her second son, because of that imprecation of Jacob, "With whomsoever thou findest thy gods, let him not live."[a] Saul pretended sacrifice, when he spared the fat cattle of Amalek; and Micah was zealous when he made him an ephod and a teraphim, and meant to make himself an image for religion when he stole his mother's money: but these are colours of religion, in which not only the world, but ourselves also, are deceived by a latent purpose, which we are willing to cover with a re-

[c] Senec. cont. lib. v. Livius lib. xxxix. Plut. in Mario.

[d] "Οστις δὲ θνητῶν μέμφεται τὰ Θεῖ', ὅτι
Οὐκ ἐνθὺς, ἀλλὰ τῷ χρόνῳ μετέρχεται
Τοὺς μὴ δικαίους, πρόφασιν ἐξακουσάτω.
Εἰ γὰρ παραυτίκ' ἦσαν αἱ τιμωρίαι,
Πολλοὶ διὰ φόβον, κ'οὐ δι' ἐυσεβὴ τρόπον,
Θεὸν σέβοιντ' ἄν· νῦν δὲ τὴς τιμωρίας
Ἀπωθεν οὔσης, τῇ φύσει χρῶνται βροτοί.
"Οταν δὲ φωραθῶσιν, ὀφθέντες κακοὶ
Τίνουσι ποινὰς ὑστέροισιν ἐν χρόνοις.
THEODECT.

[e] Jos. Ant. lib. xviii. c. 7. lib. i. Hist. c. 20.

[a] Gen. xxxi. 32.

mote design of religion, lest it should appear unhandsome in its own dressing. Thus some believe a covetousness allowable, if they greedily heap treasure with a purpose to build hospitals or colleges; and sinister acts of acquiring church-livings are not so soon condemned, if the design be to prefer an able person; and actions of revenge come near to piety, if it be to the ruin of an ungodly man; and indirect proceedings are made sacred, if they be for the good of the holy cause. This is profaning the temple with beasts brought for sacrifices, and dishonours God by making himself accessary to his own dishonour, as far as lies in them; for it disserves him with a pretence of religion: and, but that our hearts are deceitful, we should easily perceive that the greatest business of the letter is written in postscript; the great pretence is the least purpose; and the latent covetousness or revenge, or the secular appendix, is the main engine to which the end of religion is made but instrumental and pretended. But men, when they sell a mule, use to speak of the horse that begat him, not of the ass that bore him.

4. The holy Jesus "made a whip of cords," to represent and to chastise the implications and enfoldings of sin, and the cords of vanity. 1. There are some sins that of themselves are a whip of cords: those are the crying sins, that, by their degree and malignity, speak loud for vengeance; or such as have great disreputation, and are accounted the basest issues of a caitive disposition; or such which are unnatural and unusual; or which, by public observation, are marked with the signature of Divine judgments. Such are murder, oppression of widows and orphans, detaining the labourer's hire, lusts against nature, parricide, treason, betraying a just trust in great instances and base manners, lying to a king, perjury in a priest: these carry Cain's mark upon them, or Judas's sting, or Manasses's sorrow, unless they be made impudent by the spirit of obduration. 2. But there are some sins that bear shame upon them, and are used as correctives of pride and vanity; and if they do their cure, they are converted into instruments of good by the great power of the Divine grace: but if the spirit of the man grows impudent and hardened against the shame, that which commonly follows is the worst string of the whip, a direct consignation to a reprobate spirit. 3. Other sins there are, for the chastising of which Christ takes the whip into his own hand; and there is much need; when sins are the customs of a nation, and marked with no exterior disadvantage, or have such circumstances of encouragement that they are unapt to disquiet a conscience, or make our beds uneasy, till the pillows be softened with penitential showers. In both these cases, the condition of a sinner is sad and miserable. For "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God;" his hand is heavy, and his sword is sharp, and "pierces to the dividing the marrow and the bones;" and he that considers the infinite distance between God and us, must tremble, when he remembers that he is to feel the issues of that anger, which he is not certain whether or no it will destroy him infinitely and eternally. 4. But if the whip be given into our hands, that we become executioners of the Divine wrath, it is sometimes worse; for we seldom strike ourselves for emendation, but add sin to sin, till we perish miserably and inevitably. God scourges us often into repentance; but when a sin is the whip of another sin, the rod is put into our hands, who, like blind men, strike with a rude and undiscerning hand, and, because we love the punishment, do it without intermission or choice, and have no end but ruin.

5. When the holy Jesus had whipped the merchants in the temple, they took away all the instruments of their sin. For a judgment is usually the commencement of repentance: love is the last of graces, and seldom at the beginning of a new life, but is reserved to the perfections and ripeness of a christian. We begin in fear: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: when he smote them, then they turned, and inquired early after God."[b] And afterwards the impresses of fear continue like a hedge of thorns about us, to restrain our dissolutions within the awfulness of the Divine majesty, that it may preserve what was from the same principle begun. This principle of their emendation was from God, and therefore innocent and holy; and the very purpose of Divine threatenings is, that upon them, as upon one of the great hinges, the piety of the greatest part of men should turn: and the effect was answerable; but so are not the actions of all those, who follow this precedent in the tract of the letter. For indeed there have been some reformations, which have been so like this, that the greatest alteration which hath been made, was that they carried all things out of the temple, the money, and the tables, and the sacrifice; and the temple itself went at last. But these men's scourge is to follow after; and Christ, the Prince of the catholic church, will provide one of his own contexture, more severe than the stripes which Heliodorus felt from the infliction of the exterminating angel. But the Holy Spirit of God, by making provision against such a reformation, hath prophetically declared the aptnesses which are in pretences of religious alterations to degenerate into sacrilegious desires: "Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?"[c] In this case there is no amendment; only one sin resigns to another, and the person still remains under its power and the same dominion.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal Jesu, thou bright image of thy Father's glories, whose light did shine to all the world, when thy heart was inflamed with zeal and love of God and of religion, let a coal from thine altar, fanned with the wings of the holy Dove, kindle in my soul such holy flames, that I may be zealous of thy honour and glory, forward in religious duties, earnest in their pursuit, prudent in their managing, ingenuous in my purposes, making my religion to serve no end but of thy glories, and

[b] Psalm lxxviii. 34.

[c] Rom. ii. 22.

the obtaining of thy promises: and so sanctify my soul and my body, that I may be a holy temple, fit and prepared for the inhabitation of thy ever-blessed Spirit, whom grant that I may never grieve by admitting any impure thing to desecrate the place, and unhallow the courts of his abode; but give me a pure soul in a chaste and healthful body, a spirit full of holy simplicity, and designs of great ingenuity, and perfect religion, that I may intend what thou commandest, and may with proper instruments prosecute what I so intend, and by thy aids may obtain the end of my labours, the rewards of obedience and holy living, even the society and inheritance of Jesus, in the participation of the joys of thy temple, where thou dwellest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, O eternal Jesu. Amen.

DISCOURSE VIII.

Of the Religion of Holy Places.

1. THE holy Jesus brought a Divine warrant for his zeal. The selling sacrifices, and the exchange of money, and every lay employment, did violence and dishonour to the temple, which was hallowed to ecclesiastical ministries, and set apart for offices of religion, for the use of holy things; for it was God's house: and so is every house by public designation separate for prayer or other uses of religion; it is God's house. "My house." God had a propriety in it, and had set his mark on it, even his own name. And therefore it was, in the Jews' idiom of speech, called "the mountain of the Lord's house," and "the house of the Lord," by David frequently: God had put his name into all places appointed for solemn worship: "In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and bless thee."[a] For God, who was never visible to mortal eye, was pleased to make himself presential by substitution of his name; that is, in certain places he hath appointed that his name shall be called upon, and, by promising and imparting such blessings, which he hath made consequent to the invocation of his name, hath made such places to be a certain determination of some special manner of his presence. For God's name is not a distinct thing from himself, not an idea, and it cannot be put into a place in literal signification; the expression is to be resolved into some other sense: God's name is that whereby he is known, by which he is invocated, that which is the most immediate publication of his essence, nearer than which we cannot go unto him: and because God is essentially present in all places, when he makes himself present in one place more than another, it cannot be understood to any other purpose, but that in such places he gives special blessings and graces, or that in those places he appoints his name, that is, himself, especially to be invocated.

2. So that, when God "puts his name" in any place by a special manner, it signifies that there himself is in that manner: but, in separate and hallowed places, God hath expressed that he puts his name with a purpose it should be called upon; therefore, in plain signification, it is thus: In consecrated places God himself is present to be invoked; that is, there he is most delighted to hear the prayers we make unto him. For all the expressions of Scripture, of "God's house, the tabernacle of God, God's dwelling, putting his name there, his sanctuary," are resolved into that saying of God to Solomon, who prayed that he would hear the prayers of necessitous people in that place: God granting the request, expressed it thus, "I have sanctified the house which thou hast built:"[b] that is, the house which thou hast designed for my worship, I have designed for your blessing; what you have dedicated, I have accepted; what you have consecrated, I have hallowed; I have taken it to the same purpose to which your desires and designation pretended it in your first purposes and expense. So that, since the purpose of man, in separating places of worship, is, that thither, by order and with convenience, and in communities of men, God may be worshipped and prayed unto, God having declared that he accepts of such separate places to the same purposes, says, that there he will be called upon, that such places shall be places of advantage to our devotions in respect of human order, and Divine acceptance and benediction.

3. Now these are therefore God's houses, because they were given by men, and accepted by God, for the service of God and the offices of religion. And this is not the effect or result of any distinct covenant God hath made with man, in any period of the world; but it is merely a favour of God, either hearing the prayer of dedication, or complying with human order or necessities. For there is nothing in the covenant of Moses's law, that, by virtue of special stipulation, makes the assignment of a house for the service of God to be proper to Moses's rite. Not only because God had memorials and determinations of this manner of his presence before Moses's law, as at Bethel, where Jacob laid the first stone of the church, (nothing but a stone[c] was God's memorial,) and the beginning and first rudiments of a temple; but also because after Moses's law was given, as long as the nation was ambulatory, so were their places and instruments of religion: and although the ark was not confined to a place till Solomon's time, yet God was pleased in this manner to confine himself to the ark; and in all places, wherever his name was put, even in synagogues, and oratories, and threshing-floors, when they were hallowed with an altar and religion, thither God came, that is, there he heard them pray, and answered and blessed accordingly, still in proportion to that degree of religion which was put upon them. And those places, when they had once entertained religion, grew separate and sacred for

[a] Exod. xx. 24. [b] 1 Kings ix. 3.

[c] Nec fortuitum spernere cespitem
Leges sinebant, oppida publico
Sumptu jubentes, et deorum
Templa novo decorare saxo.
HOR. lib. ii. od. 15.

ever. For therefore David bought the threshing-floor of Araunah, that it might never return to common use any more: for it had been no trouble or inconvenience to Araunah to have used his floor for one solemnity; but he offered to give it, and David resolved to buy it, because it must, of necessity, be aliened from common uses, to which it could never return any more when once it had been the instrument of a religious solemnity: and yet this was no part of Moses's law, that every place of a temporary sacrifice should be "holy for ever." David had no guide in this but right reason, and the religion of all the world. For such things which were great instruments of public ends, and things of highest use, were also, in all societies of men, of greatest honour, and immured by reverence and the security of laws. For honour and reputation is not a thing inherent in any creature, but depends upon the estimate of God or men, who, either in diffusion or representation, become fountains of a derivative honour. Thus some men are honourable; that is, those who are fountains of honour in civil account have commanded that they should be honoured. And so places and things are made honourable, that as honourable persons are to be distinguished from others by honourable usages and circumstances proper to them, so also should places and things (upon special reason separate) have an usage proper to them, when, by a public instrument or minister, they are so separated. No common usage then; something proper to tell what they are, and to what purposes they are designed, and to signify their separation and extraordinariness. Such are the person of the prince, the archives and records of a kingdom, the walls and great defences of the imperial city, the eagles and ensigns of war amongst the Romans; and, above all things, though not above all persons, the temples and altars, and all the instruments of religion. And there is much reason in it. For thus a servant of a king, though his employment be naturally mean, yet is more honourable, because he relates to the most excellent person: and therefore much more those things which relate to God. And though this be the reason why it should be so; yet, for this and other reasons, they that have power, that is, they who are acknowledged to be the fountains and the channels of honour, I mean the supreme power, and public fame, have made it actually to be so. For whatsoever all wise men, and all good men, and all public societies, and all supreme authority, hath commanded to be honoured or revered, that is honourable and reverend; and this honour and reverence is to be expressed according to the customs of the nation, and instruments of honour proper to the nature of the thing or person respectively. Whatsoever is esteemed so, is so; because honour and noble separations are relative actions and terms, creatures and productions of fame, and the voice of princes, and the sense of people: and they who will not honour those things or those persons, which are thus decreed to be honourable, have no communications with the civilities of humanity, or the guises of wise nations; they do not "give honour to whom honour belongs." Now that which in civil account we call "honourable," the same in religious account we call "sacred:" for by both these words we mean things or persons made separate and retired from common opinion and vulgar usages, by reason of some excellency really inherent in them (such as are excellent men); or for their relation to excellent persons, or great ends, public or religious,[d] (and so servants of princes, and ministers of religion, and its instruments and utensils, are made honourable or sacred): and the expressions of their honour are all those actions and usages which are contrary to despite, and above the usage of vulgar things or places.[e] Whatsoever is sacred, that is honourable for its religious relation; and whatsoever is honourable, that also is sacred (that is, separate from the vulgar usages and account) for its civil excellency or relation. The result is this: that when public authority, or the consent of a nation,[f] hath made any place sacred for the uses of religion, we must esteem it sacred, just as we esteem persons honourable who are so honoured. And thus are judges, and the very places of judicature, the king's presence-chamber, the chair of state, the senate-house, the royal ensigns of a prince, whose gold and purple, in its natural capacity, hath in it no more dignity than the money of the bank, or the cloth of the mart; but it hath much more for its signification and relative use. And it is certain, these things, whose excellency depends upon their relation, must receive the degree of their honour in that proportion they have to their term and foundation: and therefore what belongs to God (as holy places of religion) must rise highest in this account; I mean higher than any other places. And this is besides the honour which God hath put upon them by his presence and his title to them, which, in all religions, he hath signified to us.

4. Indeed, among the Jews, as God had confined his church, and the rites of religion, to be used only in communion and participation with that nation, so also he had limited his presence, and was more sparing of it than in the time of the gospel his Son declared he would be. "It was said of old, that at Jerusalem men ought to worship," that is, by a solemn, public, and great address in the capital expresses of religion, in the distinguishing rites of liturgy; for else it had been no new thing. For, in ordinary prayers, God was then, and long before, pleased to hear Jeremiah in the dungeon, Manasses in prison, Daniel in the lion's den, Jonas in the belly of the deep, others in the offices yet more solemn in the proseuchæ, in the houses of prayer

[d] Religiosum est quod propter sanctitatem aliquam remotum ac sepositum à nobis est; verbum à *relinquendo* dictum, tanquam *ceremonia* à *carendo*.—GEL. lib. iv. c. 9.

[e] Ceremoniæ deorum, sanctitas regum.—JUL. CÆSAR apud Sueton.

[f] Ex lege cujusque civitatis jubentur dii coli. Dictum 5 Sapient. apud Xenophon. Σπένδειν δὲ καὶ θύειν κατὰ τὰ πάτρια ἑκάστοις προσήκει.—EPICT. c. 38.

which the Jews had, not only in their dispersion, but even in Palestine, for their diurnal and nocturnal offices. But when the holy Jesus had "broken down the partition-wall," then the most solemn offices of religion were as unlimited as their private devotions were before; for wherever a temple should be built, thither God would come, if he were "worshipped spiritually and in truth;" that is, according to the rites of Christ, (who is "grace and truth,") and the dictate of the Spirit, and analogy of the gospel. All places were now alike to build churches in, or memorials for God, God's houses. And that our blessed Saviour discourses of places of public worship to the woman of Samaria, is notorious, because the whole question was concerning the great addresses of Moses's rites, whether at Jerusalem or mount Gerizim, which were the places of the right and the schismatical temple, the confinements of the whole religion: and in antithesis Jesus said, "Nor here nor there shall be the solemnities of address to God, but in all places you may build a temple, and God will dwell in it."

5. And this hath descended from the first beginnings of religion down to the consummation of it in the perfections of the gospel. For the apostles of our Lord carried the offices of the gospel into the temple of Jerusalem; there they preached, and prayed, and paid vows, but never, that we read of, offered sacrifice: which shows, that the offices purely evangelical were proper to be done in any of God's proper places, and that thither they went not in compliance with Moses's rites, but merely for gospel duties, or for such offices which were common to Moses and Christ, such as were prayers and vows. While the temple was yet standing, they had peculiar places for the assemblies of the faithful, where either by accident, or observation, or religion, or choice, they met regularly. And I instance, in the house of John surnamed Mark, which, as Alexander reports in the life of St. Barnabas, was consecrated by many actions of religion, by our blessed Saviour's eating the passover, his institution of the holy eucharist, his farewell sermon; and the apostles met there in the octaves of Easter, whither Christ came again, and hallowed it with his presence; and there, to make up the relative sanctification complete, the Holy Ghost descended upon their heads in "the feast of Pentecost:" and this was erected into a fair fabric, and is mentioned as a famous church by St. Jerome[g] and Ven. Bede; in which, as Adrichomius adds, St. Peter preached that sermon which was miraculously prosperous in the conversion of three thousand; there St. James, brother of our Lord, was consecrated first bishop of Jerusalem; St. Stephen and the other six were there ordained deacons; there the apostles kept their first council, and compiled their creed: by these actions, and their frequent conventions, showing the same reason, order, and prudence of religion, in assignation of special places of divine service, which were ever observed by all the nations, and religions, and wise men of the world. And it were a strange imagination to fancy, that, in christian religion, there is any principle contrary to that wisdom of God and all the world,[h] which, for order, for necessity, for convenience, for the solemnity of worship, hath set apart places for God and for religion. Private prayer had always an unlimited residence and relation, even under Moses's law; but the public solemn prayer of sacrifice in the law of Moses was restrained to one temple: in the law of nature it was not confined to one, but yet determined to public and solemn places; and when the holy Jesus disparked the enclosures of Moses, we all returned to the permissions and liberty of the natural law, in which, although the public and solemn prayers were confined to a temple, yet the temple was not confined to a place; but they might be any where, so they were at all: instruments of order, conveniences of assembling, residences of religion: and God, who always loved order, and was apt to hear all holy and prudent prayers, (and therefore also the prayers of consecration,) hath often declared that he loves such places, that he will dwell in them; not that they are advantages to him, but that he is pleased to make them so to us. And therefore all nations of the world built public houses for religion; and, since all ages of the church did so too,[i] it had need be a strong and a convincing argument that must show they were deceived. And "if any man list to be contentious," he must be answered with St. Paul's reproof, "We have no such custom, nor the churches of God."

6. Thus St. Paul reproved the Corinthians for "despising the church of God"[k] by such uses, which were therefore unfit for God's, because they were proper for their own, that is, for common houses. And although they were at first, and in the descending ages, so afflicted by the tyranny of enemies, that they could not build many churches; yet some they did, and the churches themselves suffered part of the persecution. For so Eusebius reports, that when, under Severus and Gordianus, Philip and Galienus, the christian affairs were in a tolerable condition, they built churches in great number and expense. But when the persecution waxed hot under Diocletian, down went the churches, upon a design to extinguish or disadvantage the religion. Maximinus gave leave to rebuild them. Upon which rescript (saith the story) the christians were overjoyed, and raised them up to an incredible height and incomparable beauty.[l] This was christian religion then, and so it hath continued ever since; and, unless we should have new reason and new revelation, it must continue so till our churches are exchanged for thrones, and our chapels for seats placed before

[g] Epist. 27. De locis Sanct. c. 3. In Descript. Hieros. n. 6.

[h] Φήμη δ' οὔτις πάμπαν ἀπόλλυται ἥντινα πολλοὶ Λαοὶ Φημίζουσι. – Hesiod.

[i] Omnes ad orandum in idem loci convenite: sit una communis precatio, una mens, una spes in charitate et fide inculpata in Christum Jesum; quo nihil est præstantius. Omnes velut unus quispiam ad templum Dei concurrite, velut ad unum altare, ad unum Jesum Christum, &c. – S. Ignat. ad Magnes.

[k] 1 Cor. xi. 22.

[l] Καὶ δὴ διήλθομεν σιδηρέας τε πύλας καὶ χαλκέους ὀδούς· Ἀναβάθρας δὲ πλείστας περικυκλωσάμενοι, ἐς χρυσόροφον οἶκον ἀνήλθόμεν, οἷον Ὅμηρος τὸν Μενελάου φησί. – Lucian. Philopat. de Templo Christiano.

the Lamb in the eternal temple of the celestial Jerusalem.

7. And to this purpose it is observed, that the holy Jesus first ejected the beasts of sacrifice out of the temple, and then proclaimed the place holy, and the scene of representing prayers, which in type intimates the same thing which is involved in the expression of the next words, "My house shall be called the house of prayer to all nations;" now and for ever, to the Jews and to the gentiles, in all circumstances and variety of time and nation, God's houses are holy in order to holy uses; the time as unlimited as the nations were indefinite and universal.[m] Which is the more observable, because it was of the outward courts, not whither Moses's rites alone were admitted, but the natural devotion of Jews and gentile proselytes, that Christ affirmed it to be holy, to be the house of God, and the place of prayer. So that the religion of public places of prayer is not a rite of Levi, but a natural and prudent circumstance, and advantage of religion, in which all wise men agree, who therefore must have some common principle, with influence upon all the world, which must be the univocal cause of the consent of all men: which common principle must either be a dictate of natural or prime reason, or else some tradition from the first parents of mankind; which, because it had order in it, beauty, religion, and confirmation from Heaven, and no reason to contest against it, it hath surprised the understanding and practices of all nations. And indeed we find, that even in paradise God had that which is analogical to a church, a distinct place where he manifested himself present in proper manner: for Adam and Eve, when they had sinned, "hid themselves from the presence of the Lord;" and this was the word in all descents of the church, for the being of God in holy places, "the presence of the Lord was there." And probably, when Adam, from this intimation, or a greater direction, had taught Cain and Abel to offer sacrifice to God in a certain place, where they were observed of each in their several offerings, it became one of the rules of religion which was derived to their posterity by tradition, the only way they had to communicate the dictates of Divine commandment.

8. There is no more necessary to be added in behalf of holy places, and to assert them into the family and relatives of religion; our estimate and deportment towards them is matter of practice, and therefore of proper consideration. To which purpose I consider, that holy places being the residence of God's name upon earth, there where he hath put it, that, by fiction of law, it may be the sanctuary[n] and the last resort in all calamities and need, God hath sent his agents to possess them in person for him. Churches and oratories are regions and courts of angels, and they are there, not only to minister to the saints, but also they possess them in the right of God. There they are: so the greatest and Prince of Spirits tells us, the Holy Ghost; "I saw the Lord sitting upon his throne, and his train filled the temple;[o] above it stood the seraphim;" that was God's train, and therefore holy David knew that his addresses to God were in the presence of angels: "I will praise thee with my whole heart, before the gods will I sing praise unto thee:"[p] before the angels,[q] so it is in the Septuagint. And that we might know where or how the kingly worshipper would pay this adoration, he adds, "I will worship towards thy holy temple." And this was so known by him, that it became expressive of God's manner of presence in heaven: "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels, and the Lord is among them as in Sinai, in the holy place;"[r] God in the midst of angels, and the angels in the midst of "the holy place;" and God in heaven in the midst of that holy circle, as sure as he is amongst angels in the recesses of his sanctuary. Were the rudiments of the law worthy of an attendance of angels? and are the memorials of the gospel destitute of so brave a retinue? Did the beatified spirits wait upon the types? and do they decline the office at the ministration of the substance? Is the nature of man worse since the incarnation of the Son of God? and have the angels purchased an exemption from their ministry since Christ became our brother? We have little reason to think so; and therefore St. Paul still makes use of the argument to press women to modesty and humility in churches, "because of the angels." And upon the same stock St. Chrysostom[s] chides the people of his diocess for walking, and laughing, and prating in churches: "The church is not a shop of manufactures or merchandise; but the place of angels and of archangels, the court of God, and the image or representment of heaven itself."

9. For if we consider that christianity is something more than ordinary, that there are mysteries in our religion, and in none else, that God's "angels are ministering spirits for our good," and especially about the conveyances of our prayers; either we must think very low of christianity, or that greater things are in it than the presence of angels in our churches: and yet if there were no more, we should do well to behave ourselves there with the thoughts and apprehensions of heaven about us; always remembering, that our business there is an errand of religion, and God is the object of our worshippings; and therefore, although by our weakness we are fixed in the lowness of men, yet because God's infinity is our object, it were very happy if our actions

[m] Quod ab omnibus gentibus observatum est, id non nisi à Deo sancitum est.—SOCRATES.

Χρόνῳ κρατηθὲν ἔθος γένους καὶ θρησκείας ἰσχυρότερον.—NICET.

Τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀσφαλέστατα τούτους οἰκεῖν, οἳ ἂν τοῖς παροῦσιν ἤθεσι καὶ νόμοις, ἄν καὶ χείρω ᾖ, ἥκιστα διαφόρως πολιτένωσι.—ALCIBIAD. apud Thucid. lib. vi.

[n] Psalm xxvii. 4, 5, 6.

[o] Isaiah vi. 1.

[p] Psalm cxxxviii. 1, 2.

[q] Ἐναντίον ἀγγέλων, LXX. Μαρτύρομαι δὲ ἐγὼ μὲν ὑμῶν τὰ ἅγια, καὶ τοὺς ἱεροὺς ἀγγέλους τοῦ Θεοῦ.—Orat. AGRIP. apud Joseph. lib. ii. c. 16. de bello Judaic.

[r] Psalm lxviii. 17.

[s] Τότε καὶ ἄγγελοι παρεστήκασι τῷ ἱερεῖ, &c.—Homil. 16. in 1 Cor. et de Sacred.

Non dubites assistere angelum quando Christus assistit, Christus immolatur.—S. AMBROS. in cap. i. Lucæ.

Angeli siquidem circumfusi sacra custodiunt, et divinâ freti potentiâ sacerdoti subserviunt.—R. CANUTUS in Leg. Ecc. c. 4.

did bear some few degrees of a proportionable and commensurate address.

10. Now that the angels are there in the right of God, and are a manner and an exhibition of the Divine presence, is therefore certain, because, whenever it is said in the Old Testament that God appeared, it was by an angel; and the law itself, in the midst of all the glorious terrors of its manifestation, "was ordained by angels," and "a word spoken by angels;" and yet God is said to have descended upon the mount: and in the greatest glory that ever shall be revealed till the consummation of all things, the instrument of the Divine splendour is the apparition of angels; for when the holy Jesus "shall come in the glory of his Father," it is added, by way of explication, that is, "with an host of angels."

11. The result is those words of God to his people, "Reverence my sanctuary."[t] For what God loves in an especial manner, it is most fit we should esteem accordingly. "God loves the gates of Sion more than all the dwellings of Jacob."[u] The least turf of hallowed glebe is, with God himself, of more value than all the champaign of common possession; it is better in all senses: "The temple is better than gold," said our blessed Saviour;[x] and therefore it were well we should do that which is expressed in the command, of giving reverence to it, for we are too apt to pay undue devotions to gold. Which precept the holiest of that nation expressed by worshipping towards the sanctuary, by pulling off their shoes when they went into it,[y] by making it the determination of their religious addresses, by falling down low upon the earth in their accesses, by opening their windows towards it in their private devotions, by calling it the glory of their nation; as is certain in the instances of David, Daniel, and the wife of Phinehas. I shall not need to say, that the devouter christians, in the first ages, did worship God with solemnities of address whenever they entered into their oratories. It was a civility Jesus commanded his disciples to use to common houses, "When ye enter into a house salute it:" I suppose he means the dwellers in it. And it is certain, whatever those devouter people did in their religious approaches, they designed it to God, who was the major-domo, the master of those assemblies: and thus did the convinced christians in St. Paul's discourse, when he came into the church where they were prophesying in a known language; "The secrets of his heart are made manifest, and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God."[z]

12. It was no unhandsome expression of reverencing God's sanctuary, that pious people ever used in bestowing costly and fair ornaments upon it; for so all the christians did: as soon as themselves came from contempt and scorn, they raised christian oratories to an equal portion of their honour; and by this way they thought they did honour to God, who was the Numen of the place. Not that a rich house, or costly offertory, is better in respect of God;[a] for to him all is alike, save that, in equal abilities, our devotion is distinguished by them; and be the offering never so contemptible, it is a rich devotion that gives the best we have: because, although if all the wealth of the Levant were united into a present, it were short of God's infinity; yet such an offertory, or any best we have, makes demonstration, that if we had an offering infinitely better, we should give it, to express our love, and our belief of God's infinite merit and perfection. And, therefore, let not "the widow's two mites" become a precedent to the instance and value of our donation; and because she, who gave no more, was accepted, think that two farthings is as fit to be cast into the corban as two thousand pounds. For the reason why our blessed Saviour commended the widow's oblation was for the greatness of it, not the smallness; "she gave all she had, even all her living;" therefore she was accepted. And indeed, since God gives to us more than enough, beyond our necessities, much for our conveniency, much for ease, much for repute, much for public compliances, for variety, for content, for pleasure, for ornament; we should deal unworthily with God Almighty, if we limit and restrain our returns to him, by confining them within the narrow bounds of mere necessity. Certainly beggarly services and cheapness is not more pleasing to God than a rich and magnificent address.[b] To the best of essences, the best of presents is most proportionable: and although the service of the soul and spirit is most delectable and esteemed by God; yet, because our souls are served by things perishing and material, and we are of that constitution, that by the body we serve the spirit, and by both we serve God, as the spirit is chiefly to be offered to God, because it is better than the body, so the richest oblation is the best in an equal power and the same person, because it is the best of things material: and although it hath not the excellency of the spirit, it hath an excellency that a cheap oblation hath not; and besides the advantage of the natural value, it can no otherwise be spoiled than a

[t] Lev. xix. 30. [u] Psalm lxxxvii. 2. [x] Matt. xxiii. 17.

[y] Ἀνυποδήτους θύειν καὶ προσκυνεῖν, dixit Pythagoras. Maimonides ait nefas fuisse Judæis calceatis ingredi sanctuarium, aut vestitis vestibus opificum. Justin. Martyr. ait gentes in sacris ἀπολούεσθαι.

Intramus templa compositi, ad sacrificium accessuri vultum submittimus, togam adducimus, in omne argumentum modestiæ fingimur.—Sen.

Ex templo illò te ducam ubi non despuas.—Nævius in Triphallo.

Quo ore Thurarias Christianus, si per templa transibit, fumantes aras despuet?—Tert. de Idol. c. 1. Con. Gang. c. 5.

[z] 1 Cor. xiv. 25.

[a] Πρὸς γὰρ τὸν ἑκατόμβας θύσαντα μὴ μετ' εὐσεβοῦς γνώμης, καὶ πυνθανόμενον πῶς εἴη προσδεδεγμένος τὰ παρ' αὐτοῦ δῶρα, ἀποκρίνεται [Πύθιος,] Ἀλλά μοι ἔναδε χόνδρος ἀγακλυτοῦ Ἑρμιονῆος. Τὸ εὐτελέστατον προκρίνων τῆς τοσαύτης πολυτελείας, ὅτι δὴ θεοσεβείας γνώμη κεκόσμητο· μετ' αὐτῆς γὰρ πάντα θεοφιλῆ, καὶ ἄνευ ταύτης οὐδὲν θεῷ φίλον ἂν πότε γένοιτο.—Hieroc. in Pyth.

Plebs devota veni, perque hæc commercia disce
Terreno censu regna superna peti.
Simplicius P. in Expositione Ecclesiæ S. Andreanæ in Roma.

[b] Delicta majorum immeritus lues,
Romane, donec templa refeceris,
Ædesque labentes deorum, et
Fœda nigro simulachra fumo.—Hor. lib. iii. od. 6.

Impietatis notatur Zeno, quòd dixerit ἱερὰ θεῶν μὴ οἰκοδομεῖν. Et barbarum gentium mos erat aras diis ponere in lucis, nemoribus, et montium jugis, eò quòd deos templis includendos nos esse dixerant.

meaner offering may; it is always capable of the same commendation from the piety of the presenter's spirit, and may be as much purified and made holy as the cheaper or the more contemptible. God hath nowhere expressed that he accepts of a cheaper offering, but when we are not able to give him better. When the people brought offerings more than enough for the tabernacle, Moses restrained their forwardness, by saying "it was enough," but yet commended the disposition highly, and wished it might be perpetual: but God chid the people when they let his house lie waste, without reparation of its decaying beauty; and therefore sent famines upon the land, and a curse into their estate, because they would not, by giving a portion to religion, sanctify and secure all the rest. For the way for a man to be a saver by his religion, is to deposit one part of his estate in the temple, and one in the hands of the poor; for these are God's treasury and stewards respectively: and this is "laying up treasures in heaven;" and besides that it will procure blessing to other parts, it will help to save our souls; and that is good husbandry, that is worth the saving.

13. For I consider that those riches and beauties, in churches and religious solemnities, which add nothing to God, add much devotion to us, and much honour and efficacy to devotion. For since impression is made upon the soul by the intervening of corporal things, our religion and devotion of the soul receives the addition of many degrees by such instruments.[c] Insomuch that we see persons of the greatest fancy, and such who are most pleased with outward fairnesses, are most religious. Great understandings make religion lasting and reasonable; but great fancies make it more scrupulous, strict, operative, and effectual. And therefore it is strange, that we shall bestow such great expenses, to make our own houses convenient and delectable, that we may entertain ourselves with complacency and appetite; and yet think that religion is not worth the ornament, nor our fancies fit to be carried into the choice and prosecution of religious actions, with sweetness, entertainments, and fair propositions. If we say that God is not the better for a rich house, or a costly service; we may also remember, that neither are we the better for rich clothes; and the sheep will keep us as modest, as warm, and as clean, as the silk-worm; and a gold chain, or a carkenet of pearl, does no more contribute to our happiness, than it does to the service of religion. For if we reply, that they help to the esteem and reputation of our persons, and the distinction of them from the vulgar, from the servants of the lot of Issachar, and add reverence and veneration to us; how great a shame is it, if we study by great expenses to get reputation and accidental advantages to ourselves, and not by the same means to purchase reverence and esteem to religion; since we see that religion, amongst persons of ordinary understandings, receives as much external and accidental advantages, by the accession of exterior ornaments and accommodation, as we ourselves can, by rich clothes and garments of wealth, ceremony, and distinction! And as, in princes' courts, the reverence to princes is quickened and increased by an outward state and glory; so also it is in the service of God. Although the understandings of men are no more satisfied by a pompous magnificence, than by a cheap plainness; yet the eye is, and the fancy, and the affections, and the senses; that is, many of our faculties are more pleased with religion, when religion, by such instruments and conveyances, pleases them. And it was noted by Sozomen, concerning Valens, the Arrian emperor, that when he came to Cæsarea, in Cappadocia, he praised St. Basil, their bishop, and upon more easy terms revoked his banishment,[d] because he was a grave person, and did his holy offices with reverent and decent addresses, and kept his church-assemblies with much ornament and solemnity.

14. But when I consider that saying of St. Gregory, that the church is heaven within the tabernacle, heaven dwelling among the sons of men,[e] and remember, that God hath studded all the firmament, and paved it with stars, because he loves to have his house beauteous, and highly representative of his glory; I see no reason we should not do as Apollinaris says God does: "In earth do the works of heaven." For he is the God of beauties and perfections;[f] and every excellency in the creature is a portion of influence from the Divinity, and therefore is the best instrument of conveying honour to him, who made them for no other end but for his own honour, as the last resort of all other ends for which they were created.

15. But the best manner to reverence the sanctuary, is by the continuation of such actions which gave it the first title of holiness. "Holiness becometh thine house for ever," saith David: "Sancta sanctis," holy persons and holy rites, in holy places;[g] that, as it had the first relation of sanctity by the consecration of a holy and reverend minister and president of religion, so it may be perpetuated in holy offices, and receive the daily consecration, by the assistance of sanctified and religious persons. "Foris canes," dogs and criminal persons are unfit for churches; the best ornament and beauty of a church, is a holy priest and a sanctified people.[h]

[c] Τὰ αἰσθήσει καλὰ, καὶ νοήσει καλῶν εἰκόνες. PHILO.

[d] Quòd cum tanto ornatu tamque decenter sacerdotio fungeretur, conventusque ageret.

[e] Ἐκκλησία ἐστὶν οὐρανὸς ἐπίγειος.

[f] Ἔργον τὸ μέγα, καὶ καλὸν τίμιον· τοῦ γὰρ τοιούτου ἡ θεωρία θαυμαστή.—ARIST.

[g] Gravitas honesta, diligentia attonita, cura solicita, apparitio devota, et processio modesta.—TERT. de Præscript.

Confluunt ad ecclesiam castâ celebritate, honestâ utriusque sexûs discretione.—S. AUG. lib. ii. c. 28. de Civit. Dei.

[h] Τὰ γὰρ κατὰ πόλεις προσευκτήρια τί ἕτερόν ἐστὶν ἢ διδασκαλία φρονήσεως καὶ ἀνδρείας, καὶ σωφροσύνης καὶ δικαιοσύνης, εὐσεβείας τε καὶ ὁσιότητος, καὶ συμπάσης ἀρετῆς; —PHILO. Legat. ad Caium.

Μόνος γὰρ οἶδε τιμᾶν ὁ προηγουμένως ἱερεῖον ἑαυτὸν προσάγων, καὶ ἄγαλμα θεῖον τεκταίων τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ψυχὴν, καὶ ναὸν εἰς ὑποδοχὴν τοῦ θείου φωτὸς τὸν ἑαυτοῦ παρασκευάζων νοῦν.—HIER. in Pyth.

Ψυχῆς καθαρᾶς τόπον οἰκειότερον ἐπὶ γῆς θεὸς οὐκ ἔχει· οἷς καὶ ὁ Πύθιος συμφέρεται, λέγων, Εὐσεβέσιν δὲ βροτοῖς γάνυμαι τόσον ὅσσον ὀλύμπῳ.—Idem.

For, since angels dwell in churches, and God hath made his name to dwell there too; if there also be a holy people, that there be saints as well as angels, it is a holy fellowship, and a blessed communion: but to see a devil there, would scare the most confident and bold fancy, and disturb the good meeting; and such is every wicked and graceless person: "Have I not chosen twelve of you, and one of you is a devil?" An evil soul is an evil spirit, and such are no good ornaments for temples: and it is a shame that a goodly christian church should be like an Egyptian temple; without, goodly buildings; within, a dog or a cat, for the deity they adore. It is worse, if in our addresses to holy places and offices, we bear our lusts under our garments. For dogs and cats are of God's making, but our lusts are not, but are God's enemies; and therefore, besides the unholiness, it is an affront to God to bring them along, and it defiles the place in a great degree.

16. For there is a defiling of a temple by insinuation of impurities, and another by direct and positive profanation, and a third by express sacrilege. This "defiles a temple" to the ground. Every small sin is an unwelcome guest, and is a spot in those "feasts of charity," which entertain us often in God's houses: but there are some, (and all great crimes are such,) which desecrate the place, unhallow the ground as to our particulars, stop the ascent of our prayers, obstruct the current of God's blessing, turn religion into bitterness, and devotion into gall; such as are marked in Scripture with a distinguishing character, as enemies to the peculiar dispositions of religion: and such are, unchastity, which defiles the temples of our bodies; covetousness, which sets up an idol instead of God; and unmercifulness, which is a direct enemy to the mercies of God, and the fair return of our prayers. He that shows not the mercies of alms, of forgiveness, and comfort, is forbidden to hope for comfort, relief, or forgiveness, from the hands of God. A pure mind is the best manner of worship,[i] and the impurity of a crime is the greatest contradiction to the honour and religion of holy places. And, therefore, let us imitate the precedent of the most religious of kings; "I will wash my hands in innocence, O Lord, and so will I go to thine altar;"[k] always remembering those decretory and final words of St. Paul, "He that defiles a temple, him will God destroy."[l]

THE PRAYER.

O eternal God, who "dwellest not in temples made with hands; the heaven of heavens is not able to contain thee," and yet thou art pleased to manifest thy presence amongst the sons of men, by special issues of thy favour and benediction; make my body and soul to be a temple pure and holy, apt for the entertainments of the holy Jesus, and for the habitation of the Holy Spirit. Lord, be pleased, with thy rod of paternal discipline, to cast out all impure lusts, all worldly affections, all covetous desires, from this thy temple; that it may be a place of prayer and meditation, of holy appetites and chaste thoughts, of pure intentions and zealous desires of pleasing thee; that I may become also a sacrifice, as well as a temple; eaten up with the zeal of thy glory, and consumed with the fire of love; that not one thought may be entertained by me, but such as may be like perfume, breathing from the altar of incense; and not a word may pass from me, but may have the accent of heaven upon it, and sound pleasantly in thy ears. O dearest God, fill every faculty of my soul with impresses, dispositions, capacities, and aptnesses of religion; and do thou hallow my soul, that I may be possessed with zeal and religious affections; loving thee above all things in the world, worshipping thee with the humblest adorations and frequent addresses, continually feeding upon the apprehensions of thy divine sweetness, and considerations of thy infinite excellences, and observations of thy righteous commandments, and the feast of a holy conscience, as an antepast of eternity, and consignation to the joys of heaven, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SECTION XII.

Of Jesus's Departure into Galilee; his manner of Life, Miracles, and Preaching; his calling of Disciples; and what happened until the Second Passover.

1. "When Jesus understood that John was cast into prison,"[a] and that the Pharisees were envious at him for the great multitudes of people that resorted to his baptism, which he ministered, not in his own person, but by the deputation of his disciples, they finishing the ministration which himself began, (who, as Euodius,[b] bishop of Antioch, reports, baptized the blessed Virgin, his mother, and Peter only; and Peter baptized Andrew, James, and John, and they others,) he left Judea, and came into Galilee; and in his passage he must touch Sychar, a city of Samaria, where, in the heat of the day and the weariness of his journey, he sat himself down upon the margin of Jacob's well; whither, when "his disciples were gone to buy meat, a Samaritan

Quin demus id superis———
Compositum jus fasque animis, sanctosque recessus
Mentis, et incoctum generoso pectus honesto:
Hæc cedò ut admoveam templis, et farre litabo.
Pers. Sat. ii.

[i] Animadverto gratiorem existimari qui delubris deorum puram castamque mentem, quàm qui meditatum carmen intulerit.—Plin. Sec. Pan. Trajan.

Ἁγνὸν δὴ ναιοῖο θυώδεος ἔνδον ιόντα Ἐμφάμεν· ἁγνείη δ' ἐστὶ, φρονεῖν ὅσια.—Porphyr. de Non Esu Animal. lib. ii.
Optimus animus pulcherrimus cultus. Μὴ καθαρῷ καθαροῦ ἐφάπτεσθαι οὐ μὴ θεμιτόν.—Hierocl.

[k] Psalm xxvi. 6.
[l] 1 Cor. iii. 17.
[a] Matt. iv. 12.
[b] Euthym. c. 3, in Joan. Apud Niceph. lib. ii. c. 3. Hist.

woman cometh to draw water," of whom Jesus asked some, to cool his thirst, and refresh his weariness.

2. Little knew the woman the excellency of the person that asked so small a charity: neither had she been taught, that "a cup of cold water given to a disciple should be rewarded," and much rather such a present to the Lord himself. But she prosecuted the spite of her nation,[c] and the interest and quarrel of the schism; and instead of washing Jesus's feet, and giving him drink, demanded, why he, "being a Jew, should ask water of a Samaritan? for the Jews have no intercourse with the Samaritans."

3. The ground of the quarrel was this. In the sixth year of Hezekiah, Salmanasar, king of Assyria, sacked Samaria, transported the Israelites to Assyria, and planted an Assyrian colony in the town and country; who, by Divine vengeance, were destroyed by lions, which no power of man could restrain or lessen. The king thought the cause was, their not serving the God of Israel according to the rites of Moses; and therefore sent a Jewish captive priest, to instruct the remanent inhabitants in the Jewish religion; who so learned and practised it, that they still retained the superstition of the gentile rites; till Manasses, the brother of Jaddi, the high priest of Jerusalem, married the daughter of Sanballat, who was the governor under king Darius. Manasses being reproved for marrying a stranger, the daughter of an uncircumcised gentile, and admonished to dismiss her, flies to Samaria, persuades his father-in-law to build a temple in mount Gerizim, introduces the rites of daily sacrifice, and makes himself high priest, and began to pretend to be the true successor of Aaron, and commences a schism, in the time of Alexander the Great. From whence the question of religion grew so high, that it begat disaffections, anger, animosities, quarrels, bloodshed, and murders; not only in Palestine, but wherever a Jew and Samaritan had the ill fortune to meet. Such being the nature of men, that they think it the greatest injury in the world, when other men are not of their minds; and that they please God most, when they are most furiously zealous; and no zeal better to be expressed, than by hating all those whom they are pleased to think God hates. This schism was prosecuted with the greatest spite that ever any was, because both the people were much given to superstition; and this was helped forward by the constitution of their religion, consisting much in externals and ceremonials, and which they cared not much to hallow and make moral, by the intertexture of spiritual senses and charity. And, therefore, the Jews called the Samaritans "accursed;" the Samaritans, at the paschal solemnity, would at midnight, when the Jews' temple was open, scatter dead men's bones,[d] to profane and desecrate the place; and both would fight, and eternally dispute the question; sometimes referring it to arbitrators, and then the conquered party would decline the arbitration after sentence; which they did at Alexandria, before Ptolemæus Philometor, when Andronicus had, by a rare and exquisite oration, procured sentence against Theodosius and Sabbæus, the Samaritan advocates: the sentence was given for Jerusalem, and the schism increased, and lasted till the time of our Saviour's conference with this woman.

4. And it was so implanted and woven in with every understanding, that when the woman "perceived Jesus to be a prophet," she undertook this question with him: "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say that Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." Jesus knew the schism was great enough already, and was not willing to make the rent wider: and though he gave testimony to the truth, by saying, "Salvation is of the Jews;" and "we know what we worship, ye do not;" yet because the subject of this question was shortly to be taken away, Jesus takes occasion to preach the gospel, to hasten an expedient, and, by way of anticipation, to reconcile the disagreeing interests, and settle a revelation, to be verified for ever. Neither here nor there, by way of confinement; not in one country more than another; but wherever any man shall call upon God "in spirit and truth," there he shall be heard.

5. But all this while the holy Jesus was athirst, and therefore hastens at least to discourse of water, though as yet he got none. He tells her of "living water," of eternal satisfactions, of "never thirsting again," of her own personal condition, of matrimonial relation, and professes himself to be the Messias; and then was interrupted by the coming of his disciples, who wondered to see him alone, "talking with a woman," besides his custom and usual reservation. But the woman, full of joy and wonder, left her water-pot, and ran to the city, to publish the Messias: and immediately "all the city came out to see; and many believed on him upon the testimony of the woman, and more when they heard his own discourses." They invited him to the town, and received him with hospitable civilities for two days, after which he departed to his own Galilee.

6. Jesus, therefore, came into the country, where he was received with respect and fair entertainment, because of the miracles which the Galileans saw done by him at the feast: and being at Cana, where he wrought the first miracle, a noble personage; a little king, say some; a palatine, says St. Jerome; a kingly person, certainly, came to Jesus with much reverence, and desired that he would be pleased to come to his house, and cure his son, now ready to die; which he seconds with much importunity, fearing lest his son be dead before he get thither. Jesus, who did not do his miracles by natural operations, cured the child at distance, and dismissed the prince, telling him his son lived; which, by narration of his servants, he found to be true, and that he recovered at the same time when Jesus spake these salutary and healing words. Upon which accident he and all his house became disciples.

7. And now Jesus left Nazareth, and came to Capernaum, a maritime town, and of great resort, choosing that for his scene of preaching, and his

[c] Non monstrare vias eadem nisi sacra colenti;
Quæsitum ad fontem solos deducere verpos.—JUV. Sat. xiv.

[d] Διάῤῥιψιν ἀνθρωπείων ὀστῶν ἐν ταῖς στοαῖς ποιῆσαι.—JOSEPH. Ant. lib. xviii. c. 3.

place of dwelling. For now the time was fulfilled, the office of the Baptist was expired, and the kingdom of God was at hand. He, therefore, preached the sum of the gospel, faith and repentance: "Repent ye, and believe the gospel." And what that gospel was, the sum and series of all his sermons afterwards did declare.

8. The work was now grown high and pregnant, and Jesus saw it convenient to choose disciples to his ministry and service in the work of preaching, and to be "witnesses of all that he should say, do, or teach," for ends which were afterwards made public and excellent. Jesus, therefore, "as he walked by the sea of Galilee," called Simon and Andrew, who knew him before, by the preaching of John; and now "left all," their ship and their net, "and followed him. And when he was gone a little farther, he calls the two sons of Zebedee, James and John; and they went after him." And with this family he goes up and down the whole Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, healing all manner of diseases, curing demoniacs, cleansing lepers, and giving strength to paralytics and lame people.

9. But when "the people pressed on him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Genesareth," and presently "entering into Simon's ship," commanded him "to launch into the deep," and "from thence he taught the people," and there wrought a miracle; for, being Lord of the creatures, he commanded the fishes of the sea, and they obeyed. For when Simon, who had "fished all night in vain, let down his net at the command of Jesus, he enclosed so great a multitude of fishes, that the net brake;" and the fishermen were amazed and fearful at so prodigious a draught. But beyond the miracle, it was intended, that a representation should be made of the plenitude of the catholic church, and multitudes of believers, who should be taken by Simon and the rest of the disciples, whom by that miracle he consigned to become "fishers of men;" who, by their artifices of prudence, and holy doctrine, might gain souls to God; that when the net should be drawn to shore, and separation made by the angels, they and their disciples might be differenced from the reprobate portion.

10. But the light of the sun uses not to be confined to a province or a kingdom. So great a Prophet, and so divine a Physician, and so great miracles, created a fame loud as thunder, but not so full of sadness and presage. Immediately the "fame of Jesus went into all Syria, and there came to him multitudes from Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem, and Judea." And all that had any "sick with divers diseases, brought them to him;" and he laid his hands on every one of them, "and healed them." And when he cured the "lunatics, and persons possessed with evil spirits," the devils cried out, and confessed him to be "Christ, the Son of God;" but he "suffered them not," choosing rather to work faith in the persuasions of his disciples, by moral arguments, and the placid demonstrations of the Spirit; that there might in faith be an excellency in proportion to the choice, and that it might not be made violent by the conviction and forced testimonies of accursed and unwilling spirits.

11. But when Jesus saw his assembly was grown full, and his audience numerous, he "went up into a mountain," and when his disciples came unto him, he made that admirable sermon, called "the sermon upon the mount;" which is a Divine repository of most excellent truths and mysterious dictates of secret theology, and contains a breviary of all those precepts which integrate the morality of christian religion; pressing the moral precepts given by Moses, and enlarging their obligation by a stricter sense and more severe exposition, that their righteousness might "exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees." "He preaches perfection, and the doctrines of meekness, poverty of spirit, christian mourning, desire of holy things, mercy and purity, peace and toleration of injuries; affixing a special promise of blessing to be the guerdon and inheritance of those graces and spiritual excellencies. He explicates some parts of the decalogue, and adds appendices and precepts of his own. He teaches his disciples to pray, how to fast, how to give alms, contempt of the world, not to judge others, forgiving injuries, an indifference and incuriousness of temporal provisions, and a seeking of the kingdom of God and its appendant righteousness."

12. When Jesus had finished his sermon, and descended from the mountain, a poor leprous person came and worshipped, and begged to be cleansed; which Jesus soon granted, engaging him not to publish it where he should go abroad, but sending him to the priest, to offer an oblation, according to the rites of Moses's law; and then came directly to Capernaum, and "taught in their synagogues upon the sabbath-days;" where, in his sermons, he expressed the dignity of a prophet, and the authority of a person sent from God; not inviting the people by the soft arguments and insinuations of scribes and Pharisees, but by demonstrations and issues of Divinity. There he cures a demoniac, in one of their synagogues; and by and by, after going abroad, he heals Peter's wife's mother of a fever; insomuch that he grew the talk of all men, and their wonder, till they flocked so to him to see him, to hear him, to satisfy their curiosity and their needs, that after he had healed those multitudes which beset the house of Simon, where he cured his mother of the fever, he retired himself into a desert place very early in the morning, that he might have an opportunity to pray, free from the oppressions and noises of the multitude.

13. But neither so could he be hid, but, like a light shining by the fringes of a curtain, he was soon discovered in his solitude; for the multitude found him out, imprisoning him in their circuits and undeniable attendances. But Jesus told them plainly, he must preach the gospel "to other cities also;" and therefore resolved to pass to the other side of the lake of Genesareth, so to quit the throng. Whither as he was going, a scribe offered himself a disciple to his institution; till Jesus told him his condition to be worse than foxes and birds, for whom a habitation is provided, but none for him;

no, "not a place where to bow his head," and find rest. And what became of this forward professor afterwards, we find not. Others that were probationers of this fellowship, Jesus bound to a speedy profession; not suffering one to go home to bid his friends farewell, nor another so much as to "bury his dead."

14. By the time Jesus got to the ship it was late; and he, heavy to sleep, rested on a pillow, and slept soundly, as weariness, meekness, and innocence could make him: insomuch that "a violent storm," the chiding of the winds and waters, which then happened, could not awake him; till the ship, being almost covered with broken billows and the impetuous dashings of the waters, the men already sunk in their spirits, and the ship like enough to sink too, the disciples awaked him, and called for help; "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" Jesus arising, reproved their infidelity, commanded the wind to be still and the seas peaceable, and immediately "there was a great calm;" and they presently arrived in the land of the Gergesenes, or Gerasenes.

15. In the land of Gergesites, or Gergesenes, which was the remaining name of an extinct people, being one of the nations whom the sons of Jacob drave from their inheritance, there were two cities; Gadara, from the tribe of Gad, to whom it fell by lot in the division of the land, (which, having been destroyed by the Jews, was rebuilt by Pompey, at the request of Demetrius Gadarensis, Pompey's freedman,) and near to it was Gerasa, as Josephus reports:[e] which diversity of towns and names is the cause of the various recitation of this story by the evangelists. Near the city of Gadara there were many sepulchres in the hollownesses of rocks, where the dead were buried, and where many superstitious persons used Memphitic and Thessalic rites, invocating evil spirits; insomuch that, at the instant of our Saviour's arrival in the country, "there met him two possessed with devils from these tombs, exceeding fierce," and so had been long, "insomuch that no man durst pass that way."

16. Jesus commanded the devils out of the possessed persons: but there were certain men feeding swine, which, though extremely abominated by the Jewish religion, yet for the use of the Roman armies and quarterings of soldiers, they were permitted, and divers privileges granted to the masters of such herds:[f] and because Gadara was a Greek city, and the company mingled of Greeks, Syrians, and Jews, these last, in all likelihood, not making the greatest number; the devils, therefore, besought Jesus, he would not send them into the abyss, but "permit them to enter into the swine." He gave them leave; "and the swine ran violently down a steep place into the" hot baths, which were at the foot of the hill on which Gadara was built; (which smaller congregation of waters the Jews used to call sea;[g]) or else, as others think, into the lake of Genesareth, "and perished in the waters." But this accident so troubled the inhabitants, that they came and "entreated Jesus to depart out of their coasts." And he did so; leaving "Galilee of the Gentiles," he came to the lesser Galilee, and so again to the city of Capernaum.

17. But when he was come thither, he was met by divers "scribes and Pharisees," who came from Jerusalem, and "doctors of the law from Galilee;" and while they were sitting in a house, which was compassed with multitudes, that no business or necessity could be admitted to the door, a poor paralytic was brought to be cured; and they were fain to "uncover the tiles of the house, and let him down in his bed with cords, in the midst before Jesus," sitting in conference with the doctors. "When Jesus saw their faith, he said, Man, thy sins be forgiven thee." At which saying the Pharisees being troubled, thinking it to be blasphemy, and that "none but God could forgive sins;" Jesus was put to verify his absolution, which he did in a just satisfaction and proportion to their understandings. For the Jews did believe that all afflictions were punishments for sin; ("Who sinned, this man or his father, that he was born blind?") and that removing of the punishment was forgiving of the sin. And therefore, Jesus, to prove that his sins were forgiven, removed that which they supposed to be the effect of his sin; and by curing the palsy, prevented their further murmur about the pardon: "That ye might know the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed and walk. And the man arose, was healed, and glorified God."

18. Awhile after Jesus went again towards the sea, and on his way, "seeing Matthew," the publican, "sitting at the receipt of custom," he bade him "follow him." Matthew first feasted Jesus, and then became his disciple. But the Pharisees that were with him began to be troubled that he "ate with publicans and sinners." For the office of publican, though amongst the Romans it was honest and of great account, and "the flower of the Roman knights, the ornament of the city, the security of the commonwealth, was accounted to consist in the society of publicans,"[h] yet amongst both the Jews and Greeks the name was odious,[i] and the persons were accursed; not only because they were strangers that were the chief of them, who took in to them some of the nation where they were employed; but because the Jews especially stood upon the charter of their nation and the privilege of their religion, that none of them should pay tribute; and also because they exercised great injustices and oppressions,[k] having a power unlimited, and a covetousness wide as hell, and greedy as the fire or the

[e] Joseph. de Bel. Jud. lib. i. c. 5. et lib. iii. c. 2. et lib. v. c. 3. Epiph. contr. Eb. Hæres. 30.

[f] Cod. Theod. de Sauriis. Joseph. lib. ii. de Bel. Jud. c. 33.

[g] Ut mare Æneum, vas templi ad aquarum receptionem.

[h] Cicero Ep. Famil. lib. xiii. et in Orat. pro Plancio.

[i] Idem ad Quint. Fratrem de Regimine Præfecturæ Asian.

[k] Vita Publicanorum aperta est violentia, impunita rapina, negotiatio nullâ ratione constans, inverecunda mercatura. Πάντες τελῶναι, πάντες εἰσὶν ἅρπαγες.—SUIDAS, V. Publicanus.

Apud Hebræum textum D. Matthæi publicani dicti *Parisim*, nomine proprio latronibus qui sepes et maceriam dirimunt, licèt propriè dicti *Gabaim*; unde fortasse *Gabella*.

grave. But Jesus gave so fair an account concerning his converse with these persons, that the objection turned to be his apology: for therefore he conversed with them, because they were sinners; and it was as if a physician should be reproved for having so much to do with sick persons; for therefore was he "sent, not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance;" to advance the reputation of mercy above the rites of sacrifice.

19. But as the little bubbling and gentle murmurs of the water are presages of a storm, and are more troublesome in their prediction than their violence; so were the arguings of the Pharisees symptoms of a secret displeasure and an ensuing war; though at first represented in the civilities of question and scholastical discourses, yet they did but forerun vigorous objections and bold calumnies, which were the fruits of the next summer. But as yet they discoursed fairly, asking him "why John's disciples fasted often, but the disciples of Jesus did not fast?" Jesus told them, it was because these were the days in which the Bridegroom was come in person to espouse the church unto himself; and, therefore, for "the children of the bride-chamber to fast" then, was like the bringing of a dead corpse to the joys of a bride, or the pomps of coronation; "the days should come, that the bridegroom should retire" into his chamber, and draw the curtains, "and then they should fast in those days."

20. While Jesus was discoursing with the Pharisees, "Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, came to him," desiring he would help his daughter, who lay in the confines of death, ready to depart. Whither as he was going, "a woman met him, who had been diseased with an issue of blood twelve years," without hope of remedy from art or nature; and therefore she runs to Jesus, thinking, without precedent, upon the confident persuasions of a holy faith, "that if she did but touch the hem of his garment she should be whole." She came trembling, and full of hope and reverence, and "touched his garment, and immediately the fountain of her unnatural emanation was stopped," and reverted to its natural course and offices. St. Ambrose says, that this woman was Martha. But it is not likely that she was a Jewess, but a gentile; because of that return which she made, in memory of her cure and honour of Jesus, according to the gentile rites. For Eusebius reports,[l] that himself saw, at Cæsarea Philippi, a statue of brass, representing a woman kneeling at the feet of a goodly personage, who held his hand out to her in a posture of granting her request, and doing favour to her; and the inhabitants said, it was erected by the care and cost of this woman; adding, (whether out of truth or easiness is not certain,) that at the pedestal of this statue an usual plant did grow, which, when it was come up to that maturity and height as to arrive at the fringes of the brass monument, it was medicinal in many dangerous diseases: so far Eusebius. Concerning which story I shall make no censure but this, that since St. Mark and St. Luke affirm, that this woman, before her cure, "had spent all her substance upon physicians,"[m] it is not easily imaginable how she should become able to dispend so great a sum of money, as would purchase two so great statues of brass: and if she could, yet it is still more unlikely that the gentile princes and proconsuls, who searched all places, public and private, and were curiously diligent to destroy all honorary monuments of christianity, should let this alone; and that this should escape, not only the diligence of the persecutors, but the fury of such wars and changes as happened in Palestine; and that for three hundred years together it should stand up in defiance of all violences and changeable fate of all things. However it be, it is certain that the book against images, published by the command of Charles the Great, eight hundred and fifty years ago, gave no credit to the story; and if it had been true, it is more than probable, that Justin Martyr,[n] who was born and bred in Palestine, and Origen, who lived many years in Tyre, in the neighbourhood of the place where the statue is said to stand, and were highly diligent to heap together all things of advantage and reputation to the christian cause, would not have omitted so notable an instance. It is therefore likely that the statues which Eusebius saw, and concerning which he heard such stories, were first placed there upon the stock of a heathen story or ceremony; and in process of time, for the likeness of the figures, and its capacity to be translated to the christian story, were, by the christians in after-ages, attributed by a fiction of fancy, and afterwards by credulity confidently applied, to the present narrative.

21. "When Jesus was come to the ruler's house," he found the minstrels making their funeral noises for the death of Jairus's daughter, and his servants had met him, and acquainted him of "the death of the child;" yet Jesus turned out the minstrels, and "entered with the parents of the child into her chamber, and taking her by the hand, called her," and awakened her from her sleep of death, and "commanded them to give her to eat," and enjoined them not to publish the miracle. But as flames, suppressed by violent detentions, break out and rage with a more impetuous and rapid motion, so it happened to Jesus; who, endeavouring to make the noises and reports of him less popular, made them to be œcumenical; for not only we do that most greedily from which we are most restrained, but a great merit, enamelled with humility, and restrained with modesty, grows more beauteous and florid up to the heights of wonder and glories.

22. As he came from Jairus's house, he cured two blind men, upon their petition, and confession

[l] Lib. vii. Hist. c. 14.
Ἐπίσημον Χριστοῦ ἄγαλμα, et τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἀνδριάντα. Apud Sozomen. lib. v. c. 20.
Johan. Damas. de Imagin. Orat. iii. ex Chronico Johan. Melalæ Antioch. Episc. ait, supplicem libellum oblatum Philippo Tetrarchæ Trachonitidis regionis, ut liceret statuas erigere in memoriam accepti beneficii.

[m] Mark v. 26. Luke viii. 43.

[n] Lib. iv. de Imagin. cap. 15.

that they did believe in him; and cast out a dumb devil, so much to the wonder and amazement of the people, that the Pharisees could hold no longer, being ready to burst with envy, but said, "he cast out devils by help of the devils:" their malice being, as usually it is, contradictory to its own design, by its being unreasonable; nothing being more sottish than for the devil to divide his kingdom upon a plot; to ruin his certainties upon hopes future and contingent. But this was but the first eruption of their malice; all the year last past, which was the first year of Jesus's preaching, all was quiet; neither the Jews, nor the Samaritans, nor the Galileans, did malign his doctrine or person, but he preached with much peace on all hands;[o] for this was the year which the prophet Isaiah called in his prediction "the acceptable year of the Lord."

Ad SECTION XII.

Considerations upon the Intercourse happening between the Holy Jesus and the Woman of Samaria.

1. WHEN the holy Jesus, perceiving it unsafe to be at Jerusalem, returned to Galilee, where the largest scene of his prophetical office was to be represented, he journeyed on foot through Samaria; and being weary and faint, hungry and thirsty, he sat down by a well, and begged water of a Samaritan woman that was a sinner; who at first refused him, with some incivility of language. But he, instead of returning anger and passion to her rudeness, which was commenced upon the interest of a mistaken religion,[a] preached the coming of the Messias to her, unlocked the secrets of her heart, and let in his grace, and made "a fountain of living water to spring up" in her soul, to extinguish the impure flames of lust which had set her on fire, burning like hell ever since the death of her fifth husband,[b] she then becoming a concubine to the sixth. Thus Jesus transplanted nature into grace, his hunger and thirst into religious appetites, the darkness of the Samaritan into a clear revelation, her sin into repentance and charity, and so quenched his own thirst by relieving her needs: and as "it was meat to him to do his Father's will," so it was drink to him to bring us to drink of "the fountain of living water." For thus God declared it to be a delight to him to see us live, as if he were refreshed by those felicities which he gives to us as communications of his grace, and instances of mercy, and consignations to heaven. Upon which we can look with no eye but such as sees and admires the excellency of the Divine charity, which, being an emanation from the mercies and essential compassion of eternity, God cannot choose but rejoice in it, and love the works of his mercy, who was so well pleased in the works of his power. He that was delighted in the creation, was highly pleased in the nearer conveyances of himself, when he sent the holy Jesus to bear his image, and his mercies, and his glories, and offer them to the use and benefit of man. For this was the chief of the works of God, and therefore the blessed Master could not but be highliest pleased with it, in imitation of his heavenly Father.

2. The woman, observing our Saviour to have come with his face from Jerusalem, was angry at him upon the quarrel of the old schism. The Jews and the Samaritans had differing rites, and the zealous persons upon each side did commonly dispute themselves into uncharitableness: and so have christians upon the same confidence, and zeal, and mistake. For although "righteousness hath no fellowship with unrighteousness, nor Christ with Belial;" yet the consideration of the crime of heresy, which is a spiritual wickedness, is to be separate from the person, who is material. That is, no spiritual communion is to be endured with heretical persons, when it is certain they are such, when they are convinced by competent authority and sufficient argument. But the persons of the men are to be pitied, to be reproved, to be redargued and convinced, to be wrought upon by fair compliances and the offices of civility, and invited to the family of faith by the best arguments of charity, and the instances of a holy life; "having your conversation honest among men, that they may, beholding your good works, glorify God in the day when he shall visit them."[c] Indeed, if there be danger, that is, a weak understanding may not safely converse in civil society with a subtle heretic; in such cases they are to be avoided,[d] not saluted: but as this is only when the danger is by reason of the unequal capacities and strengths of the person; so it must be only when the article is certainly heresy, and the person criminal, and interest is the ingredient in the persuasion, and a certain and a necessary truth destroyed by the opinion. We read that St. John, spying Cerinthus in a bath, refused to wash there where the enemy of God and his holy Son had been.[e] This is a good precedent for us when the case is equal. St. John could discern the spirit of Cerinthus; and his heresy was notorious, fundamental, and highly criminal, and the apostle a person assisted up to infallibility. And possibly it was done by the whisper of a prophetic spirit, and upon a miraculous design; for, immediately upon his retreat, the bath fell down, and crushed Cerinthus in the ruins. But such acts of aversation as these are not easily, by us, to be drawn into example, unless in the same or the parallel concourse of equally concluding accidents. We must not quickly, nor upon slight grounds, nor unworthy instances, call heretic; there had need be a long process, and a high conviction, and a competent judge, and a necessary article, that must be ingredients into so sad and decretory definitions, and condemnation of a person

[o] Epiphan. in Panar. lib. ii. tom. 1. hæres. 51.

[a] Apud ipsos fides obstinata, misericordia in promptu, adversus omnes alios hostile odium.—TACIT.

[b] Quæ nubit toties non nubit, adultera lege est. Offendor mœchâ simpliciore minùs.—MARTIAL. Ep.

[c] 1 Pet. ii. 12.

[d] Tit. iii. 10. 2 Epist. John 10.

[e] Irenæ. lib. iii. cap. 3. Euseb. lib. iii. cap. 13.

or opinion. But if such instances occur, come not near the danger nor the scandal. And this advice St. Cyprian[f] gave to the lay people of his diocess: "Let them decline their discourses, whose sermons creep and corrode like a cancer; let there be no colloquies, no banquets, no commerce with such who are excommunicate, and justly driven from the communion of the church." "For such persons (as St. Leo[g] descants upon the apostle's expression of heretical discourses) creep in humbly, and with small and modest beginnings; they catch with flattery, they bind gently, and kill privily." Let, therefore, all persons who are in danger, secure their persons and persuasions, by removing far from the infection. And for the scandal, St. Herminigilda gave an heroic example, which, in her persuasion, and the circumstances of the age and action, deserved the highest testimony of zeal, religious passion, and confident persuasion. For she rather chose to die by the mandate of her tyrant father, Leonigildus the Goth, than she would, at the paschal solemnity, receive the blessed sacrament at the hand of an Arian bishop.[h]

3. But excepting these cases, which are not to be judged with forwardness, nor rashly taken measure of, we find that conversing charitably with persons of different persuasions, hath been instrumental to their conversion, and God's glory. "The believing wife" may "sanctify the unbelieving husband;" and we find it verified in church story. St. Cecily converted her husband Valerianus; St. Theodora converted Sisinius; St. Monica converted Patricius, and Theodelinda, Agilulphus; St. Clotilda persuaded king Clodoveus to be a christian; and St. Natolia persuaded Adrianus to be a martyr. For they, having their conversation honest and holy amongst the unbelievers, shined like virgin-tapers in the midst of an impure prison, and amused the eyes of the sons of darkness with the brightness of the flame. For the excellency of a holy life is the best argument of the inhabitation of God within the soul: and who will not offer up his understanding upon that altar, where a Deity is placed as the president and author of religion? And this very intercourse of the holy Jesus with the woman is abundant argument, that it were well we were not so forward to refuse communion with dissenting persons, upon the easy and confident mistakes of a too forward zeal. They that call heretic may themselves be the mistaken persons, and, by refusing to communicate the civilities of hospitable entertainment, may shut their doors upon truth, and their windows against light, and refuse to let salvation in. For sometimes ignorance is the only parent of our persuasions, and many times interest hath made an impure commixture with it, and so produced the issue.

4. The holy Jesus gently insinuates his discourses. "If thou hadst known who it is that asks thee water, thou wouldest have asked water of him." Oftentimes we know not the person that speaks, and we usually choose our doctrine by our affections to the man: but then, if we are uncivil upon the stock of prejudice, we do not know that it is Christ that calls our understandings to obedience, and our affections to duty and compliances. The woman little thought of the glories which stood right against her. He that sat upon the well, had a throne placed above the heads of cherubims. In his arms, who there rested himself, was the sanctuary of rest and peace, where wearied souls were to lay their heads, and dispose their cares, and there to turn them into joys, and to gild their thorns with glory. That holy tongue, which was parched with heat, streamed forth rivulets of holy doctrine, which were to water all the world, to turn our deserts into paradise. And though he begged water at Jacob's well, yet Jacob drank at his: for at his charge all Jacob's flocks and family were sustained, and by him Jacob's posterity were made honourable and redeemed. But because this well was deep, and the woman "had nothing to draw water with," and of herself could not fathom so great a depth, therefore she refused him; just as we do, when we refuse to give drink to a thirsty disciple. Christ comes in that humble manner of address, under the veil of poverty or contempt, and we cannot see Christ from under that robe, and we send him away without an alms; little considering, that when he begs an alms of us in the instance of any of his poor relatives, he asks of us but to give him occasion to give a blessing for an alms. Thus do the ministers of religion ask support; but when the laws are not more just than many of the people are charitable, they shall fare as their Master did; they shall preach, but, unless they can draw water themselves, they shall not drink; but, *si sciremt*, if men did but know who it is that asks them, that it is Christ, either in his ministers, or Christ in his poor servants, certainly they could not be so obstructed in the issues of their justice and charity, but would remember that no honour could be greater, no love more fortunate, than to meet with an opportunity to be expressed in so noble a manner, that God himself is pleased to call his own relief.

5. When the disciples had returned from the town, whither they went to buy provision, they "wondered to see" the Master "talking" alone "with a woman." They knew he never did so before; they had observed him to be of a reserved deportment, and not only innocent, but secure from the dangers of malice and suspicion in the matter of incontinence. The Jews were a jealous and froward people: and as nothing will more blast the reputation of a prophet than effeminacy and wanton affections; so he knew no crime was sooner objected, or harder cleared, than that. Of which, because commonly it is acted in privacy, men look for no probation, but pregnant circumstances and arguments of suspect: so nothing can wash it off, until a man can prove a negative; and if he could, yet he is guilty enough in the estimate of the vulgar for having been accused. But then, because nothing is so destructive of the reputation of a governor, so contradictory to the authority and dignity of his person, as the low and baser appetites of uncleanness, and the consequent shame and scorn, (inso-

[f] Lib. i. ep. 3. [g] Serm. 5. de Jejun. Decimi Mensis. [h] Gregor. lib. iii. dial. iii. 13.

much that David, having fallen into it, prayed God to confirm or establish him *spiritu principali*, with the spirit of a prince, the spirit of lust being uningenuous and slavish,) the holy Jesus, who was to establish a new law in the authority of his person, was highly curious so to demean himself, that he might be a person incapable of any such suspicions, and of a temper apt not only to answer the calumny, but also to prevent the jealousy. But yet, now he had a great design in hand, he meant to reveal to the Samaritans the coming of the Messias; and to this, his discourse with the woman was instrumental. And, in imitation of our great Master, spiritual persons, and the guides of others, have been very prudent and reserved in their societies and intercourse with women. Heretics have served their ends upon the impotency of the sex; and having "led captive silly women," led them about as triumphs of lust, and knew no scandal greater than the scandal of heresy, and therefore sought not to decline any, but were infamous in their unwary and lustful mixtures. Simon Magus had his Helena partner of his lust and heresy; the author of the sect of the Nicolaitans (if St. Jerome was not misinformed) had whole troops of women; Marcion sent a woman as his emissary to Rome; Apelles had his Philomene; Montanus, Prisca and Maximilla; Donatus was served by Lucilla, Helpidius by Agape, Priscillian by Galla, and Arrius spreads his nets, by opportunity of his conversation with the prince's sister, and first he corrupted her, then he seduced the world.

6. But holy persons, preachers of true religion and holy doctrines, although they were careful, by public homilies, to instruct the female disciples, that they who are heirs together with us of the same hope, may be servants in the same discipline and institution; yet they remitted them to "their husbands" and guardians to be "taught at home."[i] And when any personal transactions concerning the needs of their spirit were, of necessity, to intervene between the priest and a woman, the action was done most commonly under public test; or if in private, yet with much caution and observation of circumstance, which might as well prevent suspicion as preserve their innocence. Conversation, and frequent and familiar address, does too much rifle the ligaments and reverence of spiritual authority, and, amongst the best persons, is matter of danger. When the cedars of Libanus have been observed to fall, when David and Solomon have been dishonoured, he is a bold man that will venture farther than he is sent in errand by necessity, or invited by charity, or warranted by prudence. I deny not but some persons have made holy friendships with women; St. Athanasius with a devout and religious virgin, St. Chrysostome with Olympia, St. Jerome with Paula Romana, St. John with the elect Lady, St. Peter and St. Paul with Petronilla[k] and Tecla. And, therefore, it were a jealousy beyond the suspicion of monks and eunuchs, to think it impossible to have a chaste conversation with a distinct sex. 1. A pure and right intention, 2. an intercourse not extended beyond necessity or holy ends, 3. a short stay, 4. great modesty, 5. and the business of religion, will, by God's grace, hallow the visit, and preserve the friendship in its being spiritual, that it may not degenerate into carnal affection. And yet, these are only advices useful when there is danger in either of the persons, or some scandal incident to the profession, that to some persons, and in the conjunction of many circumstances, are oftentimes not considerable.

7. When Jesus had resolved to reveal himself to the woman, he first gives her occasion to reveal herself to him, fairly insinuating an opportunity to confess her sins, that, having purged herself from her impurity, she might be apt to entertain the article of the revelation of the Messias. And indeed a crime in our manners is the greatest indisposition of our understanding to entertain the truth and doctrine of the gospel; especially when the revelation contests against the sin, and professes open hostility to the lust. For faith being the gift of God, and an illumination, the Spirit of God will not give this light to them that prefer their darkness before it; either the will must open the windows, or the light of faith will not shine into the chamber of the soul. "How can ye believe," said our blessed Saviour, "that receive honour one of another?"[l] Ambition and faith, believing God and seeking of ourselves, are incompetent, and totally incompossible. And therefore Serapion, bishop of Thmuis, spake like an angel, (saith Socrates,[m]) saying, "that the mind, which feedeth upon spiritual knowledge, must thoroughly be cleansed. The irascible faculty must first be cured with brotherly love and charity, and the concupiscible must be suppressed with continency and mortification." Then may the understanding apprehend the mysteriousness of christianity. For, since christianity is a holy doctrine, if there be any remanent affections to a sin, there is in the soul a party disaffected to the entertainment of the institution, and we usually believe what we have a mind to: our understandings, if a crime be lodged in the will, being like icterical eyes, transmitting the species to the soul with prejudice, disaffection, and colours of their own framing.[n] If a preacher should discourse, that there ought to be a parity amongst christians, and that their goods ought to be in common, all men will apprehend, that not princes and rich persons, but the poor and the servants, would soonest become disciples, and believe the doctrines, because they are the only persons likely to get by them; and it concerns the other not to believe him, the doctrine being destructive of their interests. Just such a persuasion is every persevering love to a vicious habit; it having possessed the understanding with fair opinions of it, and surprised the will with passion and desires, whatsoever doctrine is its

[i] 1 Cor. xiv. 35.
[k] Quam B. Petri filiam naturalem non fuisse rectè probat Baronius.
[l] John v. 44.
[m] Lib. iv. Hist. cap. 23.
[n] Lurida prætereà fiunt quæcunque tuentur
Arquati———————
Multaque sunt oculis in eorum denique mista,
Quæ contage suâ palloribus omnia pingunt.—Lucret. l. iv.

enemy, will with infinite difficulty be entertained. And we know a great experience of it, in the article of the Messias dying on the cross, which, though infinitely true, yet, because "to the Jews it was a scandal, and to the Greeks foolishness," it could not be believed, they remaining in that indisposition; that is, unless the will were first set right, and they willing to believe any truth, though for it they must disclaim their interest: their understanding was blind, because the heart was hardened, and could not receive the impression of the greatest moral demonstration in the world.

8. The holy Jesus asked water of the woman, unsatisfying water; but promised that himself, to them that ask him, would give waters of life, and satisfaction infinite; so distinguishing the pleasures and appetites of this world from the desires and complacencies spiritual. Here we labour, but receive no benefit; we sow many times, and reap not; or reap, and do not gather in; or gather in, and do not possess; or possess, but do not enjoy; or if we enjoy, we are still unsatisfied, it is with anguish of spirit, and circumstances of vexation. A great heap of riches makes neither our clothes warm, nor our meat more nutritive, nor our beverage more pleasant; and it feeds the eye, but never fills it, but, like drink to an hydropic person, increases the thirst, and promotes the torment. But the grace of God, though but like a grain of mustard seed, fills the furrows of the heart; and as the capacity increases, itself grows up in equal degrees, and never suffers any emptiness or dissatisfaction, but carries content and fulness all the way; and the degrees of augmentation are not steps and near approaches to satisfaction, but increasings of the capacity; the soul is satisfied all the way, and receives more, not because it wanted any, but that it can now hold more, is more receptive of felicities: and in every minute of sanctification there is so excellent a condition of joy and high satisfaction, that the very calamities, the afflictions, and persecutions of the world, are turned into felicities by the activity of the prevailing ingredient; like a drop of water falling into a tun of wine, it is ascribed into a new family, losing its own nature by a conversion into the more noble. For now that all passionate desires are dead, and there is nothing remanent that is vexatious, the peace, the serenity, the quiet sleeps, the evenness of spirit, and contempt of things below, remove the soul from all neighbourhood of displeasure, and place it at the foot of the throne, whither, when it is ascended, it is possessed of felicities eternal. These were the waters which were given to us to drink, when, with the rod of God, the rock Christ Jesus was smitten: the Spirit of God moves for ever upon these waters; and when the angel of the covenant hath stirred the pool, whoever descends hither shall find health and peace, joys spiritual, and the satisfactions of eternity.

THE PRAYER.

O holy Jesus, fountain of eternal life, thou spring of joy and spiritual satisfactions, let the holy stream of blood and water issuing from thy sacred side cool the thirst, soften the hardness, and refresh the barrenness of my desert soul; that I, thirsting after thee, as the wearied hart after the cool stream, may despise all the vainer complacencies of this world, refuse all societies but such as are safe, pious, and charitable, mortify all sottish appetites, and may desire nothing but thee, seek none but thee, and rest in thee with entire dereliction of my own caitive inclinations; that the desires of nature may pass into desires of grace, and my thirst and my hunger may be spiritual, and my hopes placed in thee, and the expresses of my charity upon thy relatives, and all the parts of my life may speak my love, and obedience to thy commandments: that thou possessing my soul, and all its faculties, during my whole life, I may possess thy glories in the fruition of a blessed eternity; by the light of thy gospel here, and the streams of thy grace, being guided to thee, the fountain of life and glory, there to be inebriated with the waters of paradise, with joy, and love, and contemplation, adoring and admiring the beauties of the Lord for ever and ever. Amen.

Considerations upon Christ's First Preaching, and the Accidents happening about that Time.

1. "When John was cast into prison, then began Jesus to preach;" not only because the ministry of John, by order of Divine designation, was to precede the publication of Jesus, but also upon prudent considerations and designs of Providence, lest two great personages at once upon the theatre of Palestine might have been occasion of divided thoughts, and these have determined upon a schism, some professing themselves to be of Christ, some of John. For once an offer was made of a dividing question by the spite of the Pharisees, "Why do the disciples of John fast often, and thy disciples fast not?" But when John went off from the scene, then Jesus appeared, like the sun in succession to the morning star, and there were no divided interests upon mistake, or the fond adherences of the followers. And although the holy Jesus would certainly have cured all accidental inconveniences which might have happened in such accidents; yet this may become a precedent to all prelates, to be prudent in avoiding all occasions of a schism, and, rather than divide a people, submit and relinquish an opportunity of preaching to their inferiors, as knowing that God is better served by charity than a homily; and if my modesty made me resign to my inferior, the advantages of honour to God by the cessions of humility are of greater consideration than the smaller and accidental advantages of better penned and more accurate discourses. But our blessed Lord, designing to gather disciples, did it in the manner of the more extraordinary persons and doctors of the Jews, and particularly of the Baptist, he initiated them into the institution by the solemnity of a baptism; but yet he was pleased not to minister it in his own

person. His apostles were baptized in John's baptism, said Tertullian;[a] or else, St. Peter only was baptized by his Lord, and he baptized the rest. However, the Lord was pleased to depute the ministry of his servants, that so he might constitute a ministry; that he might reserve it to himself as a specialty to "baptize with the Spirit," as his servants did "with water;" that he might declare, that the efficacy of the rite did not depend upon the dignity of the minister, but his own institution, and the holy covenant; and lastly, lest they who were baptized by him in person might please themselves above their brethren, whose needs were served by a lower ministry.

2. The holy Jesus, the great Physician of our souls, now entering upon his cure, and the diocess of Palestine, which was afterwards enlarged to the pale of the catholic church, was curious to observe all advantages of prudence for the benefit of souls, by the choice of place, by quitting the place of his education, (which, because it had been poor and humble, was apt to procure contempt to his doctrine, and despite to his person,) by fixing in Capernaum, which had the advantage of popularity, and the opportunity of extending the benefit, yet had not the honour and ambition of Jerusalem; that the ministers of religion might be taught to seek and desire employment in such circumstances which may serve the end of God, but not of ambition; to promote the interest of souls, but not the inordination of lower appetites. Jesus quitted his natural and civil interests, when they were less consistent with the end of God and his prophetical office, and considered not his mother's house and the vicinage, in the accounts of religion, beyond those other places in which he might better do his Father's work: in which a forward piety might behold the insinuation of a duty to such persons, who, by rights of law and custom, were so far instrumental to the cure of souls, as to design the persons; they might do but duty if they first considered the interests of souls before the advantages of their kindred and relatives: and although, if all things else be alike, they may in equal dispositions prefer their own before strangers; yet it were but reason that they should first consider sadly if the men be equal, before they remember that they are of their kindred, and not let this consideration be ingredient into the former judgment. And another degree of liberty yet there is; if our kindred be persons apt and holy, and without exceptions either of law, or prudence, or religion, we may do them advantages before others who have some degrees of learning and improvement beyond the other: or else no man might lawfully prefer his kindred, unless they were absolutely the ablest in a diocess or kingdom; which doctrine were a snare apt to produce scruples to the consciences, rather than advantages to the cure. But then also patrons should be careful, that they do not account their clerks by an estimate taken from comparison with unworthy candidates, set up on purpose, that when we choose our kindred we may abuse our consciences by saying, we have fulfilled our trust, and made election of the more worthy. In these and the like cases, let every man who is concerned deal with justice, nobleness, and sincerity, with the simplicity of a christian and the wisdom of a man, without tricks and stratagems, to disadvantage the church by doing temporal advantages to his friend or family.

3. The blessed Master began his office with a sermon of repentance, as his decessor, John the Baptist, did in his ministration, to tell the world that the new covenant, which was to be established by the mediation and office of the holy Jesus, was a covenant of grace and favour, not established upon works, but upon promises, and remission of right on God's part, and remission of sins on our part. The law was "a covenant of works," and whoever prevaricated any of its sanctions in a considerable degree, he stood sentenced by it without any hopes of restitution supplied by the law. And therefore it was the "covenant of works;" not because good works were then required more than now, or because they had more efficacy than now; but because all our hopes did rely upon the perfection of works and innocence, without the suppletories of grace, pardon, and repentance. But the gospel is therefore "a covenant of grace," not that works are excluded from our duty, or from co-operating to heaven; but that, because there is in it so much mercy, the imperfections of the works are made up by the grace of Jesus, and the defects of innocence are supplied by the substitution of repentance. Abatements are made for the infirmities and miseries of humanity; and if we do our endeavour now, after the manner of men, the faith of Jesus Christ, that is, conformity to his laws, and submission to his doctrine, entitles us to the grace he hath purchased for us, that is, our sins for his sake shall be pardoned. So that the law and the gospel are not opposed barely upon the title of faith and works, but as the "covenant of faith" and the "covenant of works." In the faith of a christian, works are the great ingredient and the chief of the constitution, but the gospel is not "a covenant of works," that is, it is not an agreement upon the stock of innocence without allowances of repentance, requiring obedience in rigour and strictest estimate. But the gospel requires the holiness of a christian, and yet after the manner of a man; for, always provided that we do not allow to ourselves a liberty, but endeavour with all our strength, and love with all our soul, that which, if it were upon our allowance, would be required at our hands, now that it is against our will, and highly contested against, is put upon the stock of Christ, and allowed to us by God in the accounts of pardon by the merits of Jesus, by the covenant of the gospel. And this is the repentance and remission of sins which John first preached upon the approximation of the kingdom, and Christ at the first manifestation of it, and the apostles afterward in the name of Jesus.

4. Jesus now having begun his preaching, began also to gather his family; and first called Simon and Andrew, then James and John, at whose voca-

[a] Lib. de Baptism.

tion he wrought a miracle, which was a signification of their office, and the success of it; a draught of fishes so great and prodigious, that it convinced them that he was a person very extraordinary, whose voice the fishes heard, and came at his call: and since he designed them to become "fishers of men," although themselves were as unlikely instruments to persuade men, as the voice of the Son of man to command fishes, yet they should prevail in so great numbers, that the whole world should run after them, and, upon their summons, come into the net of the gospel, becoming disciples of the glorious Nazarene. St. Peter, the first time that he threw his net, at the descent of the Holy Ghost in Pentecost, caught three thousand men; and at one sermon, sometimes the princes of a nation have been converted, and the whole land presently baptized; and the multitudes so great, that the apostles were forced to design some men to the ministration of baptism by way of peculiar office; and it grew to be work enough, the easiness of the ministry being made busy and full of employment where a whole nation became disciples. And indeed the doctrine is so holy, the principle so Divine, the instruments so supernatural, the promises so glorious, the revelations so admirable, the rites so mysterious, the whole fabric of the discipline so full of wisdom, persuasion, and energy, that the infinite number of the first conversions were not so great a wonder, as that there are so few now; every man calling himself christian, but few having that "power of godliness" which distinguishes christian from a word and an empty name. And the word is now the same, and the arguments greater, (for some have been growing ever since, as the prophecies have been fulfilled,) and the sermons more, and "the Spirit the same;" and yet such "diversity of operations," that we hear and read the sermons and dictates evangelical as we do a romance, but that it is with less passion, but altogether as much unconcerned as with a story of Salmanasar or Ibrahim Bassa: for we do not leave one vice, or reject one lust, or deny one impetuous temptation the more, for the four Gospels' sake, and all St. Paul's epistles mingled in the argument. And yet all think themselves fishes within Christ's net, and the prey of the gospel: and it is true they are so; for "the kingdom is like unto a net, which enclosed fishes good and bad;" but this shall be of small advantage when the net shall be drawn to the shore, and the separation made.

5. When Jesus called those disciples, they had been "fishing all night, and caught nothing;" but when Christ bade them "let down the net," they took multitudes: to show to us, that the success of our endeavours is not in proportion to our labours, but the Divine assistance and benediction. It is not the excellency of the instrument, but the capacity of the subject, nor yet this alone, but the aptness of the application, nor that without an influence from Heaven, can produce the fruits of a holy persuasion and conversion. "Paul may plant, and Apollos may water; but God gives the increase." Indeed, when we let down the nets at the Divine appointment, the success is the more probable; and certainly God will bring benefit to the place, or honour to himself, or salvation to them that will obey, or conviction to them that will not: but whatever the fruit be in respect of others, the reward shall be great to themselves. And therefore St. Paul did not say he had profited, but, "he had laboured more than they all," as knowing the Divine acceptance would take its account in proportion to our endeavours and intendments; not by commensuration to the effect, which being without us, depending upon God's blessing, and the co-operation of the recipients, can be no ingredients into our account. But this also may help to support the weariness of our hopes, and the protraction and deferring of our expectation, if a laborious prelate and an assiduous preacher have but few returns to his many cares and greater labours. A whole night a man may labour, (the longest life is no other,) and yet catch nothing, and then the Lord may visit us with his special presence, and more forward assistance, and the harvest may grow up with the swiftness of a gourd, and the fruitfulness of olives, and the plaisance of the vine, and the strength of wheat; and whole troops of penitents may arise from the darkness of their graves at the call of one sermon, even when he pleases: and till then we must be content that we do our duty, and lay the consideration of the effect at the feet of Jesus.

6. In the days of the patriarchs, the governors of the Lord's people were called shepherds: so was Moses, and so was David. In the days of the gospel they are shepherds still, but with the addition of a new appellative, for now they are called fishers. Both the callings were honest, humble, and laborious, watchful and full of trouble; but now that both the titles are conjunct, we may observe the symbol of an implicit and folded duty. There is much simplicity and care in the shepherd's trade; there is much craft and labour in the fisher's: and a prelate is to be both full of piety to his flock, careful of their welfare; and because, in the political and spiritual sense too, feeding and governing are the same duty, it concerns them that have cure of souls to be discreet and wary, observant of advantages, laying such baits for the people as may entice them into the nets of Jesus's discipline. "But being crafty I caught you," saith St. Paul; for he was a fisher too. And so must spiritual persons be fishers to all spiritual senses of watchfulness, and care, and prudence: only they must not fish for preferment and ambitious purposes, but must say with the king of Sodom, "Date nobis animas, cætera vos tollite;" which St. Paul renders, "We seek not yours, but you." And in order to such acquist, the purchase of souls, let them have the diligence and the craft of fishers, the watchfulness and care of shepherds, the prudence of politics, the tenderness of parents, the spirit of government, the wariness of observation, great knowledge of the dispositions of their people, and experience of such advantages by means

of which they may serve the ends of God, and of salvation upon their souls.

7. When Peter had received the fruits of a rich miracle, in the prodigious and prosperous draught of fishes, he instantly "falls down at the feet of Jesus," and confesses himself "a sinner," and unworthy of the presence of Christ. In which confession I not only consider the conviction of his understanding by the testimony of the miracle, but the modesty of his spirit, who, in his exaltation and the joy of a sudden and happy success, retired into humility and consideration of his own unworthiness, lest, as it happens in sudden joys, the lavishness of his spirit should transport him to intemperance, to looser affections, to vanity, and garishness, less becoming the severity and government of a disciple of so great a Master. For in such great and sudden accidents, men usually are dissolved and melted into joy and inconsideration, and let fly all their severe principles and discipline of manners, till, as Peter here did, though to another purpose, they say to Christ, "Depart from me, O Lord;" as if such excellencies of joys, like the lesser stars, did disappear at the presence of him, who is the fountain of all joys regular and just. When the spirits of the body have been bound up by the cold winter air, the warmth of the spring makes so great an aperture of the passages, and, by consequence, such dissolution of spirits, in the presence of the sun, that it becomes the occasion of fevers and violent diseases. Just such a thing is a sudden joy, in which the spirits leap out from their cells of austerity and sobriety, and are warmed into fevers and wildnesses, and forfeiture of all judgment and vigorous understanding. In these accidents, the best advice is to temper and allay our joys with some instant consideration of the vilest of our sins, the shamefulness of our disgraces, the most dolorous accidents of our lives, the worst of our fears, with meditation of death, or the terrors of doomsday, or the unimaginable miseries of damned and accursed spirits.[b] For such considerations as these are good instruments of sobriety, and are correctives to the malignity of excessive joys or temporal prosperities, which, like minerals, unless allayed by art, prey upon the spirits, and become the union of a contradiction, being turned into mortal medicines.

8. At this time "Jesus preached to the people from the ship," which, in the fancies and tropical discoursings of the old doctors, signifies the church, and declares, that the homilies of order and authority must be delivered from the oracle; they that preach must be sent, and God hath appointed tutors and instructors of our consciences by special designation and peculiar appointment: if they that preach do not make their sermons from the ship, their discourses either are the false murmurs of heretics and false shepherds, or else of thieves and invaders of authority, or corrupters of discipline and order. For God, that loves to hear us in special places, will also be heard himself by special persons; and since he sent his angels ministers to convey his purposes of old, then when "the law was ordained by angels, as by the hands of a mediator,"[c] now also he will send his servants, the sons of men, since the new law was ordained by the Son of man, who is the Mediator between God and man in the new covenant. And, therefore, in the ship Jesus preached, but he had first caused it "to put off from land;" to represent to us, that the ship in which we preach must be put off from the vulgar communities of men,[d] separate from the people, by the designation of special appointment and of special holiness; that is, they neither must be common men nor of common lives, but consecrated by order, and hallowed by holy living, lest the person want authority in destitution of a divine character, and his doctrine lose its energy and power when the life is vulgar, and hath nothing in it holy and extraordinary.

9. The holy Jesus, in the choice of his apostles, was resolute and determined to make election of persons bold and confident; (for so the Galileans were observed naturally to be, and Peter was the boldest of the twelve, and a good sword-man, till the spirit of his Master had fastened his sword within the scabbard, and charmed his spirit into quietness;) but he never chose any of the scribes and Pharisees, none of the doctors of the law, but persons ignorant and unlearned; which, in designs and institutions whose divinity is not demonstrated from other arguments, would seem an art of concealment and distrust. But in this, which derives its rays from the fountain of wisdom most openly and infallibly, it is a contestation against the powers of the world upon the interests of God, that he who does all the work might have all the glory, and in the productions in which he is fain to make the instruments themselves, and give them capacity and activity, every part of the operation, and causality, and effect, may give to God the same honour he had from the creation, for his being the only workman; with the addition of those degrees of excellency which, in the work of redemption of man, are beyond that of his creation and first being.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal Jesu, Lord of the creatures, and Prince of the catholic church, to whom all creatures obey, in acknowledgment of thy supreme dominion, and all, according to thy disposition, co-operate to the advancement of thy kingdom, be pleased to order the affairs and accidents of the world, that all things in their capacity may do the work of the gospel, and co-operate to the good of the elect, and retrench the growth of vice, and advance the interests of virtue. Make all the states and orders of men disciples of thy holy institution: let princes worship thee, and defend religion; let thy clergy do thee honour by personal zeal, and vigilance

[b] Simul et quod gaudes et quod times contrahe.—SENECA.

[c] Gal. iii. 19.

[d] Χωρεῖν γὰρ τὸ ὅμοιον πρὸς ὅμοιον, ὅθεν καὶ μόνος ἱερεὺς ὁ σοφὸς λέγεται, μόνος θεοφιλὴς, μόνος εἰδὼς ἔνξασθαι· μόνος γὰρ οἶδε τιμᾶν, ὁ τὴν ἀξίαν μὴ συγχέων τῶν τιμωμένων, καὶ ὁ προηγουμένως ἱερεῖον ἑαυτὸν προσάγων.—HIEROCL. in Pythag.

over their flocks; let all the world submit to thy sceptre, and praise thy righteousness, and adore thy judgments, and revere thy laws: and, in the multitudes of thy people within the enclosures of thy nets, let me also communicate in the offices of a strict and religious duty, that I may know thy voice and obey thy call, and entertain thy Holy Spirit, and improve my talents; that I may also communicate in the blessings of the church; and when the nets shall be drawn to the shore, and the angels shall make separation of the good fishes from the bad, I may not be rejected, or thrown into those seas of fire which shall afflict the enemies of thy kingdom; but be admitted into the societies of saints, and the everlasting communion of thy blessings and glories, O blessed and eternal Jesu. Amen.

DISCOURSE IX.

Of Repentance.

1. The whole doctrine of the gospel is comprehended by the Holy Ghost in these two summaries, "faith and repentance;"[a] that those two potent and imperious faculties, which command our lower powers, which are the fountain of actions, occasion and capacity of laws, and the title to reward or punishment, the will and the understanding, that is, the whole man considered in his superior faculties, may become subjects of the kingdom, servants of Jesus, and heirs of glory. Faith supplies our imperfect conceptions, and corrects our ignorance, making us to distinguish good from evil, not only by the proportions of reason, and custom, and old laws, but by the new standard of the gospel; it teaches us all those duties which were enjoined us in order to a participation of mighty glories; it brings our understanding into subjection, making us apt to receive the Spirit for our guide, Christ for our master, the gospel for our rule, the laws of christianity for our measure of good and evil: and it supposes us naturally ignorant, and comes to supply those defects which, in our understandings, were left after the spoils of innocence and wisdom made in paradise upon Adam's prevarication, and continued and increased by our neglect, evil customs, voluntary deceptions, and infinite prejudices. And as faith presupposes our ignorance, so repentance presupposes our malice and iniquity. The whole design of Christ's coming, and the doctrines of the gospel, being to recover us from a miserable condition, from ignorance to spiritual wisdom, by the conduct of faith; and from a vicious, habitually depraved life, and ungodly manners, to the purity of the sons of God, by the instrument of repentance.

2. And this is a loud publication of the excellency and glories of the gospel, and the felicities of man over all the other instances of creation. The angels, who were more excellent spirits than human souls, were not comprehended and made safe within a covenant and provisions of repentance. Their first act of volition was their whole capacity of a blissful or a miserable eternity: they made their own sentence when they made their first election; and having such excellent knowledge, and no weaknesses to prejudge and trouble their choice, what they first did was not capable of repentance; because they had at first, in their intuition and sight, all which could afterwards bring them to repentance. But weak man, who knows first by elements, and, after long study, learns a syllable, and in good time gets a word, could not at first know all those things which were sufficient to determine his choice, but as he grew to understand more, saw more reasons to rescind his first elections. The angels had a full peremptory will, and a satisfied understanding, at first, and therefore were not to mend their first act by a second contradictory: but poor man hath a will always strongest when his understanding is weakest, and chooseth most when he is least able to determine; and, therefore, is most passionate in his desires, and follows his object with greatest earnestness, when he is blindest, and hath the least reason so to do. And therefore God, pitying man, begins to reckon his choices to be criminal just in the same degree as he gives him understanding. The violences and unreasonable actions of childhood are no more remembered by God, than they are understood by the child. The levities and passions of youth are not aggravated by the imputation of malice, but are sins of a lighter dye, because reason is not yet impressed, and marked upon them with characters and tincture in grain. But he who (when he may choose, because he understands) shall choose the evil, and reject the good, stands marked with a deep guilt, and hath no excuse left to him, but as his degrees of ignorance left his choice the more imperfect. And because every sinner, in the style of Scripture, is a fool, and hath an election as imperfect as is the action, that is, as great a declension from prudence as it is from piety, and the man understands as imperfectly as he practises; therefore God sent his Son to "take upon him, not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham,"[b] and to propound salvation upon such terms as were possible, that is, upon such a piety which relies upon experience, and trial of good and evil; and hath given us leave, if we choose amiss at first, to choose again, and choose better; Christ having undertaken to pay for the issues of our first follies, to make up the breach made by our first weaknesses and abused understandings.

3. But as God gave us this mercy by Christ, so he also revealed it by him. He first used the authority of a Lord, and a Creator, and a Lawgiver: he required obedience, indeed, upon reasonable terms, upon the instance of but a few commandments at first, which when he afterwards multiplied, he also appointed ways to expiate the smaller irregularities; but left them eternally bound without remedy, who should do any great violence or a crime. But then he bound them but to a temporal death. Only this, as an eternal death was also tacitly implied, so also a remedy was secretly ministered, and repentance particularly preached by homilies dis-

[a] Acts xx. 21.

[b] Heb. ii. 16.

tinct from the covenant of Moses's law. The law allowed no repentance for greater crimes; "he that was convicted of adultery, was to die without mercy:"[c] but God pitied the miseries of man, and the inconveniences of the law, and sent Christ to suffer for the one, and remedy the other; "for so it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations."[d] And now this is the last and only hope of man, who, in his natural condition, is imperfect, in his customs vicious, in his habits impotent and criminal. Because man did not remain innocent, it became necessary he should be penitent,[e] and that this penitence should, by some means, be made acceptable, that is, become the instrument of his pardon, and restitution of his hope. Which, because it is an act of favour, and depends wholly upon the Divine dignation, and was revealed to us by Jesus Christ, who was made, not only the Prophet and Preacher, but the Mediator of this new covenant and mercy; it was necessary we should become disciples of the holy Jesus, and servants of his institution; that is, run to him to be made partakers of the mercies of this new covenant, and accept of him such conditions as he should require of us.

4. This covenant is then consigned to us when we first come to Christ, that is, when we first profess ourselves his disciples and his servants, disciples of his doctrine, and servants of his institution; that is, in baptism, in which Christ, who died for our sins, makes us partakers of his death. "For we are buried by baptism into his death,"[f] saith St. Paul. Which was also represented in ceremony by the immersion appointed to be the rite of that sacrament. And then it is that God pours forth, together with the sacramental waters, a salutary and holy fountain of grace, to wash the soul from all its stains and impure adherences. And, therefore, this first access to Christ is, in the style of Scripture, called "regeneration, the new birth, redemption, renovation, expiation, or atonement with God, and justification."[g] And these words in the New Testament relate principally and properly to the abolition of sins committed before baptism. For we are "justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past: to declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness." And this is that which St. Paul calls "justification by faith," that "boasting might be excluded," and the grace of God by Jesus made exceeding glorious.[h] For this being the proper work of Christ, the first entertainment of a disciple, and manifestation of that state which is first given him as a favour, and next intended as a duty, is a total abolition of the precedent guilt of sin, and leaves nothing remaining that can condemn; we then freely receive the entire and perfect effect of that atonement which Christ made for us, we are put into a condition of innocence and favour. And this, I say, is done regularly in baptism, and St. Paul expresses it to this sense; after he had enumerated a series of vices subjected in many, he adds, "and such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified."[i] There is nothing of the old guilt remanent; when "ye were washed, ye were sanctified," or, as the Scripture calls it in another place, "Ye were redeemed from your vain conversation."[k]

5. For this grace was the formality of the covenant: "Repent, and believe the gospel.[l] Repent, and be converted," (so it is in St. Peter's sermon,) "and your sins shall be done away,"[m] that was the covenant. But that Christ chose baptism for its signature, appears in the parallel: "Repent, and be baptized, and wash away your sins: for Christ loved his church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy, and without blemish."[n] The sanctification is integral, the pardon is universal and immediate.

6. But here the process is short; no more at first but this, "Repent, and be baptized, and wash away your sins;"[o] which baptism, because it was speedily administered, and yet not without the preparatives of faith and repentance, it is certain those predispositions were but instruments of reception, actions of great facility, of small employment, and such as, supposing the person not unapt,[p] did confess the infiniteness of the Divine mercy, and fulness of the redemption, and is called by the apostle, "a being justified freely."[q]

7. Upon this ground it is, that, by the doctrine of the church, heathen persons, "strangers from the covenant of grace," were invited to a confession of faith, and dereliction of false religions, with a promise, that, at the very first resignation of their persons to the service of Jesus, they should obtain full pardon.[r] It was St. Cyprian's counsel to old Demetrianus, "Now, in the evening of thy days, when thy soul is almost expiring, repent of thy sins, believe in Jesus, and turn christian; and although thou art almost in the embraces of death, yet thou

[c] Lev. xx. 10. [d] Luke xxiv. 46. 47.

[e] Parcus deorum cultor et infrequens,
Insanientis dum sapientiæ
Consultus erro, nunc retrorsum
Vela dare, atque iterare cursus
Cogor relictos.—HOR. lib. i. od. 34.

[f] Rom. vi. 4.

[g] 1 Pet. iii. 21. Rom. v. 1. Tit. iii. 5, 7. Rom. iii. 26. Gal. ii. 16.

[h] Rom. iii. 24–28. [i] 1 Cor. vi. 11. [k] 1 Pet. i. 18.

[l] Mark i. 15. [m] Acts iii. 19.

[n] Acts ii. 38. Mark xvi. 16. Eph. v. 25–27.

[o] *Φαίνεσθέ μοι οὐ κατ' ἄνθρωπον ζῶντες, ἀλλὰ κατὰ Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν τὸν δι' ἡμᾶς ἀποθανόντα, ἵνα πιστεύοντες εἰς τὸν θάνατον αὐτοῦ διὰ τοῦ βαπτίσματος κοινωνοὶ τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ γένησθε.*—IGNAT. ad Trall.

Εἶπον δὲ, δι' ὕδατος, καὶ πίστεως, καὶ ξύλου, οἱ προπαρασκευαζόμενοι, καὶ μετανοοῦντες ἐφ' οἷς ἥμαρτον, ἐκφεύξονται τὴν μέλλουσαν ἐπέρχεσθαι τοῦ Θεοῦ κρίσιν.—JUST. MART. Dial. cum Tryph.

[p] Acts viii. 37. x. 47. and xvi. 15, 33. [q] Rom. iii. 24.

[r] Eadem est ratio laborantium in vinea quos dominus in parabola, Matt. xx. undecimâ demum horâ conduxerat, omnes æqualem sortem promerebantur. Ratio autem est, quia anteà vocati non erant: "Nemo nos conduxerat," verse 7. *Θέλει δικαιοπραγῆσαι ὁ λῃστὴς, ἀλλὰ προλαμβάνει ὁ θάνατος.* Cui respondet Christus, *Οὐ τὸ ἔργον περιμένω μόνον, ἀλλὰ τὴν πίστιν ἀπεδεξάμην.*—CYRIL. Hieros.

shalt be comprehended of immortality." "Baptizatus ad horam securus hinc exit," saith St. Austin; a baptized person dying immediately shall live eternally and gloriously. And this was the case of the thief upon the cross; he confessed Christ, and repented of his sins, and begged pardon, and did acts enough to facilitate his first access to Christ, and but to remove the hinderances of God's favour; then he was redeemed and reconciled to God by the death of Jesus, that is, he was pardoned with a full, instantaneous, integral, and clear pardon; with such a pardon which declared the glory of God's mercies, and the infiniteness of Christ's merits, and such as required a mere reception and entertainment on man's part.

8. But then we, having received so great a favour, enter into covenant to correspond with a proportionable endeavour; the benefit of absolute pardon, that is, salvation of our souls, being not to be received till "the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;" [s] all the interval we have promised to live a holy life, in obedience to the whole discipline of Jesus. That is the condition on our part: and if we prevaricate that, the mercy shown to the blessed thief is no argument of hope to us, because he was saved by the mercies of the first access, which corresponds to the remission of sins we receive in baptism; and we shall perish, by breaking our own promises and obligations, which Christ passed upon us when he made with us the covenant of an entire and gracious pardon.[t]

9. For in the precise covenant there is nothing else described, but pardon so given and ascertained upon an obedience persevering to the end. And this is clear in all those places of Scripture which express a holy and innocent life to have been the purpose and design of Christ's death for us, and redemption of us from the former estate.[u] "Christ bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead unto sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye are healed." [x] (Exinde,) from our being "healed," from our "dying unto sin," from our being "buried with Christ," from our being "baptized into his death;" the end of Christ's dying for us is, "that we should live unto righteousness." Which was also highly and prophetically expressed by St. Zacharias,[y] in his divine ecstasy: this was "the oath which he sware to our forefather Abraham, that he would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life." And St. Paul[z] discourses to this purpose pertinently and largely: "For the grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, ('Hi sunt angeli quibus in lavacro renunciavimus,' saith Tertullian, 'Those are the evil angels, the devil and his works, which we deny or renounce in baptism,') we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;" that is, lead a whole life in the pursuit of universal holiness; sobriety, justice, and godliness, being the proper language to signify our religion and respects to God, to our neighbours, and to ourselves. And that this was the very end of our dying in baptism, and the design of Christ's manifestation of our redemption, he adds,[a] "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus, who gave himself for us," to this very purpose, "that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Purifying a people peculiar to himself, is cleansing it in the laver of regeneration, and appropriating it to himself in the rites of admission and profession. Which plainly designs the first consignation of our redemption to be in baptism, and that Christ, there cleansing his church "from every spot or wrinkle," made a covenant with us, that we should renounce all our sins, and he should cleanse them all, and then that we should abide in that state. Which is also very explicitly set down by the same apostle, in that divine and mysterious epistle to the Romans: [b] "How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death?" Well, what then? "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into his death, that, like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." That is the end and mysteriousness of baptism; it is a consignation into the death of Christ, and we die with him that once; that is, die to sin, that we may for ever after live the life of righteousness. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him; that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin;" [c] that is, from the day of our baptism to the day of our death. And therefore God, who knows the weaknesses on our part, and yet the strictness and necessity of conserving baptismal grace by the covenant evangelical, hath appointed the auxiliaries of the Holy Spirit to be ministered to all baptized people in the holy rite of confirmation, that it might be made possible to be done by Divine aids, which is necessary to be done by the Divine commandments.

10. And this might not be improperly said to be the meaning of those words of our blessed Saviour, "He that speaks a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but he that speaks a word against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him:" that is, those sins which were committed in infidelity, before we became disciples of the holy Jesus, are to be remitted in baptism and our first

[s] Acts iii. 19.

[t] Licèt latro veniam meruisset in fine de omni suo crimine, non tamen dedit baptizatis peccandi et perseverandi auctoritatem. Tunc enim baptizatus est, qui tunc primùm Christum in cruce confessus est. Pœnitentia enim, sit in extremo vitæ hiatu advenerit, sanat et liberat in ablutione baptismi. Illi autem qui, cùm potuerunt, nunquam converti voluerunt, confitentes cùm jam peccare nequeunt, non sic facilè acquirunt quod volunt.—S. Aug. cap. Nullus de Pœnit. dist. 7.

[u] Vide Part III. Consid. of Crucifix. of Jesus.

[x] 1 Pet. ii. 24.

[y] Luke i. 73, &c.

[z] Titus ii. 11, 12.

[a] Ib. ver. 13, 14.

[b] Rom. vi. 2—4.

[c] Ib. ver. 6.

profession of the religion; but the sins committed after baptism and confirmation, in which we receive the Holy Ghost, and by which the Holy Spirit is grieved, are to be accounted for with more severity. And therefore the primitive church,[d] understanding our obligations according to this discourse, admitted not any to holy orders who had lapsed and fallen into any sin of which she could take cognizance, that is, such who had not kept the integrity of their baptism; but sins committed before baptism were no impediments to the susception of orders, because they were absolutely extinguished in baptism. This is the nature of the covenant we made in baptism, that is, the grace of the gospel, and the effect of faith and repentance; and it is expected we should so remain. For it is no where expressed to be the mercy and intention of the covenant evangelical, that this redemption should be any more than once, or that repentance, which is in order to it, can be renewed to the same, or so great purposes and present effects.

11. But after we are once reconciled in baptism, and put entirely into God's favour, when we have once been redeemed,[e] if we then fall away into sin, we must expect God's dealing with us in another manner, and to other purposes. Never must we expect to be so again justified, and upon such terms as formerly; the best days of our repentance are interrupted: not that God will never forgive them that sin after baptism, and recover by repentance; but that restitution by repentance after baptism, is another thing than the first redemption. No such entire, clear, and integral, determinate, and presential effects of repentance; but an imperfect, little, growing, uncertain, and hazardous reconciliation: a repentance that is always in production, a renovation by parts, a pardon that is revocable, a "salvation" to be "wrought by fear and trembling;" all our remanent life must be in bitterness, our hopes allayed with fears, our meat attempered with coloquintida, and "death is in the pot:" as our best actions are imperfect, so our greatest graces are but possibilities and aptnesses to a reconcilement, and all our life we are working ourselves into that condition we had in baptism, and lost by our relapse. As the habit lessens, so does the guilt; as our virtues are imperfect, so is the pardon; and because our piety may be interrupted, our state is uncertain,[f] till our possibilities of sin are ceased, till our "fight is finished," and the victory therefore made sure because there is no more fight. And it is remarkable, that St. Peter gives counsel to live holily, in pursuance of our redemption, of our calling, and of our "escaping from that corruption that is in the world through lust," lest we lose the benefit of our purgation, to which, by way of antithesis, he opposes this: "Wherefore the rather give diligence to make your calling and election sure." And, "if ye do these things, ye shall never fall."[g] Meaning, by the perpetuating our state of baptism and first repentance we shall never fall, but be in a sure estate; "our calling and election shall be sure."[h] But not, if we fall; "if we forget we were purged from our old sins;"[i] if we forfeit our "calling," we have also made our "election" unsure, movable, and disputable.

12. So that now the hopes of lapsed sinners rely upon another bottom. And, as in Moses's law there was no revelation of repentance, but yet the Jews had hopes in God, and were taught the succours of repentance, by the homilies of the prophets, and other accessory notices; so in the gospel the covenant was established upon faith and repentance, but it was consigned in baptism, and was verifiable only in the integrity of a following holy life according to the measures of a man; not perfect, but sincere; not faultless, but heartily endeavoured: but yet the mercy of God, in pardoning sinners lapsed after baptism, was declared to us by collateral and indirect occasions; by the sermons of the apostles, and the commentaries of apostolical persons, who understood the meaning of the Spirit, and the purposes of the Divine mercy, and those other significations of his will, which the blessed Jesus left upon record in other parts of his testament, as in codicils annexed, besides the precise testament itself. And it is certain, if, in the covenant of grace, there be the same involution of an after-repentance, as there is of present pardon upon past repentance and future sanctity, it is impossible to justify, that a holy life, and a persevering sanctity, is enjoined by the covenant of the gospel: if, I say, in its first intention, it be declared that we may as well, and upon the same terms, hope for pardon upon a recovery hereafter, as upon the perseverance in the present condition.

13. From these premises, we may soon understand what is the duty of a christian in all his life, even to pursue his own undertaking made in baptism, or his first access to Christ, and redemption of his person from the guilt and punishment of sins. The state of a christian is called in Scripture "regeneration, spiritual life, walking after the Spirit, walking in newness of life;" that is, "a bringing forth fruits meet for repentance." That repentance, which, tied up in the same ligament with faith, was the disposition of a christian to his regeneration and atonement, must have holy life in perpetual succession; for that is the apt and proper fruit of the first repentance which John the Baptist preached as an introduction to christianity, and as an entertaining the redemption by the blood of the covenant. And all that is spoken in the New Testament, is nothing but a calling upon us to do what we promised in our regeneration, to perform that which was the design of Christ, who therefore redeemed us, and "bare our

[d] Vitia catechumeno non imputantur fideli, imò et polygamia ante baptismum sacerdotibus non ponebat obicem. S. Hieron. in fin. Apol. I. contra Ruffin.

De sacramento enim agitur, non de peccato.—S. Aug. de Bono Conjugali.

Nam in baptismo omnia peccata dimittuntur.—Ca. Apost. 17. Concil. Eliber. cap. 30, 31.

Mundus post diluvium rursus delinquens igni destinatur: sicut et homo qui post baptismum delicta restaurat.—Tertul. de Baptis.

[e] Nunc hic dies aliam vitam adfert, alios mores postulat.

[f] Ante obitum nemo supremaque funera felix.

[g] 2 Pet. i. 4, 10. [h] Vide etiam Col. i. 21—23.

[i] 2 Pet. i. 9.

sins in his own body, that we might die unto sin, and live unto righteousness."

14. This is that saying of St. Paul,[k] "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you." Plainly saying, that unless we pursue the state of holiness and christian communion, into which we were baptized when we received the grace of God, we shall fail of the state of grace, and never come to see the glories of the Lord. And a little before, "Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."[l] That is the first state of our redemption, that is "the covenant God made with us, to remember our sins no more, and to put his laws in our hearts and minds."[m] And this was done "when our bodies were washed with water, and our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience," that is, in baptism. It remains then that we persist in the condition, that we may continue our title to the covenant; for so it follows, "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for if we sin wilfully after the profession, there remains no more sacrifice:"[n] that is, if we hold not fast the profession of our faith, and continue not the condition of the covenant, but fall into a contrary state, we have forfeited the mercies of the covenant. So that all our hopes of blessedness, relying upon the covenant made with God in Jesus Christ, are ascertained upon us by "holding fast that profession," by retaining "our hearts" still "sprinkled from an evil conscience," by "following peace with all men, and holiness;" for, by not "failing of the grace of God," we shall not fail of our hopes, "the mighty price of our high calling;" but without all this, we shall never see the face of God.

15. To the same purpose are all those places of Scripture, which entitle us to Christ and the Spirit upon no other condition but a holy life, and a prevailing, habitual, victorious grace. "Know you not your own selves," brethren, "how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"[o] There are but two states of being in order to eternity, either a state of the inhabitation of Christ, or the state of reprobation: either "Christ is in us," or we "are reprobates." But what does that signify, to have "Christ dwelling in us?" That also we learn at the feet of the same doctor: "If Christ be in you, the body is dead by reason of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness."[p] The body of sin is mortified, and the life of grace is active, busy, and spiritual, in all them who are not in the state of reprobation. The parallel with that other expression of his, "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."[q] If sin be vigorous, if it be habitual, if it be beloved, if it be not dead, or dying in us, we are not of Christ's portion, we belong not to him, nor he to us. For "whoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God:"[r] that is, every regenerate person is in a condition, whose very being is a contradiction and an opposite design to sin. When he was regenerate, and born anew "of water and the Spirit, the seed of God," the original of piety, was put into him, and bidden to "increase and multiply." "The seed of God," (in St. John,) is the same with "the word" of God, (in St. James,) "by which he begat us;"[s] and as long as this remains, a regenerate person cannot be given up to sin; for when he is, he quits his baptism, he renounces the covenant, he alters his relation to God in the same degree as he enters into a state of sin.

16. And yet this discourse is no otherwise to be understood than according to the design of the thing itself and the purpose of God; that is, that it be a deep engagement and an effectual consideration for the necessity of a holy life; but at no hand let it be made an instrument of despair, nor an argument to lessen the influences of the Divine mercy. For although the nicety and limits of the covenant, being consigned in baptism, are fixed upon the condition of a holy and persevering uninterrupted sanctity; and our redemption is wrought but once, completed but once, we are but once absolutely, entirely, and presentially forgiven, and reconciled to God, this reconciliation being in virtue of the sacrifice, and this sacrifice applied in baptism is one, as "baptism is one," and as the sacrifice is one: yet the mercy of God, besides this great feast, hath fragments, which the apostles and ministers spiritual are to gather up in baskets, and minister to the after-needs of indigent and necessitous disciples.

17. And this we gather, as fragments are gathered, by respersed sayings, instances and examples of the Divine mercy recorded in holy Scripture. The holy Jesus commands us to "forgive our brother seventy times seven times," when he asks our pardon and implores our mercy; and since the Divine mercy is the pattern of ours, and is also procured by ours, the one being made the measure of the other, by way of precedent and by way of reward, God will certainly forgive us as we forgive our brother: and it cannot be imagined God should oblige us to give pardon oftener than he will give it himself, especially since he hath expressed ours to be a title of a proportionable reception of his; and hath also commanded us to ask pardon all days of our life, even in our daily offices, and to beg it in the measure and rule of our own charity and forgiveness to our brother. And therefore God, in his infinite wisdom, foreseeing our frequent relapses, and considering our infinite infirmities, appointed in his church an ordinary ministry of pardon; designing the minister to pray for sinners, and promising to accept him in that his advocation, or that he would open or shut heaven respectively to his act on earth; that is, he would hear his prayers, and verify his ministry, to whom he hath "committed the word of reconciliation." This became a duty to christian ministers, spiritual persons, that they should "restore a person overtaken in a fault,"[t] that is, reduce

[k] Heb. xii. 14, 15. [l] Heb. x. 22. [m] Ver. 16, 17.
[n] Heb. x. 23, 26. [o] 2 Cor. xiii. 5. [p] Rom. viii. 10.
[q] Gal. v. 24. [r] 1 John iii. 9.
[s] James i. 18. [t] Gal. vi. 1.

him to the condition he begins to lose; that they should "pray over sick persons,"[u] who are also commanded to "confess their sins;" and God hath promised, that "the sins they have committed shall be forgiven them." Thus St. Paul absolved the incestuous, excommunicate Corinthian; in the person of Christ he forgave him.[x] And this, also, is the confidence St. John taught the christian church, upon the stock of the excellent mercy of God, and propitiation of Jesus: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."[y] Which discourse he directs to them who were christians, already initiated into the institution of Jesus. And the epistles which the Spirit sent to the seven Asian churches, and were particularly addressed to the bishops, the angels, of those churches, are exhortations, some to perseverance, some to repentance, that "they may return from whence they are fallen."[z] And the case is so with us, that it is impossible we should be actually and perpetually free from sin, in the long succession of a busy, and impotent, and a tempted conversation. And without these reserves of the Divine grace, and after-emanations from the mercy-seat, no man could be saved; and the death of Christ would become inconsiderable to most of his greatest purposes: for none should have received advantages but newly-baptized persons, whose albs of baptism served them also for a winding-sheet. And, therefore, our baptism, although it does consign the work of God presently to the baptized person in great, certain, and entire effect, in order to the remission of what is past, in case the catechumen be rightly disposed, or hinders not; yet it hath also influence upon the following periods of our life, and hath admitted us into a lasting state of pardon, to be renewed and actually applied by the sacrament of the Lord's supper, and all other ministries evangelical, and so long as our repentance is timely, active, and effective.[a]

18. But now, although it is infinitely certain, that the gates of mercy stand open to sinners after baptism; yet it is with some variety, and greater difficulty. He that renounces christianity, and becomes apostate from his religion, not by a seeming abjuration under a storm, but by a voluntary and hearty dereliction, he seems to have quitted all that grace which he had received when he was illuminated, and to have lost the benefits of his redemption and former expiation. And I conceive this is the full meaning of those words of St. Paul, which are of highest difficulty and latent sense; "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened," &c. "if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance."[b] The reason is there subjoined, and more clearly explicated a little after: "For if we sin wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sins; for he hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite to the Spirit of grace."[c] The meaning is diverse, according to the degrees of apostasy or relapse. They who fall away after they were once enlightened in baptism,[d] and felt all those blessed effects of the sanctification and the emanations of the Spirit, if it be into a contradictory state of sin and mancipation, and obstinate purposes to serve Christ's enemies; then "there remains nothing but a fearful expectation of judgment:" but if the backsliding be but the interruption of the first sanctity by a single act, or an unconformed, unresolved, unmalicious habit; then, also, "it is impossible to renew them unto repentance," viz. as formerly; that is, they can never be reconciled as before, integrally, fully, and at once, during this life. For that redemption and expiation was by baptism, into Christ's death; and there are no more deaths of Christ, nor any more such sacramental consignations of the benefit of it; "there is no more sacrifice for sins," but the redemption is one, as the sacrifice is one in whose virtue the redemption does operate. And, therefore, the Novatians, who were zealous men, denied to the first sort of persons the peace of the church, and remitted them to the Divine judgment. The[e] church herself was sometimes almost as zealous against the second sort of persons lapsed into capital crimes, granting to them repentance but once; by such disciplines consigning this truth, That every recession from the state of grace, in which by baptism we were established and consigned, is a farther step from the possibilities of heaven, and so near a ruin, that the church thought them persons fit to be transmitted to a judicature immediately Divine; as supposing either her power to be too little, or the other's malice too great; or else the danger too violent, or the scandal insupportable. For concerning such persons, who once were pious, holy, and forgiven, (for so is every man and woman worthily and aptly baptized,) and afterwards fell into dissolution of manners, "extinguishing the Holy Ghost, doing despite to the Spirit of grace, crucifying again the Lord of life;" that is, returning to such a condition from which they were once recovered, and could not otherwise be so but by the death of our dearest Lord; I say, concerning such persons the Scripture speaks very suspiciously, and to the sense and signification of an infinite danger. For if the speaking a word "against the Holy Ghost be not to be pardoned, here nor here-

[u] James v. 14.

[x] Εἴ τις ἐπίσκοπος ἢ πρεσβύτερος τὸν ἐπιστρέφοντα ἀπὸ ἁμαρτίας οὐ προσδέχεται, ἀλλὰ ἀποβάλλεται, καθαιρείσθω, ὅτι λυπεῖ Χριστὸν τὸν εἰπόντα, Χαρὰ γίνεται ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ ἐπὶ ἑνὶ ἁμαρτωλῷ μετανοοῦντι.—Can. Apost. 51.

Ὁ πιστευθεὶς παρὰ Θεοῦ λύειν καὶ δεσμεῖν, εἰ φιλανθρωπότερος γένοιτο, οὐκ ἔσται καταγνώσεως ἄξιος.—S. BASIL. Can. Pœnit.

[y] 1 John i. 9.

[z] Apocal. ii. 5.

[a] See Discourse vi. of Baptism.

[b] Heb. vi. 4, 6.

[c] Heb. x. 26, 29.

[d] Quid igitur? rejecta est pœnitentia? Haudquaquam: sed renovatio per novum baptisma rejecta est. Renovatio namque solius lavacri est; ex hac causa ab apostolo dicitur lavacrum regenerationis et renovationis Spiritûs Sancti.—THEOPHYL. in hunc locum.

Idem aiunt S. Chrys. Ambros. Anselm. in 10. Heb.

[e] Collocavit in vestibulo pœnitentiam secundam quæ pulsantibus patefaciat, sed jam semel, quia jam secundò; sed ampliùs nunquam, quia proximè frustra. Hujus igitur pœnitentiæ secundæ et unius, &c.—TERTUL. lib. de Pœnit. c 7, 9.

after," what can we imagine to be the end of such an impiety, which "crucifies the Lord of life, and puts him to an open shame;" which "quenches the Spirit, doing despite to the Spirit of grace?" Certainly that is worse than speaking against him. And such is every person who falls into wilful apostasy from the faith, or does that violence to holiness which the other does to faith; that is, extinguishes the sparks of illumination, "quenches the Spirit," and is habitually and obstinately criminal in any kind. For the same thing that atheism was in the first period of the world, and idolatry in the second, the same is apostasy in the last; it is a state wholly contradictory to all our religious relation to God, according to the nature and manner of the present communication. Only this last, because it is more malicious, and a declension from a greater grace, is something like the fall of angels. And of this the emperor Julian was a sad example.

19. But as these are degrees immediately next, and a little less; so the hopes of pardon are the more visible. Simon Magus spake a word, or at least thought, against the Holy Ghost; he "thought he was to be bought with money." Concerning him, St. Peter pronounced, "Thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity: yet repent, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee."[f] Here the matter was of great difficulty; but yet there was a possibility left, at least no impossibility of recovery declared. And therefore St. Jude bids us, "of some to have compassion, making a difference; and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire;"[g] meaning, that their condition is only not desperate. And still in descent, retaining the same proportion, every lesser sin is easier pardoned, as better consisting with the state of grace: the whole Spirit is not destroyed, and the body of sin is not introduced: Christ is not quite ejected out of possession, but, like an oppressed prince, still continues his claim; and such is his mercy, that he will still do so, till all be lost, or that he is provoked by too much violence, or that antichrist is put in substitution, and "sin reigns in our mortal body." So that I may use the words of St. John: "These things I write unto you, that you sin not. But if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is a propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world."[h] That is plainly, Although the design of the gospel be, that we should erect a throne for Christ to reign in our spirits, and this doctrine of innocence be therefore preached, that we sin not; yet if one be overtaken in fault, despair not; Christ is our Advocate, and he is the propitiation: he did propitiate the Father by his death, and the benefit of that we receive at our first access to him; but then he is our Advocate too, and prays perpetually for our perseverance or restitution respectively. But his purpose is, and he is able so to do, "to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory."

20. This consideration I intend should relate to all christians of the world: and although, by the present custom of the church, we are baptized in our infancy, and do not actually reap that fruit of present pardon, which persons of a mature age in the primitive church did, (for we yet need it not, as we shall when we have past the calentures of youth, which was the time in which the wisest of our fathers in Christ chose for their baptism, as appears in the instance of St. Ambrose, St. Austin, and divers others,) yet we must remember, that there is a baptism of the Spirit as well as of water: and whenever this happens, whether it be together with that baptism of water, as usually it was when only men and women of years of discretion were baptized; or whether it be ministered in the rite of confirmation, which is an admirable suppletory of an early baptism, and intended by the Holy Ghost for a corroborative of baptismal grace, and a defensative against danger; or that, lastly, it be performed by an internal and merely spiritual ministry, when we, by acts of our own election, verify the promise made in baptism, and so bring back the rite, by receiving the effect of baptism; that is, whenever the "filth of our flesh is washed away," and that we have "the answer of a pure conscience towards God," which St. Peter affirms to be the true baptism, and which, by the purpose and design of God, it is expected we should not defer longer than a great reason or a great necessity enforces; when our sins are first expiated, and the sacrifice and death of Christ is made ours, and we made God's by a more immediate title (which at some time or other happens to all christians, that pretend to any hopes of heaven); then let us look to our standing, and "take heed lest we fall. When we once have tasted of the heavenly gift, and are made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come," that is, when we are redeemed by an actual mercy and presential application, which every christian that belongs to God is at some time or other of his life; then a fall into a deadly crime is highly dangerous, but a relapse into a contrary estate is next to desperate.

21. I represent this sad, but most true doctrine, in the words of St. Peter: "If, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome; the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them."[i] So that a relapse, after a state of grace, into a state of sin, into confirmed habits, is to us a great sign, and possibly in itself it is more than a sign, even a state, of reprobation and final abscission.[k]

[f] Acts viii. 20, 22, 23.
[g] Ver. 22, 23.
[h] 1 John ii. 1, 2.
[i] 2 Pet. ii. 20, 21.
[k] ——Neque amissos colores
Lana refert medicata fuco:
Nec vera virtus, cùm semel excidit,
Curat reponi deterioribus. – Hor. lib. iii. od. 5.

22. The sum of all is this. There are two states of like opposite terms. First, "Christ redeems us from our vain conversation," and reconciles us to God, putting us into an entire condition of pardon, favour, innocence, and acceptance; and becomes our Lord and King, his Spirit dwelling and reigning in us. The opposite state to this, is that which in Scripture is called a "crucifying the Lord of life, a doing despite to the Spirit of grace, a being entangled in the pollutions of the world;" the apostasy, or falling away; an impotency, or disability to do good, viz. of such who "cannot cease from sin;"[l] who are slaves of sin, and in whom "sin reigns in their bodies." This condition is a full and integral deletery of the first; it is such a condition, which, as it hath no holiness or remanent affections to virtue, so it hath no hope or revelation of a mercy, because all that benefit is lost which they received by the death of Christ; and the first being lost, "there remains no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment." But between these two states, stand all those imperfections and single delinquencies, those slips and falls, those parts of recession and apostasy, those grievings of the Spirit: and so long as any thing of the first state is left, so long we are within the covenant of grace, so long we are within the ordinary limits of mercy and the Divine compassion; we are in possibilities of recovery, and the same sacrifice of Christ hath its power over us; Christ is in his possession, though he be disturbed: but then our restitution consists upon the only condition of a renovation of our integrity; as are the degrees of our innocence, so are our degrees of confidence.

23. Now, because the intermedial state is divisible, various, successive, and alterable; so also is our condition of pardon. Our flesh shall no more return as that of a little child; our wounds shall never be perfectly cured; but a scar, and pain, and danger of a relapse, shall for ever afflict us; our sins shall be pardoned by parts and degrees, to uncertain purposes, but with certain danger of being recalled again; and the pardon shall never be consummate, till that day in which all things have their consummation.

24. And this is evident to have been God's usual dealing with all those upon whom his name is called. God pardoned David's sins of adultery and murder; but the pardon was but to a certain degree, and in a limited expression: "God hath taken away thy sin; thou shalt not die." But this pardon was as imperfect as his condition was: "Nevertheless, the child that is born unto thee, that shall die."[m] Thus God pardoned the Israelites, at the importunity of Moses, and yet threatened to visit that sin upon them in the day of visitation. And so it is in christianity: when once we have broken and discomposed the golden chain of vocation, election, and justification, which are entire links and methodical periods of our happiness, when we first give up our names to Christ, for ever after our condition is imperfect; we have broken our covenant, and we must be saved by the excrescences and overflowings of mercy. Our whole endeavour must be, to be reduced to the state of our baptismal innocence and integrity, because in that the covenant was established. And since our life is full of defailances, and all our endeavours can never make us such as Christ made us, and yet upon that condition our hopes of happiness were established; I mean, of remaining such as he had made us: as are the degrees of our restitution and access to the first federal condition, so also are the degrees of our pardon. But as it is always in imperfection during this life, and subject to change and defailance; so also are the hopes of our felicity; never certain till we are taken from all danger; never perfect till all that is imperfect in us is done away.[n]

25. And, therefore, in the present condition of things, our pardon was properly expressed by David, and St. Paul, by "a covering,"[o] and "a not imputing."[p] For because the body of sin dies divisibly, and fights perpetually, and disputes with hopes of victory, and may also prevail, all this life is a condition of suspense; our sin is rather covered, than properly pardoned; God's wrath is suspended, not satisfied; the sin is not to all purposes of anger imputed, but yet is in some sense remanent, or at least lies ready at the door. Our condition is a state of imperfection; and every degree of imperfection brings a degree of recession from the state Christ put us in; and every recession from our innocence is also an abatement of our confidence: the anger of God hovers over our head, and breaks out into temporal judgments; and he retracts them again, and threatens worse, according as we approach to or retire from that first innocence, which was the first entertainment of a christian, and the crown of the evangelical covenant. Upon that we entertained the mercies of redemption; and God established it upon such an obedience, which is a constant, perpetual, and universal sincerity and endeavour: and as we perform our part, so God verifies his, and not only gives a great assistance by the perpetual influences of his Holy Spirit, by which we are consigned to the day of redemption, but also takes an account of obedience, not according to the standard of the law and an exact scrutiny, but by an evangelical proportion; in which we are, on one side, looked upon as persons already redeemed and assisted, and therefore highly engaged; and on the other side, as compassed about with infirmities and enemies, and therefore much pitied. So that, as at first, our "calling and election" is presently good, and shall remain so, if we make it sure; so if we once prevaricate it, we are rendered then full of hazard, difficulty, and uncertainty, and we must, with pains and sedulity, "work out our salvation with fear and trembling;" first, by preventing a fall; or afterwards, by returning to that excellent condition from whence we have departed.

26. But although the pardon of sins after baptism be, during this life, difficult, imperfect, and revocable; yet because it is to great effects for the

[l] 2 Pet. ii. 14.
[m] 2 Sam. xii. 13, 14.
[n] Μήπω μέγαν εἴπῃς πρὶν τελευτήσαντ' ἴδῃς. — SOPHOCL.
[o] Psal. xxxii. 1, 2.
[p] Rom. iv 7.

present, and in order to a complete pardon in the day of judgment, we are next to inquire, what are the parts of duty to which we are obliged, after such prevarications which usually interrupt the state of baptismal innocence, and the life of the Spirit. St. John gives this account: "If we say we have fellowship with God, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have communion one with another, and the blood of Jesus cleanseth us from all sin."[q] This state of duty St. Paul calls, "a casting off the works of darkness, a putting on the armour of light, a walking honestly, a putting on the Lord Jesus Christ."[r] And to it he confronts, "making provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof." St. Peter, describing the duty of a christian, relates the proportion of it as high as the first precedent, even God himself: "As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy, in all manner of conversation: not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts."[s] And again: "Seeing, then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness?"[t] And St. John, with the same severity and perfection: "Every one that hath this hope," (that is, every one who either does not, or hath no reason to despair,) "purifieth himself, even as God is pure;"[u] meaning, that he is pure by a divine purity, which God hath prescribed as an imitation of his holiness, according to our capacities and possibilities.

That purity must needs be "a laying aside all malice, and guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and evil speakings;"[x] so St. Peter expresses it: "a laying aside every weight, and the sin that does so easily beset us;"[y] so St. Paul, This is to "walk in the light, as he is in the light, for in him is no darkness at all;"[z] which we have then imitated, when we have "escaped the corruption that is in the world through lusts;"[a] that is, so as we are "not held by them," that we take them for our enemies, for the object and party of our contestation and spiritual fight, "when we contend earnestly" against them, "and resist them unto blood," if need be; that is being "pure as he is pure." But besides this positive rejection of all evil, and perpetually contesting against sin, we must pursue the interests of virtue and an active religion.

27. "And besides this," saith St. Peter, "giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to your virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity."[b] All this is an evident prosecution of the first design, the holiness and righteousness of a whole life; the being clear from all spots and blemishes, a being pure, and so presented unto Christ: for upon this the covenant being founded, to this all industries must endeavour, and arrive in their proportions. "For if these things be in you and abound, they shall make that you be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and hath forgotten he was purged from his old sins;"[c] that is, he hath lost his baptismal grace, and is put from the first state of his redemption, towards that state which is contradictory and destructive of it.

28. Now, because all these things are in latitude, distance, and divisibility, and only enjoin a sedulity and great endeavour, all that we can dwell upon is this, That he who endeavours most is most secure, and every degree of negligence is a degree of danger; and although in the intermedial condition, between the two states of christianity and a full impiety, there is a state of recovery and possibility, yet there is danger in every part of it; and it increases according as the deflexion and irregularity comes to its height, position, state, and finality. So that we must "give all diligence to work out our salvation," and it would ever be "with fear and trembling:" with fear, that we do not lose our innocence; and with trembling, if we have lost it, for fear we never recover, or never be accepted. But holiness of life and uninterrupted sanctity, being the condition of our salvation, the ingredient of the covenant, we must proportion our degrees of hope, and confidence of heaven, according as we have obtained degrees of innocence, or perseverance, or restitution. Only this: as it is certain he is in a state of reprobation who lives unto sin, that is, whose actions are habitually criminal, who gives more of his consent to wickedness than to virtue; so it is also certain he is not in the state of God's favour and sanctification, unless he lives unto righteousness; that is, unless his desires, and purposes, and endeavours, and actions, and customs, are spiritual, holy, sanctified, and obedient. When sin is dead, and the Spirit is life; when the lusts of the flesh are mortified, and the heart is purged from an evil conscience, and we abound in a whole system of christian virtues; when our hearts are right to God, and with our affections and our wills we love God, and keep his commandments; when we do not only "cry, Lord, Lord," but also "do his will;" then "Christ dwells in us," and we in Christ. Now let all this be taken in the lowest sense that can be imagined, all, I say, which out of Scripture I have transcribed; "casting away every weight, laying aside all malice, mortifying the deeds of the flesh, crucifying the old man with all his affections and lusts, and then having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust;" besides this, "adding virtue to virtue till all righteousness be fulfilled in us, walking in the light, putting on the Lord Jesus, purifying ourselves as God is pure, following peace with all men and holiness, resisting unto blood, living in the Spirit, being holy in all manner of conversation as he is holy, being careful and excellent in all conversation

[q] 1 John i. 6, 7. [r] Rom. xiii. 12–14.
[s] 1 Pet. i. 14, 15. [t] 2 Pet. iii. 11. [u] 1 John iii. 3.
[x] 1 Pet. ii. 1. [y] Heb. xii. 1. [z] 1 John i. 5, 7.
[a] 2 Pet. i. 4. [b] Ibid. ver. 5, &c.
Veri boni aviditas tuta est. Quid sit istud, interrogas, aut unde subeat? dicam: ex bona conscientia, ex honestis consiliis, ex rectis actionibus, ex contemptu fortuitorum, ex placido vitæ et continuo tenore unam prementis viam.—SEN. ep. 23.
[c] 2 Pet. i. 8, 9.

and godliness;" all this, being a pursuit of the first design of Christ's death, and our reconcilement, can mean no less but that, 1. We should have in us no affection to a sin; of which we can best judge, when we never choose it, and never fall under it but by surprise, and never lie under it at all, but instantly recover, judging ourselves severely: and, 2. That we should choose virtue with great freedom of spirit and alacrity, and pursue it earnestly, integrally,[d] and make it the business of our lives:[e] and that, 3. The effect of this be, that sin be crucified in us, and the desires to it dead, flat, and useless; and that our desires of serving Christ be quick-spirited, active, and effective, inquisitive for opportunities, apprehensive of the offer, cheerful in the action, and persevering in the employment.

29. Now let a prudent person imagine what infirmities and oversights can consist with a state thus described, and all that does no violence to the covenant; God pities us, and calls us not to an account for what morally cannot, or certainly will not, with great industry, be prevented.[f] But whatsoever is inconsistent with this condition is an abatement from our hopes, as it is a retiring from our duty, and is, with greater or less difficulty, cured, as are the degrees of its distance from that condition which Christ stipulated with us, when we became his disciples. For we are just so restored to our state of grace and favour, as we are restored to our state of purity and holiness. Now this redintegration, or renewing of us into the first condition, is also called repentance, and is permitted to all persons who still remain within the powers and possibilities of the covenant, that is, who are not in a state contradictory to the state and portion of grace; but with a difficulty increased by all circumstances, and incidences, of the crime and person. And this I shall best represent in repeating these considerations: 1. Some sins are past hopes of pardon in this life; 2. All that are pardoned are pardoned by parts, revocably and imperfectly during this life, not quickly nor yet manifestly; 3. Repentance contains in it many operations, parts, and employments, its terms and purpose being to redintegrate our lost condition, that is, in a second and less perfect sense, but, as much as in such circumstances we can, to verify our first obligations of innocence and holiness, in all manner of conversation and godliness.

30. Concerning the first, it is too sad a consideration to be too dogmatical and conclusive in it; and, therefore, I shall only recall those expresses of Scripture which may, without envy, decree the article: such as are those of St. Paul, that there is a certain sort of men, whom he twice describes, whom "it is impossible to renew again unto repentance;" or those of St. Peter, such whose "latter end is worse than the beginning, because, after they once had escaped the pollutions of the world, they are entangled therein;" such who, as our blessed Saviour threatens, "shall never be forgiven in this world, nor in the world to come." For there is an unpardonable estate, by reason of its malice and opposition to the covenant of grace; and there is a state unpardonable, because the time of repentance is past. There are days and periods of grace: "If thou hadst known, at least in this thy day," said the weeping Saviour of the world to foreknown and determined Jerusalem. When God's decrees are gone out, they are not always revocable: and, therefore, it was a great caution of the apostle, that we should "follow peace and holiness, and look diligently that we fall not from the grace of God, lest any of us become like Esau, to whose repentance there was no place left, though he sought it carefully with tears;"[g] meaning, that we also may put ourselves into a condition, when it shall be impossible we should be renewed unto repentance: and those are they "who sin a sin unto death, for whom" we have, from the apostle, no encouragement "to pray."[h] And these are in so general and conclusive terms described in Scripture, that every persevering sinner hath great reason to suspect himself to be in the number: if he endeavours, as soon as he thinks of it, to recover, it is the best sign he was not arrived so far; but he that liveth long in a violent and habitual course of sin, is at the margin and brim of that state of final reprobation; and some men are in it before they be aware, and to some God reckons their days swifter, and their periods shorter. The use I make of this consideration is, that if any man hath reason to suspect, or to be certain, that his time of repentance is past, it is most likely to be a death-bed penitent, after a vicious life, a life contrary to the mercies and grace of the evangelical covenant; for he hath provoked God as long as he could, and rejected the offers of grace as long as he lived, and refused virtue till he could not entertain her, and hath done all those things which a person rejected from hopes of repentance can easily be imagined to have done. And if there be any time of rejection, although it may be earlier, yet it is also certainly the last.

31. Concerning the second, I shall add this to the former discourse of it, that perfect pardon of sins is not in this world at all, after the first emission and great efflux of it in our first regeneration. During this life we are in imperfection, minority, and under conditions, which we have prevaricated; and our recovery is in perpetual flux, in heightenings and declensions, and we are highly uncertain of our acceptation, because we are not certain of our restitution and innocence; we know not whether we have done all that is sufficient to repair the breach made in the first state of favour and baptismal grace. But "he that is dead," saith St. Paul, "is justified from sin;"[i] not till then. And therefore, in the doctrine of the most learned Jews, it is affirmed: "He that is guilty of the profanation of the name of God, he shall not interrupt the apparent malignity of it by

[d] Bonum ex integra causa, malum ex quolibet defectu peculiari.

[e] Χρόνος δίκαιον ἄνδρα δείκνυσιν μόνος.
Κακὸν δὲ κᾆν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ γνοίης μιᾷ.—Sophocl. Œd. Tyr.

[f] Illud enim esset, (quod apud Diodorum Siculum,) Τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης καὶ κοινῆς ἀσθενείας ἐπιλανθάνεσθαι, ἕως ἄν τις ἀναμαρτήτους κολάζῃ, τὸ μέτρον ὑπερβαίνει τῆς κατὰ φύσιν ἐπανορθώσεως. Sopater dixit dissimulanda τὰ μικρὰ καὶ συνήθη τῶν ἁμαρτημάτων. Malè hoc; nisi in quantum vitari non possunt.

[g] Heb. xii. 14–17.

[h] 1 John v. 16.

[i] Rom. vi. 7.

his present repentance, nor make atonement in the day of expiation, nor wash the stains away by chastising of himself; but during his life it remains wholly in suspense, and, before death, is not extinguished:" according to the saying of the prophet Isaiah, "This iniquity shall not be blotted out till ye die, saith the Lord of hosts."[k] And some wise persons have affirmed, that Jacob related to this in his expression and appellatives of God, whom he called "the God of Abraham, and the fear of his father Isaac,"[l] because, as the doctors of the Jews tell us, Abraham, being dead, was ascribed into the final condition of God's family; but Isaac, being living, had apprehensions of God, not only of a pious, but also of a tremulous fear: he was not sure of his own condition, much less of the degrees of his reconciliation, how far God had forgiven his sins, and how far he had retained them. And it is certain, that if every degree of the Divine favour be not assured by a holy life, those sins, of whose pardon we were most hopeful, return in as full vigour and clamorous importunity as ever, and are made more vocal by the appendant ingratitude, and other accidental degrees. And this Christ taught us by a parable: for as the lord made his uncharitable servant pay all that debt which he had formerly forgiven him; even "so will God do to us, if we, from our hearts, forgive not one another their trespasses."[m] "Behold the goodness and severity of God," saith St. Paul: "on them which fell, severity; but on thee goodness, if thou continue in that goodness; otherwise thou shalt be cut off. For this is my covenant which I shall make with them, when I shall take away their sins."[n] And if this be true in those sins which God certainly hath forgotten, such as were all those which were committed before our illumination; much rather is it true in those which we committed after, concerning whose actual and full pardon we cannot be certain without a revelation. So that our pardon of sins, when it is granted after the breach of our covenant, is just so secure as our perseverance is: concerning which, because we must ascertain it as well as we can, but ever with fear and trembling, so also is the estate of our pardon hazardous, conditional, revocable, and uncertain; and, therefore, the best of men do, all their lives, ask pardon, even of those sins for which they have wept bitterly, and done the sharpest and severest penance. And, if it be necessary, we pray that we may not enter into temptation, because temptation is full of danger, and the danger may bring a sin, and the sin may ruin us: it is also necessary that we understand the condition of our pardon to be, as is the condition of our person, variable as will, sudden as affections, alterable as our purposes, revocable as our own good intentions, and then made as ineffective as our inclinations to good actions. And there is no way to secure our confidence and our hope, but by being perfect, and holy, and pure, as our heavenly Father is; that is, in the sense of human capacity, free from the habits of all sin, and active, and industrious, and continuing in the ways of godliness. For upon this only the promise is built, and by our proportion to this state we must proportion our confidence; we have no other revelation. Christ reconciled us to his Father upon no other conditions, and made the covenant upon no other articles, but of a holy life, in obedience universal and perpetual: and the abatements of the rigorous sense of the words, as they are such as may infinitely testify and prove his mercy, so they are such as must secure our duty and habitual graces; an industry manly, constant, and christian: and because these have so great latitude, (and to what degrees God will accept our returns, he hath no where punctually described,) he that is most severe in his determination does best secure himself, and, by exacting the strictest account of himself, shall obtain the easier scrutiny at the hands of God. The use I make of this consideration, is to the same purpose with the former: for if every day of sin, and every criminal act, is a degree of recess from the possibilities of heaven, it would be considered at how great distance a death-bed penitent, after a vicious life, may apprehend himself to stand for mercy and pardon: and since the terms of restitution must, in labour, and in extension of time, or intention of degrees, be of value great enough to restore him to some proportion or equivalence with that state of grace from whence he is fallen, and upon which the covenant was made with him; how impossible, or how near to impossible, it will appear to him to go so far and do so much in that state, and in those circumstances of disability.

32. Concerning the third particular, I consider that repentance, as it is described in Scripture, is a system of holy duties, not of one kind, not properly consisting of parts, as if it were a single grace; but it is the reparation of that estate into which Christ first put us, "a renewing us in the spirit of our mind," so the apostle calls it; and the Holy Ghost hath taught this truth to us by the implication of many appellatives, and also by express discourses. For there is in Scripture a "repentance to be repented of,"[o] and a "repentance never to be repented of."[p] The first is mere sorrow for what is past, an ineffective trouble, producing nothing good; such as was the repentance of Judas, "he repented, and hanged himself;" and such was that of Esau, when it was too late; and so was the repentance of the five foolish virgins: which examples tell us also when ours is an impertinent and ineffectual repentance. To this repentance pardon is no where promised in Scripture. But there is a repentance which is called "conversion, or amendment of life," a repentance productive of holy fruits, such as the Baptist and our blessed Saviour preached, such as himself also propounded in the example of the Ninevites;[q] they "repented at the preaching of Jonah," that is, "they fasted, they covered them in

[k] Isaiah xxii. 14.
[l] Gen. xxxi. 42.
[m] Matt. xviii. 35.
[n] Rom. xi. 22, 27.
[o] Μεταμέλεια.
[p] Μετάνοια. Μετάμεληθεὶς ἐπέστρεψε, cui in Act. Apost. opponitur μετανοήσατε οὖν καὶ ἐπιστρέψατε, Acts iii. 19. Huic enim promittitur peccatorum remissio in seq. εἰς τὸ ἐξαλειφθῆναι ὑμῶν τὰς ἁμαρτίας.
[q] Matt. xii. 41

sackcloth, they cried mightily unto God, yea, they turned every one from his evil way, and from the violence that was in their hands."[r] And this was it that appeased God in that instance. "God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, and did it not."

33. The same character of repentance we find in the prophet Ezekiel: "When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right; if the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life without committing iniquity, he hath done that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die."[s] And in the gospel, repentance is described with as full and entire comprehensions as in the old prophets. For faith and repentance are the whole duty of the gospel. Faith, when it is in conjunction with a practical grace, signifies an intellectual.[t] Faith signifies the submission of the understanding to the institution; and repentance includes all that whole practice which is the entire duty of a christian, after he hath been overtaken in a fault. And, therefore, repentance first includes a renunciation and abolition of all evil, and then also enjoins a pursuit of every virtue, and that till they arrive at an habitual confirmation.

34. Of the first sense are all those expressions of Scripture which imply repentance to be the deletory of sins. "Repentance from dead works,"[u] St. Paul affirms to be the prime fundamental of the religion; that is, conversion, or returning from dead works: for unless repentance be so construed, it is not good sense. And this is therefore highly verified, because repentance is intended to set us into the condition of our first undertaking, and articles covenanted with God. And therefore it is "a redemption of the time," that is, a recovering what we lost, and making it up by our doubled industry. "Remember whence thou art fallen, repent," that is, return, "and do thy first works," said the Spirit to the angel of the church of Ephesus, or else "I will remove thy candlestick, except thou repent."[x] It is a restitution; "if a man be overtaken in a fault, restore such a one,"[y] that is, put him where he was. And then, that repentance also implies a doing all good, is certain by the sermon of the Baptist, "Bring forth fruits meet for repentance:"[z] "Do thy first works," was the sermon of the Spirit: "Laying aside every weight, and the sin that easily encircles us, let us run with patience the race that is set before us;" so St. Paul taught. And St. Peter gives charge, that when we "have escaped the corruptions of the world, and of lusts,"[a] besides this, we "give all diligence" to acquire the rosary and conjugation of christian virtues. And they are proper effects, or rather constituent parts, of a holy repentance. "For godly sorrow worketh repentance," saith St. Paul, "not to be repented of:"[b] and that ye may know what is signified by repentance, behold the product was "carefulness, clearing of themselves, indignation, fear, vehement desires, zeal, and revenge;" to which if we add the epithet of holy, (for these were the results of a godly sorrow, and the members of a repentance not to be repented of,) we are taught that repentance, besides the purging out the malice of iniquity, is also a sanctification of the whole man, a turning nature into grace, passions into reason, and the flesh into spirit.

35. To this purpose I reckon those phrases of Scripture calling it a "renewing of our mind;"[c] a "renewing of the Holy Ghost;"[d] a "cleansing of our hands, and purifying our hearts,"[e] that is, a becoming holy in our affections and righteous in our actions; a "transformation,"[f] or utter change; a "crucifying the flesh, with the affections and lusts;"[g] a "mortified"[h] state, a "purging out the old leaven, and becoming a new conspersion;"[i] a "waking out of sleep,[j] and walking honestly, as in the day;"[k] a "being born again,"[l] and being "born from above;" a "new life." And I consider that these preparative actions of repentance, such as are sorrow, and confession of sins, and fasting, and exterior mortifications, and severities, are but forerunners of repentance,[m] some of the retinue, and they are of the family, but they no more complete the duty of repentance than the harbingers are the whole court, or than the fingers are all the body. There "is more joy in heaven," said our blessed Saviour, "over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance." There is no man but needs a tear and a sorrow, even for his daily weaknesses, and possibly they are the instrumental expiations of our sudden, and frequent, and lesser surprises of imperfection; but the "just persons need no repentance," that is, need no inversion of state, no transformation from condition to condition, but from the less to the more perfect the best man hath. And, therefore, those are vain persons who, when they "owe God a hundred, will write fourscore, or a thousand, will write fifty." It was the saying of an excellent person, that "repentance is the beginning of philosophy, a flight and renunciation of evil works and words, and the first preparation and entrance into a life which is never to be repented of: and, therefore, a penitent is not taken with umbrages and appearances, nor quits a real good for an imaginary, nor chooses evil for fear of enemies and adverse accidents; but peremptorily conforms his sentence to the Divine laws, and submits his whole life in a

[r] Jonah iii. 8, 10. [s] Ezek. xviii. 27. and xxxiii. 15.
[t] Διόπερ οὐκ ἀποστατέον οὐδενὸς τῶν χρησίμων διὰ τὰς προφαινομένας δυσχερείας. προσακτέον δὲ τὴν ἕξιν, ᾗ πάντα τὰ καλὰ γίνεται θηρατὰ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις.—POLYBIUS.
Vide etiam Clem. Alexan. Strom. lib. ii. ubi ad eundem sensum definit pœnitentiam.
[u] Μετάνοια ἀπὸ τῶν νεκρῶν ἔργων, Heb. vi. 1.
[x] Apocal. ii. 5. [y] Gal. vi. 1. [z] Matt. iii. 8.
[a] 2 Pet. i. 4, 5. [b] 2 Cor. vii. 10. [c] Rom. xii. 2.
[d] Tit. iii. 5. [e] Jam. iv. 8. [f] Rom. xii. 2.
[g] Gal. v. 24. [h] Col. iii. 5. [i] 1 Cor. v. 7.
[j] Eph. v. 14. Rom. xiii. 11. [k] Rom. xiii. 13.
[l] 1 John iii. 3.
[m] ——Scelerum si bene pœnitet,
Eradenda cupidinis
Pravi sunt elementa; et teneræ nimis
Mentes asperioribus
Formandæ studiis.—HOR. lib. iii. od. 24.

conformity with them."[n] He that said those excellent words had not been taught the christian institution, but it was admirable reason and deep philosophy, and most consonant to the reasonableness of virtue, and the proportions and designs of repentance, and no other than the doctrine of christian philosophy.

36. And it is considerable, since in Scripture there is a repentance mentioned, which is impertinent and ineffectual as to the obtaining pardon, a repentance implied which is to be repented of, and another expressed which is "never to be repented of, and this is described to be a new state of life, a whole conversion and transformation of the man; it follows, that whatsoever, in any sense, can be called repentance, and yet is less than this new life, must be that ineffective repentance. A sorrow is a repentance, and all the acts of dolorous expression are but the same sorrow in other characters, and they are good when they are parts or instruments of the true repentance; but when they are the whole repentance, that repentance is no better than that of Judas, nor more prosperous than that of Esau. Every sorrow is not a "godly sorrow," and that which is, is but instrumental, and in order to repentance. "Godly sorrow worketh repentance," saith St. Paul; that is, it does its share towards it, as every grace does toward the pardon, as every degree of pardon does toward heaven. By "godly sorrow," it is probable St. Paul means the same thing which the school hath since called contrition; a grief proceeding from a holy principle, from our love of God, and anger that we have offended him: and yet this is a great way off from that repentance without the performance of which we shall certainly perish: but no contrition alone is remissive of sins, but as it cooperates towards the integrity of our duty. "Cum conversus ingemuerit," is the prophet's expression. When a man "mourns, and turns from all his evil way, that is a godly sorrow," and that is repentance too:[o] but the tears of a dolorous person, though running over with great effusions, and shed in great bitterness, and expressed in actions of punitive justice, all being but the same sense in louder language, being nothing but the expressions of sorrow, are good only as they tend further; and if they do, they may, by degrees, bring us to repentance, and that repentance will bring us to heaven; but of themselves they may as well make the sea swell beyond its margin, or water and refresh the sun-burnt earth, as move God to mercy, and pierce the heavens. But then to this consideration we may add, that a sorrow upon a death-bed, after a vicious life, is such as cannot easily be understood to be ordinarily so much as the beginning of virtue, or the first instance towards a holy life. For he that till then retained his sins, and now, when he is certain and believes he shall die, or is fearful lest he should, is sorrowful that he hath sinned, is only sorrowful because he is like to perish: and such a sorrow may perfectly consist with as great an affection to sin, as ever the man had in the highest caresses and invitation of his lust. For even then, in certain circumstances, he would have refused to have acted his greatest temptation. The boldest and most pungent lust would refuse to be satisfied in the market-place, or with a dagger at his heart; and the greatest intemperance would refuse a pleasant meal, if he believed the meat to be mixed with poison: and yet this restraint of appetite is no abatement of the affection, any more than the violent fears which, by being incumbent upon the death-bed penitent, make him grieve for the evil consequents more than to hate the malice and irregularity. He that does not grieve till his greatest fear presses him hard, and damnation treads upon his heels, feels indeed the effects of fear, but can have no present benefit of his sorrow, because it had no natural principle, but a violent, unnatural, and intolerable cause, inconsistent with a free, placid, and moral election. But this I speak only by way of caution: for God's mercy is infinite, and can, if he please, make it otherwise. But it is not good to venture, unless you have a promise.

37. The same also I consider concerning the purpose of a new life, which that any man should judge to be repentance, that duty which restores us, is more unreasonable than to think sorrow will do it. For as a man may sorrow, and yet never be restored; (and he may sorrow so much the more, because he shall never be restored, as Esau did, as the five foolish virgins did, and as many more do;) so he that purposes to lead a new life, hath convinced himself that the duty is undone, and therefore his pardon not granted, nor his condition restored. As a letter is not a word, nor a word an action; as an embryo is not a man, nor the seed the fruit; so is a purpose of obedience but the element of repentance, the first imaginations of it differing from the grace itself as a disposition from a habit, or (because itself will best express itself) as the purpose does from the act.[p] For either a holy life is necessary, or it is not necessary. If it be not, why does any man hope to "escape the wrath to come," by resolving to do an unnecessary thing? or if he does not purpose it, when he pretends he does, that is a mocking of God, and that is a great way from being an instrument of his restitution. But if a holy life be necessary, as it is certain by infinite testimonies of Scriptures, it is the "unum necessarium," the one great necessary; it cannot reasonably be thought that any thing less than doing it shall serve our turns. That which is only in pur-

[n] Ἡ δὲ μετάνοια αὕτη φιλοσοφίας ἀρχὴ γίνεται, καὶ τῶν ἀνοήτων ἔργων τε καὶ λόγων φυγὴ, καὶ τῆς ἀμεταμελήτου ζωῆς ἡ πρώτη παρασκευὴ—διὸ οὔτε προσδοκίαις τῶν λεγομένων ἀγαθῶν τὸ ὄντως ἀγαθὸν ἂν παρίδῃ, οὔτε φόβῳ τῶν ἐναντίων τὴν τοῦ κακοῦ πρᾶξιν αἱρήσεται· ἑστώσῃ δὲ τῇ γνώμῃ πρὸς τοὺς θείους κανόνας τὸν ἑαυτοῦ βίον ἀπευθύνει. —Hierocl. in Pythag.

[o] Μετανοήσατε καὶ ἐπιστρέψατε, Acts iii. 19.

Ὡς γὰρ ἔχοντες δίκην τὸ λυπεῖσθαι ἐπὶ τοῖς πεποιημένοις, παύονται τῆς ὀργῆς.—Arist. 2. Rhetor.

——Ἀγαθοὶ ἀριδάκρυες ἄνδρες.—Hom.

Ὁ μετανοῶν οὐ φόβῳ τῶν ἐναντίων τὴν τοῦ κακοῦ πρᾶξιν αἱρήσεται.—Hierocl.

[p] Nam illi qui ex aliis propositis in alia transiliunt, aut ne transiliunt quidem, sed casu quodam transmittuntur, quomodo habere quicquam certum mansurumve possunt, suspensi et vagi?—Seneca, Ep. 23

pose is not yet done, and yet it is necessary it should be done, because it is necessary we should purpose it. And in this we are sufficiently concluded by that ingeminate expression used by St. Paul: "In Jesus Christ nothing can avail but a new creature;" nothing "but faith working by charity," nothing "but a keeping the commandments of God." [q] "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy; they are the Israel of God." [r]

38. This consideration I intended to oppose against the carnal security of death-bed penitents, who have (it is to be feared) spent a vicious life, who have therefore mocked themselves, because they meant to mock God, they would reap what they sowed not. "But be not deceived," saith the apostle; "he that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." [s] Only this, "let us not be weary of well-doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not:" [t] meaning that by a persevering industry, and a long work, and a succession of religious times, we must sow to the Spirit; a work of such length, that the greatest danger is of fainting and intercision: but he that sows to the Spirit, not being weary of well-doing, not fainting in the long process, he, and he only, shall reap life everlasting. But a purpose is none of all this. If it comes to act, and be productive of a holy life, then it is useful, and it was like the eve of a holyday, festival in the midst of its abstinence and vigils, it was the beginnings of a repentance. But if it never come to act, it was to no purpose, a mocking of God, an act of direct hypocrisy, a provocation of God, and a deceiving our own selves; you are unhappy you began not early, or that your earlier days return not together with your good purposes. [u]

39. And neither can this have any other sentence, though the purpose be made upon our death-bed. For God hath made no covenant with us on our death-bed distinct from that he made with us in our life and health. And since in our life and present abilities, good purposes, and resolutions, and vows, (for they are but the same thing in differing degrees,) did signify nothing till they came to act, and no man was reconciled to God by good intentions, but by doing the will of God; can we imagine that such purposes can more prevail at the end of a wicked life than at the beginning? that less piety will serve our turns after fifty or sixty years' impiety, than after but five or ten? that a wicked and sinful life should by less pains be expiated than an unhappy year? For it is not in the state of grace as in other exterior actions of religion or charity, where God will accept the will for the deed, when the external act is inculpably out of our powers, and may also be supplied by the internal: as bendings of the body, by the prostration of the soul; alms, by charity; preaching, by praying for conversion. These things are necessary, because they are precepts, and obligatory only in certain circumstances, which may fail, and we be innocent and disobliged. But it is otherwise in the essential parts of our duty, which God hath made the immediate and next condition of our salvation, such which are never out of our power but by our own fault. [x] Such are charity, forgiveness, repentance, and faith; such to which we are assisted by God, such which are always put by God's grace into our power, therefore because God indispensably demands them. In these cases, as there is no revelation, God will accept the will for the deed, the purpose for the act, so it is unreasonable to expect it; because God did once put it into our powers, and, if we put it out, we must not complain of want of fire which ourselves have quenched, nor complain we cannot see, when we have put our own lights out; and hope God will accept the will for the deed, since we had no will to it when God put it into our powers. These are but fig-leaves to cover our nakedness, which our sin hath introduced.

40. For either the reducing such vows and purposes to act is the duty, without which the purpose is ineffectual; or else that practice is but the sign and testimony of a sincere intention, and that very sincere intention was of itself accepted by God in the first spring. If it was nothing but a sign, then the covenant which God made with man in Jesus Christ was faith and good meaning, not faith and repentance, and a man is justified as soon as ever he purposes well, before any endeavours are commenced, or any act produced, or habit ratified; and the duties of a holy life are but shadows and significations of a grace, no part of the covenant, not so much as smoke is of fire, but a mere sign of a person justified as soon as he made his vow: but then also a man may be justified five hundred times in a year, as often as he makes a new vow and confident resolution, which is then done most heartily, when the lust is newly satisfied, and the pleasure disappears for the instant, though the purpose disbands upon the next temptation. Yea, but, unless it be a sincere purpose, it will do no good; and although we cannot discern it, nor the man himself, yet God knows the heart; and if he sees it would have been reduced to act, then he accepts it, and this is the hopes of a dying man. But faint they are and dying, as the man himself.

41. For it is impossible for us to know but that what a man intends (as himself thinks) heartily, is sincerely meant, and if that may be insincere, and is to be judged only by a never-following event, (in case the man dies,) it cannot become to any man the ground of hope; nay, even to those persons who do

[q] Gal. vi. 15, v. 6. 1 Cor. vii. 19.
[r] Gal. vi. 16.
[s] Gal. vi. 7, 8.
[t] Ver. 9.
[u] Mutatus ——————
Dices, heu! (quoties te in speculo videris alterum)
Quæ mens est hodie, cur eadem non puero fuit?
Vel cur his animis incolumes non redeunt genæ?
Hor. lib. iv. od. 10.
[x] Εἰς ποῖον ἔτι χρόνον ἀναβάλῃ τὸ τῶν βελτίστων ἀξιοῦν σεαυτὸν, καὶ ἐν μηδενὶ παραβαίνειν τὸν διαιροῦντα λόγον; παρείληφας τὰ θεωρήματα οἷς ἔδει σε συμβάλλειν, καὶ συμβέβληκας; ποῖον οὖν ἔτι διδάσκαλον προσδοκᾷς, ἣν εἰς ἐκεῖνον ὑπερθῇς τὴν ἐπανόρθωσιν ποιῆσαι τὴν σεαυτοῦ; οὐκ ἔτι εἶ μειράκιον, ἀλλ' ἀνὴρ ἤδη τέλειος. Ἂν τοίνυν ἀμελήσῃς, καὶ ῥαθυμήσῃς, καὶ ἀεὶ ὑπερθέσεις ἐξ ὑπερθέσεων ποιῇς, προθέσεις ἐκ προθέσεων, καὶ ἡμέρας ἄλλας ἐπ' ἄλλαις ὁρίζῃς, μεθ' ἃς προσέξεις σεαυτῷ, λήσεις σεαυτὸν οὐ προκόψας, ἀλλ' ἰδιώτης διατελήσεις καὶ ζῶν καὶ ἀποθνήσκων.—Epict. c. 75.

mean sincerely, it is still an instrument of distrust and fears infinite, since his own sincere meaning hath nothing in the nature of the thing, no distinct formality, no principle, no sign, to distinguish it from the insincere vows of sorrowful, but not truly penitent, persons. 2. A purpose acted and not acted, differs not in the principle, but in the effect, which is extrinsical and accidental to the purpose, and each might be without the other: a man might live holily, though he had not made that vow; and when he hath made the vow, he may fail of living holily.[y] And as we should think it hard measure to have a damnation increased upon us for those sins which we would have committed if we had lived; so it cannot be reasonable to build our hopes of heaven upon an imaginary piety, which we never did, and, if we had lived, God knows whether we would or not. 3. God takes away the godly, lest malice should corrupt their understandings, and "for the elect's sake those days are shortened, which, if they should continue, no flesh should escape:" but now shall all that be laid upon their score,[z] which, if God had not so prevented by their death, God knows they would have done? And God deals with the wicked in a proportionable manner, to the contrary purpose, he shortens their days, and takes away their possibilities and opportunities, when the time of repentance is past, because he will not do violence to their wills: and this "lest they should return, and be converted, and I should heal them:"[a] so that it is evident, some persons are by some acts of God, after a vicious life, and the frequent rejection of the Divine grace, at last prevented from mercy, who, without such courses, and in contrary circumstances, might possibly do acts of repentance, and return, and then "God would heal them." 4. Let their purposes and vows be never so sincere in the principle, yet, since a man who is in the state of grace may again fail of it, and forget he was "purged from his old sins;" (and every dying sinner did so, if ever he was washed in the laver of regeneration, and sanctified in his spirit;) then much more may such a sincere purpose fail, and then it would be known to what distance of time or state from his purpose God will give his final sentence. Whether will he quit him, because in the first stage he will correspond with his intention, and act his purposes; or condemn him, because in his second stage he would prevaricate? And when a man does fail, it is not because his first principle was not good; for the Holy Spirit, which is certainly the best principle of spiritual actions, may be extinguished in a man, and a sincere or hearty purpose may be lost, or it may again be recovered, and be lost again: so that it is as unreasonable as it is unrevealed, that a sincere purpose on a death-bed shall obtain pardon, or pass for a new state of life. Few men are at those instants, and in such pressures, hypocritical and vain; and yet to perform such purposes is a new work and a new labour; it comes in upon a new stock, differing from that principle, and will meet with temptations, difficulties, and impediments; and an honest heart is not sure to remain so, but may split upon a rock of a violent invitation. A promise is made to be faithful or unfaithful *ex post facto*, by the event, but it was sincere or insincere in the principle, only if the person promising did, or did not, respectively at that time mean what he said. A sincere promise many times is not truly performed.

42. Concerning all the other acts which it is to be supposed a dying person can do, I have only this consideration: If they can make up a new creature, become a new state, be in any sense a holy life, a keeping the commandments of God, a following of peace and holiness, a becoming holy in all conversation; if they can arrive to the lowest sense of that excellent condition Christ intended to all his disciples, when he made "keeping the commandments" to be the condition of "entering into life," and not "crying, Lord, Lord, but doing the will of God;" if he that hath served the lusts of the flesh, and taken pay under all God's enemies during a long and malicious life, can, for any thing a dying person can do, be said in any sense to have lived holily; then his hopes are fairly built: if not, they rely upon a sand, and the storm of death, and the Divine displeasure, will beat too violently upon them. There are no suppletories of the evangelical covenant: if we "walk according to the rule," then "shall peace and righteousness kiss each other;" if we have sinned, and prevaricated the rule, repentance must bring us into the ways of righteousness, and then we must go on upon the old stock; but the "deeds of the flesh" must be "mortified," and Christ must "dwell in us," and the Spirit must "reign in us," and virtue must be habitual, and the habits must be confirmed: and this as we do by the Spirit of Christ, so it is hallowed and accepted by the grace of God, and we put into a condition of favour, and redeemed from sin, and reconciled to God. But this will not be put off with single acts, nor divided parts, nor newly commenced purposes,[b] nor fruitless sorrow; it is a great folly to venture eternity upon dreams: so that now let me represent the condition of a dying person after a vicious life.

43. First: He that considers the frailty of human bodies, their incidences and aptness to sickness, casualties, death, sudden or expected, the condition of several diseases, that some are of too quick a sense, and are intolerable, some are dull, stupid, and lethargical; then adds the prodigious judgments which fall upon many sinners in the act of sin, and are marks of our dangers, and God's essential justice and severity; and that security which possesses such persons whose lives are vicious, and that habitual carelessness, and groundless confidence, or an abso-

[y] Et quis tandem est nostrûm qui, quod ad sese attinet, æquum censeat quenquam pœnas dare ob eam rem, quòd arguatur malè facere voluisse? Nemo, opinor.——Sed si honorem non æquum est habere ob eam rem, quòd bene facere voluisse quis dicit, neque fecit tamen; Rhodiensibus tale erit, non quòd malè fecerunt, sed quia voluisse dicuntur facere.—Orat. M. CATONIS pro Rhodiens. apud A. Gellium, lib. vii. cap. 3.

[z] Nunquam crescit ex post facto præteriti æstimatio.—D. de Reg. Jur.

[a] Matt. xiii. 15, ex Isa. vi. 9, 10. Mark iv. 12. Luke viii. 10. John xii. 40. Acts xxviii. 27. Rom. xi. 8.

[b] Audies plerosque dicentes, A quinquagesimo in otium secedam; Sexagesimus annus ab officiis me dimittet. Et quem tandem longioris vitæ prædem accipis?—SENEC.

lute inconsideration, which is generally the condition and constitution of such minds, every one whereof is likely enough to confound a persevering sinner in miseries eternal; will soon apprehend the danger of a delayed repentance to be infinite and unmeasurable.[c]

44. Secondly: But suppose such a person, having escaped the antecedent circumstances of the danger, is set fairly upon his death-bed, with the just apprehension of his sins about him, and his addresses to repentance; consider then the strength of his lusts, that the sins he is to mortify are inveterate, habitual, and confirmed, having had the growth and stability of a whole life; that the liberty of his will is impaired; (the Scripture saying of such persons, "whose eyes are full of lust, and that cannot cease from sin;"[d] and that "his servants they are whom they obey;" that they are slaves to sin, and so not *sui juris*, not at their own dispose;) that his understanding is blinded, his appetite is mutinous, and of a long time used to rebel and prevail; that all the inferior faculties are in disorder; that he wants the helps of grace proportionable to his necessities (for the longer he hath continued in sin, the weaker the grace of God is in him; so that, in effect, at that time the more need he hath, the less he shall receive, it being God's rule "to give to him that hath, and from him that hath not, to take even what he hath"): then add the innumerable parts and great burdens of repentance, that it is not a sorrow, nor a purpose, because both these suppose that to be undone which is the only necessary support of all our hopes in Christ when it is done; the innumerable difficult cases of conscience that may then occur, particularly in the point of restitution; (which, among many other necessary parts of repentance, is indispensably required of all persons that are able, and in every degree in which they are able;) the many temptations of the devil, the strength of passions, the impotency of the flesh, the illusions of the spirits of darkness, the tremblings[e] of the heart, the incogitancy of the mind, the implication and entanglings of ten thousand thoughts, and the impertinences of a disturbed fancy, and the great hinderances[f] of a sick body, and a sad and weary spirit: all these represent a death-bed to be but an ill station for a penitent.[g] If the person be suddenly snatched away, he is not left so much as to dispute; if he be permitted to languish in his sickness, he is either stupid, and apprehends nothing, or else miserable, and hath reason to apprehend too much. However, all these difficulties are to be past and overcome before the man be put into a savable condition. From this consideration, though perhaps it may infer more, yet we cannot but conclude this difficulty to be as great as the former danger, that is, vast and ponderous, and insupportable.

45. Thirdly: Suppose the clinic, or death-bed penitent, to be as forward in these employments, and as successful in the mastering many of the objections, as reasonably can be thought: yet it is considerable, that there is a repentance which is to be repented of, and that is a repentance which is not productive of fruits of amendment of life; that there is a period set down by God in his judgment, and that many, who have been profane as Esau was, are reduced into the condition of Esau, and "there is no place left for their repentance, though they seek it carefully with tears;" that they who have long refused to hear God calling them to repentance, God will refuse to hear them calling for grace and mercy; that "he will laugh" at some men "when their calamity comes;"[h] that the five foolish virgins addressed themselves at the noise of the bridegroom's coming, and begged oil, and went out to buy oil, and yet, for want of some more time and an early diligence, came too late, and were shut out for ever; that it is no where revealed that such late endeavours and imperfect practices shall be accepted; that God hath made but one covenant with us in Jesus Christ, which is faith and repentance consigned in baptism; and the signification of them, and the purpose of Christ, is, "that we should henceforth no more serve sin," but mortify and kill him perpetually, and destroy his kingdom, and extinguish, as much as in us lies, his very title; that we should "live holily, justly, and soberly, in this present world, in all holy conversation and godliness;" and that either we must be continued in or reduced to this state of holy living and habitual sanctity, or we have no title to the promises; that every degree of recession from the state Christ first put us in, is a recession from our hopes, and an insecuring our condition, and we add to our confidence only as our obedience is restored. All this is but a sad story to a dying person, who "sold himself to work wickedness," in an habitual iniquity and aversation from the conditions of the holy covenant in which he was sanctified.

46. And certainly it is unreasonable to plant all our hopes of heaven upon a doctrine that is destructive of all piety, which supposes us in such a condition that God hath been offended at us all our life long, and yet that we can never return our duties to

[c] Παρήνει δὲ τοῖς συνοῦσι μὴ ἀναβάλλεσθαι τὸ ἀγαθὸν, ὅπερ τοὺς πολλοὺς ποιεῖν, προθεσμίας ὁριζομένους ἑορτὰς ἢ πανηγύρεις, ὡς ἀπ' ἐκείνων ἀρξομένους τοῦ μὴ ψεύσασθαι, καὶ τοῦ τὰ δέοντα ποιήσειν.—Lucian. Nigrin.

[d] 2 Pet. ii. 14.

[e] Ἐπειδάν τις ἐγγὺς ᾖ τοῦ οἴεσθαι τελευτήσειν, εἰσέρχεται αὐτῷ φόβος καὶ φροντὶς, περὶ ὧν ἐν τῷ πρόσθεν οὐκ εἰσῄει.—Plato de Repub.

[f] Nequit sanè fieri ut homo intelligat aut cognoscat quicquam ex cognitione Creatoris, si adversâ valetudine contabescat.—Maimon. Can. Eth. cap. 4.

[g] Ante senectutem, curandum est ût homo bene vivat; in senectute autem, ut bene moriatur.—Seneca.

[h] O si compunctas humana superbia mentes
Ante obitum mutare, nec exspectare suprema
Fata velit ————————
Pœnitet ambiguè quem serò pœnitet; ergò
Præsentis spatium nobis dum creditur ævi,
Dum patulam cunctis Christi clementia sese
Præbet, præteritæ plangamus crimina vitæ,
Dum licet, et sano ingenioque animoque valemus.
Alcimus Avit.

Bis jam penè tibi consul trigesimus instat,
Et numerat paucos vix tua vita dies.
Mart. lib. i. Ep. 16.

Vide S. Ambros. lib. ii. de Pœnit. cap. i. et xi. S. Aug. in lib. Homil. homil. xli. S. Basil. Orat. iv. S. Bernard. in parvis Serm. ser. xxxviii.

him, unless he will unravel the purposes of his predestination, or call back time again, and begin a new computation of years for us; and if he did, it would be still as uncertain. For what hope is there to that man who hath fulfilled all iniquity, and hath not fulfilled righteousness? Can a man live to the devil, and die to God? "sow to the flesh," and "reap to the Spirit?" hope God will in mercy reward him who hath served his enemy? Sure it is, the doctrine of the avail of a death-bed repentance cannot easily be reconciled with God's purposes and intentions to have us live a good life; for it would reconcile us to the hopes of heaven for a few thoughts, or words, or single actions, when our life is done; it takes away the benefit of many graces, and the use of more, and the necessity of all.

47. For let it be seriously weighed, To what purpose is the variety of God's grace? what use is there of preventing, restraining, concomitant, subsequent, and persevering grace, unless it be in order to a religious conversation? And by deferring repentance to the last, we despoil our souls, and rob the Holy Ghost of the glory of many rays and holy influences, with which the church is watered and refreshed; that it may "grow from grace to grace," till it be consummate in glory. It takes away the very being of chastity and temperance; no such virtues, according to this doctrine, need to be named among christians. For the dying person is not in capacity to exercise these; and then, either they are troublesome, without which we may do well enough, or else the condition of the unchaste and intemperate clinic is sad and deplorable. For how can he eject those devils of lust, and drunkenness, and gluttony, from whom the disease hath taken all powers of election and variety of choice, unless it be possible to root out long-contracted habits in a moment, or acquire the habits of chastity, sobriety, and temperance, those self-denying and laborious graces, without doing a single act of the respective virtues, in order to obtaining of habits; unless it be so that God will infuse habits into us more immediately than he creates our reasonable souls, in an instant, and without the co-operation of the suscipient, without "the working out our salvation with fear," and without "giving all diligence," and "running with patience," and "resisting unto blood," and "striving to the last," and "enduring unto the end," in a long fight and a long race? If God infuses such habits, why have we laws given us, and are commanded to work, and to do our duty with such a succession and lasting diligence, as if the habits were to be acquired; to which, indeed, God promises and ministers his aids, still leaving us the persons obliged to the law and the labour, as we are capable of the reward? I need not instance any more. But this doctrine of a death-bed repentance is inconsistent with the duties of mortification; with all the vindictive and punitive parts of repentance, in exterior instances; with the precepts of waiting, and watchfulness, and preparation, and standing in a readiness "against the coming of the bridegroom;" with "the patience of well-doing;" with exemplary living; with the imitation of the life of Christ, and conformities to his passion; with the kingdom, and dominion, and growth of grace. And, lastly, it goes about to defeat one of God's great purposes; for God therefore concealed the time of our death,[i] that we might always stand upon our guard. The holy Jesus told us so: "Watch, for ye know not what hour the Lord will come:" but this makes men seem more crafty in their late-begun piety, than God was provident and mysterious in concealing the time of our dissolution.

48. And now, if it be demanded, How long time must our repentance and holy living take up? What is the last period of commencement of our piety, after which it will be unaccepted or ineffectual? Will a month, or a year, or three years, or seven, suffice? For since every man fails of his first condition, and makes violent recessions from the state of his redemption and his baptismal grace, how long may he lie in that state of recession, with hopes of salvation?[k] To this I answer, He cannot lie in sin a moment, without hazarding his eternity; every instant is a danger, and all the parts of its duration do increase it; and there is no answer to be given antecedently, and by way of rule, but all the hopes of our restitution depend upon the event. It is just as if we should ask, How long will it be before an infant comes to the perfect use of reason, or before a fool will become wise, or an ignorant person become excellently learned? The answer to such questions must be given according to the capacity of the man, to the industry of his person, to his opportunities or hinderances, to his life and health, and to God's blessing upon him. Only this; every day of deferring it lessens our hopes, and increases the difficulty; and when this increasing, divisible difficulty comes to the last period of impossibility, God only knows, because he measures the thoughts of man, and comprehends his powers in a span; and himself only can tell how he will correspond, in those assistances, without which we can never be restored.[l] "Agree with thy adversary quickly,

[i] Prudens futuri temporis exitum
Caliginosâ nocte premit Deus.—Horat. lib. iii. od. 29.
Vita data est utenda, data est sine fœnore nobis
Mutua, nec certâ persoluënda die.
Quæris quod sit longissimum vitæ spatium? Usque ad sapientiam pervenire. Qui ad illam pervenit, attingit non longissimum finem, sed maximum.—Senec.

[k] Malè vivunt qui semper vivere incipiunt. Non potest stare paratus ad mortem, qui modò incipit vivere. Quidam vivere tunc incipiunt cùm desinendum est; quidam antè vivere desiêrunt quàm inciperent.—Senec. Ep. 23.

[l] Hic est locus solvendi æris alieni.—Senec. ibid.
Mortem venientem nemo hilaris excipit, nisi qui se ad eam diu composuerat.—Idem, Ep. 30.

——Qui peccatum moriens dimittit, et ipsa
In serum tempus differt admissa fateri,
Non tam dimittit, quàm dimittatur ab illis.
Alcim. Avitus.
Non potest stare paratus ad mortem qui modò incipit vivere. Id agendum est, ut satis vixerimus. Quidam vivere tunc incipiunt cùm desinendum est. Si hoc judicas mirum, adjiciam quod magis admireris: Quidam antè vivere desiêrunt quàm inciperent.—Senec. Ep. 23.
Cras te victurum, cras dicis, Posthume, semper.
Dic mihi, Cras istud, Posthume, quando venit?
Cras vives? hodie jam vivere, Posthume, serum est:
Ille sapit quisquis, Posthume, vixit heri.
Martial. lib. v. Ep. 59.

while thou art in the way:" quickly. And, therefore, the Scripture sets down no other time than "to-day; while it is yet called to-day." But, because it will every day be called to-day, we must remember, that our duty is such as requires a time, a duration; it is a course, "a race that is set before us;" a duty requiring patience, and longanimity, and perseverance, and great care and diligence, "that we faint not." And, supposing we could gather probably, by circumstances, when the last period of our hopes begins; yet he that stands out as long as he can, gives probation, that he came not in of good will or choice; that he loves not the present service; that his body is present, but his heart is estranged from the yoke of his present employment; and then all that he can do is odious to God, being a sacrifice without a heart, an offertory of shells and husks, while the devil and the man's lusts have devoured the kernels.

49. So that this question is not to be asked beforehand; but after a man hath done much of the work, and in some sense lived holily, then he may inquire into his condition; whether, if he persevere in that, he may hope for the mercies of Jesus. But he that inquires beforehand, as commonly he means ill, so he can be answered by none but God; because the satisfaction of such a vain question depends upon future contingencies, and accidents depending upon God's secret pleasure and predestination. He that repents but to-day, repents late enough, that he put it off from yesterday. It may be that some may begin to-day, and find mercy, and to another person it may be too late; but no man is safe or wise that puts it off till to-morrow. And that it may appear how necessary it is to begin early, and that the work is of difficulty and continuance, and that time still increases the objections, it is certain that all the time that is lost must be redeemed by something in the sequel, equivalent or fit to make up the breach, and to cure the wounds long since made, and long festering; and this must be done by doing the first works, by something that God hath declared he will accept instead of them: the intention of the following actions, and the frequent repetition, must make up the defect in the extension and co-existence, with a longer time. It was an act of an heroical repentance, and great detestation of the crime, which Thomas Cantipratanus relates, of a young gentleman condemned to die for robberies; who, endeavouring to testify his repentance, and, as far as was then permitted him, to expiate the crime, begged of the judge, that tormentors might be appointed him, that he might be long a dying, and be cut in small pieces, that the severity of the execution might be proportionable to the immensity of his sorrow and greatness of the iniquity. Such great acts do facilitate our pardon, and hasten the restitution, and in a few days comprise the elapsed duty of many months: but to rely upon such acts is the last remedy, and like unlikely physic to a despairing person: if it do well, it is well; if it happen otherwise, he must thank himself, it is but what in reason he could expect. The Romans sacrificed a dog to Mana Geneta, and prayed, "Ne quis domi natorum bonus fiat," that none of their domestics might be good; that is, that they might not die, (saith Plutarch,[m]) because dead people are called good. But if they be so only when they die, they will hardly find the reward of goodness in the reckonings of eternity, when to kill and to make good is all one (as Aristotle observed it to be in the Spartan covenant with the Tegeatæ,[n] and as it is the case of penitents, never mending their lives till their lives be done:) that goodness is fatal, and the prologue of an eternal death.

50. I conclude this point with the words of St. Paul: "God will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality;" to them, "eternal life. But to them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness;" to them "indignation and wrath: tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doth evil?"[o]

51. Having now discoursed of repentance upon distinct principles, I shall not need to consider upon those particulars, which are usually reckoned parts or instances of repentance; such as are contrition, confession, and satisfaction. Repentance is the fulfilling all righteousness, and includes in it whatsoever is matter of christian duty, and expressly commanded; such as is contrition or godly sorrow, and confession to God, both which are declared in Scripture to be in order to pardon and purgation of our sins. "A contrite and a broken heart, O God, thou wilt not despise;" and, "If we confess our sins, God is just and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all iniquity." To which add, concerning satisfaction, that it is a judging and punishing of ourselves; that it also is an instrument of repentance, and a fruit of godly sorrow, and of good advantage for obtaining mercy of God. For "indignation and revenge" are reckoned by St. Paul effects of "a godly sorrow;" and the blessing which encourages its practice, is instanced by the same saint: "When we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord; but if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged:" where he expounds "judged" by "chastened;" if we were severer to ourselves, God would be gentle and remiss.[p] And there are only these two cautions to be annexed, and then the direction is sufficient. 1. That when promise of pardon is annexed to any of these or another grace, or any good action, it is not to be understood as if alone it were effectual, either to the abolition or pardon of sins; but the promise is made to it, as to a member of the whole body of piety. In the coadunation and conjunction

Non bene distuleris, videas quæ posse negari;
Et solum hoc ducas, quod fuit, esse tuum.
Non est, crede mihi, sapientis dicere, Vivam.
Sera nimis vita est crastina; vive hodie.
MARTIAL. lib. i. Ep. 16.

[m] Τελευτῶντες χρηστοί. Ῥωμαϊκ. κεφ. νβ.

[n] Μηδένα χρηστὸν ποιεῖν, i. e. ἀποκτιννύναι.
PLUTAR. ibid. ex Aristotele.

[o] Rom. ii. 6—9.

[p] Τοὺς μὲν γὰρ ἀρνουμένους καὶ ἀντιλέγοντας μᾶλλον κολάζομεν· πρὸς δὲ τοὺς ὁμολογοῦντας δικαίως κολάζεσθαι ξυνούμενοι.—ARIST. Rhet. 2.

of parts, the title is firm, but not at all in distinction and separation. For it is certain, if we fail in one, we are guilty of all; and therefore cannot be repaired by any one grace, or one action, or one habit. And therefore, "charity hides a multitude of sins"[q] with men and God too; "alms deliver them from death;[r] humility pierceth the clouds," and will not depart before its answer be gracious; and "hope purifieth,[s] and makes not ashamed;"[t] and patience, and faith, and piety to parents, and prayer, and the eight beatitudes, "have promises of this life, and of that which is to come,"[u] respectively: and yet nothing will obtain these promises, but the harmony and uniting of these graces in a holy and habitual confederation. And when we consider the promise, as singularly relating to that one grace, it is to be understood comparatively; that is, such persons are happy, if compared with those who have contrary dispositions. For such a capacity does its portion of the work, towards complete felicity, from which the contrary quality does estrange and disentitle us.

2. The special and minute actions, and instances, of these three preparatives of repentance, are not under any command in the particulars, but are to be disposed of by christian prudence, in order to those ends to which they are most aptly instrumental and designed: such as are fasting, and corporal severities in satisfaction, or the punitive parts of repentance; they are either vindictive of what is past, and so are proper acts or effects of contrition and godly sorrow; or else they relate to the present and future state, and are intended for correction or emendation, and so are of good use as they are medicinal, and in that proportion not to be omitted. And so is confession, to a spiritual person, an excellent instrument of discipline, a bridle of intemperate passions, an opportunity of restitution: "Ye which are spiritual, restore such a person overtaken in a fault,"[x] saith the apostle; it is the application of a remedy, the consulting with the guide, and the best security to a weak, or lapsed, or an ignorant person, in all which cases he is unfit to judge his own questions, and in these he is also committed to the care and conduct of another. But these special instances of repentance are capable of suppletories, and are, like the corporal works of mercy, necessary only in time and place, and in accidental obligations. He that relieves the poor, or visits the sick, choosing it for the instance of his charity, though he do not redeem captives, is charitable, and hath done his alms. And he that cures his sin by any instruments, by external, or interior and spiritual remedies, is penitent, though his diet be not ascetic and afflictive, or his lodging hard, or his sorrow bursting out into tears, or his expressions passionate and dolorous.[y] I only add this, that acts of public repentance must be by using the instruments of the church, such as she hath appointed; of private, such as, by experience, or by reason, or by the counsel we can get, we shall learn to be most effective of our penitential purposes. And yet it is a great argument that the exterior expressions of corporal severities are of good benefit, because, in all ages, wise men and severe penitents have chosen them for their instruments.

[q] Jam. v. 20. [r] Tob. iv. 10. [s] 1 John iii. 3.
[t] Rom. v. 5. [u] 1 Tim. iv. 8. [x] Gal. vi. 1.

[y] Vide Disc. of Mortification, Part i. and Disc. of Fasting, Part ii.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal God, who wert pleased in mercy to look upon us when we were in our blood, to reconcile us when we were enemies, to forgive us in the midst of our provocations of thy infinite and eternal majesty, finding out a remedy for us which mankind could never ask, even making an atonement for us by the death of thy Son, sanctifying us by the blood of the everlasting covenant and thy all-hallowing and divine Spirit; let thy graces so perpetually assist and encourage my endeavours, conduct my will, and fortify my intentions, that I may persevere in that holy condition which thou hast put me in by the grace of the covenant, and the mercies of the holy Jesus. O let me never fall into those sins, and retire to that vain conversation, from which the eternal and merciful Saviour of the world hath redeemed me; but let me grow in grace, adding virtue to virtue, reducing my purposes to act, and increasing my acts till they grow into habits, and my habits till they be confirmed, and still confirming them till they be consummate in a blessed and holy perseverance. Let thy preventing grace dash all temptations in their approach; let thy concomitant grace enable me to resist them in the assault, and overcome them in the fight: that my hopes be never discomposed, nor my faith weakened, nor my confidence made remiss, nor my title and portion in the covenant be lessened. Or if thou permittest me at any time to fall, (which, holy Jesu, avert, for thy mercy and compassion's sake,) yet let me not sleep in sin, but recall me instantly by the clamours of a nice and tender conscience, and the quickening sermons of the Spirit, that I may never pass from sin to sin, from one degree to another; lest sin should get the dominion over me, lest thou be angry with me, and reject me from the covenant, and I perish. Purify me from all uncleanness, sanctify my spirit that I may be holy as thou art, and let me never provoke thy jealousy, nor presume upon thy goodness, nor distrust thy mercies, nor defer my repentance, nor rely upon vain confidence; but let me, by a constant, sedulous, and timely endeavour, make my calling and election sure, living to thee and dying to thee; that, having sowed to the Spirit, I may from thy mercies reap in the Spirit bliss, and eternal sanctity, and everlasting life, through Jesus Christ, our Saviour, our hope, and our mighty and ever glorious Redeemer. Amen.

Upon Christ's Sermon on the Mount, and of the Eight Beatitudes.

1. The holy Jesus, being entered upon his prophetical office, in the first solemn sermon gave

testimony that he was not only an interpreter of laws then in being, but also a Lawgiver, and an Angel of the new and everlasting covenant; which because God meant to establish with mankind by the mediation of his Son, by his Son also he now began to publish the conditions of it: and that the publication of the christian law might retain some proportion, at least, and analogy of circumstance, with the promulgation of the law of Moses, Christ went up into a mountain, and from thence gave the oracle. And here he taught all the disciples; for what he was now to speak was to become a law, a part of the condition on which he established the covenant, and founded our hopes of heaven. Our excellent and gracious Lawgiver, knowing that the great argument in all practical disciplines is the proposal of the end, which is their crown and their reward, begins his sermon, as David began his most divine collection of hymns, with "blessedness." And having enumerated eight duties, which are the rule of the spirits of christians, he begins every duty with a beatitude, and concludes it with a reward; to manifest the reasonableness, and to invite and determine our choice to such graces which are circumscribed with felicities, which have blessedness in present possession, and glory in the consequence, which, in the midst of the most passive and afflictive of them, tells us that we are blessed, which is indeed a felicity, as a hope is good, or as a rich heir is rich, who, in the midst of his discipline, and the severity of tutors and governors, knows he is designed to, and certain of, a great inheritance.

2. The eight beatitudes, which are the duty of a christian and the rule of our spirit, and the special discipline of Christ, seem like so many paradoxes and impossibilities reduced to reason; and are indeed virtues made excellent by rewards, by the sublimity of grace, and the mercies of God, hallowing and crowning those habits which are despised by the world, and are esteemed the conditions of lower and less considerable people. But God "sees not as man sees," and his rules of estimate and judgment are not borrowed from the exterior splendour, which is apt to seduce children, and cozen fools, and please the appetites of sense and abused fancy; but they are such as he makes himself, excellencies which, by abstractions and separations from things below, land us upon celestial appetites. And they are states of suffering rather than states of life: for the great employment of a christian being to bear the cross, Christ laid the pedestal so low, that the rewards were like rich mines interred in the deeps and inaccessible retirements, and did choose to build our felicities upon the torrents and violences of affliction and sorrow. Without these graces we cannot get heaven, and without sorrow and sad accidents we cannot exercise these graces. Such are,

3. First: "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Poverty of spirit is in respect of secular affluence and abundance, or in respect of great opinion and high thoughts;[a] either of which have divers acts and offices. That the first is one of the meanings of this text is certain, because St. Luke, repeating this beatitude, delivers it plainly, "Blessed are the poor;"[b] and to it he opposes riches. And our blessed Saviour[c] speaks so suspiciously of riches and rich men, that he represents the condition to be full of danger and temptation: and St. James[d] calls it full of sin; describing rich men to be oppressors, litigious, proud, spiteful, and contentious; which sayings, like all others of that nature, are to be understood in common and most frequent accidents, not regularly, but very improbable to be otherwise. For if we consider our vocation, St. Paul informs us, that "not many mighty, not many noble, are called;" but "God hath chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith:" and how "hard it is for a rich man to enter into heaven," our great Master hath taught us, by saying, "It is more easy for a camel to pass through a needle's eye." And the reason is, because of the infinite temptation which riches minister to our spirits; it being such an opportunity of vices, that nothing remains to countermand the act, but a strong, resolute, unaltered, and habitual purpose, and pure love of virtue; riches, in the mean time, offering to us occasions of lust, fuel for revenge, instruments of pride, entertainment of our desires, engaging them in low, worldly, and sottish appetites, inviting us to show our power in oppression, our greatness in vanities, our wealth in prodigal expenses, and to answer the importunity of our lusts, not by a denial, but by a correspondence and satisfaction, till they become our mistresses, imperious, arrogant, tyrannical, and vain.[e] But poverty is the sister of a good mind; it ministers aid to wisdom, industry to our spirit, severity to our thoughts, soberness to our counsels, modesty to our desires; it restrains extravagancy and dissolution of appetites; the next thing above our present condition, which is commonly the object of our wishes, being temperate, and little proportionable enough to nature, not wandering beyond the limits of necessity or a moderate conveniency, or at farthest, but to a free refreshment, and recreation. And the cares of poverty are single and mean, rather a fit employment to correct our levities, than a business to impede our better thoughts; since a little thing supplies the needs of nature, and the earth and the

[a] Προκοπὴ ψυχῆς προκοπὴ ταπεινώσεως.
[b] Luke vi. 20.
[c] Luke vi. 24.
[d] James ii. 6, &c. v. 1, &c.
[e] Nulli fortunæ minùs bene quàm optimæ creditur. Aliâ felicitate ad tuendam felicitatem est opus.—SENEC.
Ὤφελες, ὦ τυφλὲ πλοῦτε, μήτ' ἐν γῇ, μήτ' ἐν θαλάττῃ, μήτ' ἐν ἠπείρῳ φανῆναι, ἀλλὰ τάρταρόν τε νάειν καὶ ἀχέροντα· διὰ σὲ γὰρ πάντα ἐν ἀνθρώποις κακά.—TIMOCR. Lyr.
Vel nos in mare proximum
Gemmas et lapides, aurum et inutile,
Summi materiam mali,
Mittamus.—HOR. lib. iii. Od. 24.
Ὁ δὲ πλοῦτος ἡμᾶς, καθάπερ ἰατρὸς κακὸς,
Τυφλοὺς, βλέποντας παραλαβὼν, πάντας ποιεῖ.
Incert. apud STOB. Floril. tit. 93.
Δοῦλος Ἐπίκτητος γενόμην, καὶ σώματι πηρὸς,
Καὶ πενίην Ἴρος, καὶ φίλος ἀθανάτοις.
Γλακτοφάγων, ἀβίων τε, δικαιοτάτων ἀνθρώπων,
dixit Homerus de Mysis et Hippomolgis, lib. xiii. Il. Justissimos et longævos dixit qui vescebantur lacte et cibo modesto.

fountain[f] with little trouble minister food to us, and God's common providence and daily dispensation eases the cares, and makes them portable. But the cares and business of rich men are violences to our whole man; they are loads of memory, business for the understanding, work for two or three arts and sciences, employment for many servants to assist in, increase the appetite, and heighten the thirst; and, by making their dropsy bigger, and their capacities large, they destroy all these opportunities and possibilities of charity, in which only riches can be useful.

4. But it is not a mere poverty of possession which entitles us to the blessing, but a poverty of spirit; that is, a contentedness in every state, an aptness to renounce all when we are obliged in duty, a refusing to continue a possession, when we for it must quit a virtue or a noble action, a divorce of our affections from those gilded vanities, a generous contempt of the world; and at no hand heaping riches, either with injustice or with avarice, either with wrong or impotency, of action or affection. Not like Laberius, described by the poet,[g] who thought nothing so criminal as poverty, and every spending of a sesterce was the loss of a moral virtue, and every gaining of a talent was an action glorious and heroical. But poverty of spirit accounts riches to be the servants of God first, and then of ourselves, being sent by God, and to return when he pleases, and all the while they are with us to do his business. It is a looking upon riches and things of the earth, as they do who look upon it from heaven, to whom it appears little and unprofitable. And because the residence of this blessed poverty is in the mind, it follows that it be here understood, that all that exinanition and renunciation, abjection and humility of mind, which depauperates the spirit, making it less worldly and more spiritual, is the duty here enjoined. For if a man throws away his gold, as did Crates the Theban, or the proud philosopher Diogenes, and yet leaves a spirit high, airy, fantastical, and vain, pleasing himself, and with complacency reflecting upon his own act, his poverty is but a circumstance of pride, and the opportunity of an imaginary and a secular greatness. Ananias and Sapphira renounced the world by selling their possessions; but because they were not "poor in spirit," but still retained the affections to the world, therefore they "kept back part of the price," and lost their hopes. The church of Laodicea[h] was possessed with a spirit of pride, and flattered themselves in imaginary riches; they were not poor in spirit, but they were poor in possession and condition. These wanted humility, the other wanted a generous contempt of worldly things; and both were destitute of this grace.

5. The acts of this grace are: 1. To cast off all inordinate affection to riches.[i] 2. In heart and spirit, that is, preparation of mind to quit the possession of all riches, and actually so to do, when God requires it, that is, when the retaining riches loses a virtue. 3. To be well pleased with the whole economy of God, his providence and dispensation of all things, being contented in all estates. 4. To employ that wealth God hath given us[k] in actions of justice and religion. 5. To be thankful to God in all temporal losses. 6. Not to distrust God, or to be solicitous and fearful of want in the future. 7. To put off the spirit of vanity, pride, and fantastic complacency in ourselves, thinking lowly or meanly of whatsoever we are or do. 8. To prefer others before ourselves, doing honour and prelation to them, and either contentedly receiving affronts done to us, or modestly undervaluing ourselves. 9. Not to praise ourselves but when God's glory and the edification of our neighbour is concerned in it, nor willingly to hear others praise us. 10. To despoil ourselves of all interior propriety, denying our own will in all instances of subordination to our superiors, and our own judgment in matters of difficulty and question, permitting ourselves and our affairs to the advice of wiser men, and the decision of those who are trusted with the cure of our souls. 11. Emptying ourselves of ourselves, and throwing ourselves wholly upon God, relying upon his providence, trusting his promises, craving his grace, and depending upon his strength for all our actions, and deliverances, and duties.

6. The reward promised is "the kingdom of heaven. Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's pleasure to give you a kingdom."[l] To be little in our own eyes is to be great in God's; the poverty of the spirit shall be rewarded with the riches of the kingdoms, of both kingdoms:[m] that of heaven is expressed. Poverty is the highway of eternity. But, therefore, the kingdom of grace is taken in the way, the way to our country; and it, being the forerunner of glory, and nothing else but an antedated eternity, is part of the reward as well as of our duty. And, therefore, whatsoever is signified by kingdom, in the appropriate evangelical sense, is there intended as a recompence. For the kingdom of the gospel is a congregation and society of Christ's poor, of his "little ones:" they are the communion of saints, and their present entertainment is knowledge of the truth, remission of sins, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and what else in Scripture is signified to be a part, or grace, or condition

[f] ——Satis est fluviusque Ceresque.—Lucan.

Ἐπεὶ τί δεῖ βροτοῖσι πλὴν δυοῖν μόνον,
Δημητρὸς ἀκτῆς, πώματος θ' ὑδρηχόου,
Ἅπερ πάρεστι, καὶ πέφυχ' ἡμᾶς τρέφειν. —Eurip.

[g] ——Quoad vixit, credidit ingens
Pauperiem vitium, et cavit nil acrius, ut si
Fortè minûs locuples uno quadrante periret,
Ipse videretur nequior sibi——Horat.

[h] Apocal. iii. 17.

[i] Ἐγὼ οὔτ' Ἀμαλθείης βουλοίμην κέρας, οὔτ' ἔτεα πεντήκοντα ἑκατὸν Ταρτήσου βασιλεῦσαι.—Anacreon.

[k] Non possidentem multa vocaveris
Rectè beatum: rectiùs occupat
Nomen beati, qui deorum
Muneribus sapienter uti,
Duramque callet pauperiem pati,
Pejusque letho flagitium timet, &c.
Hor. lib. iv. Od. 9.

[l] Latiùs regnes avidum domando
Spiritum, quàm si Libyam remotis
Gadibus jungas, et uterque Pœnus
Serviat uni.—Hor. lib. ii. Od. 2.
Serviet æternùm, qui parvo nesciet uti.—Hor.

[m] Matt. xi. 11. and xviii. 4.

of the kingdom. For "to the poor the gospel is preached;"[n] that is, to the poor the kingdom is promised and ministered.

7. Secondly: "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted." This duty of christian mourning is commanded not for itself, but in order to many good ends. It is in order to patience: "Tribulation worketh patience;"[o] and therefore "we glory in them," saith St. Paul; and St. James, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye enter into divers temptations, knowing that the trial of your faith (viz. by afflictions) worketh patience."[p] 2. It is in order to repentance: "Godly sorrow worketh repentance."[q] 3. By consequence it is in order to pardon; for "a contrite heart God will not reject." 4. And after all this it leads to joy; and therefore St. James preached a homily of sorrow: "Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep," that is, in penitential mourning; for he adds, "humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up."[r] The acts of this duty are: 1. To bewail our own sins. 2. To lament our infirmities, as they are principles of sin, and recessions from our first state. 3. To weep for our own evils and sad accidents, as they are issues of the Divine anger. 4. To be sad for the miseries and calamities of the church, or of any member of it: and, indeed, to "weep with every one that weeps;" that is, not to rejoice in his evil, but to be compassionate, and pitiful, and apt to bear another's burden. 5. To avoid all loose and immoderate laughter, all dissolution of spirit and manners, uncomely jestings, free revellings, carnivals, and balls, which are the perdition of precious hours, (allowed us for repentance and possibilities of heaven,) which are the instruments of infinite vanity, idle talking, impertinency, and lust, and very much below the severity and retiredness of a christian spirit. Of this Christ became to us the great example; for St. Basil reports a tradition of him, that he never laughed, but wept often. And if we mourn with him, we shall also rejoice in the joys of eternity.

8. Thirdly: "Blessed are the meek; for they shall possess the earth:" that is, the gentle and softer spirits, persons not turbulent or unquiet, not clamorous or impatient, not over-bold or impudent, not querulous or discontented, not brawlers or contentious, not nice or curious, but men who submit to God, and know no choice of fortune or employment or success, but what God chooses for them, having peace at home, because nothing from without does discompose their spirit. In some, meekness is an indifference to any exterior accident, a being reconciled to all conditions and instances of Providence, a reducing ourselves to such an evenness and interior satisfaction, that there is the same conformity of spirit and fortune by complying with my fortune, as if my fortune did comply with my spirit.[s] And, therefore, in the order of beatitudes, meekness is set between mourning and desire, that it might balance and attemper those actions by indifference, which, by reason of their abode, are apt to the transportation of passion.[t] The reward expressed is "a possession of the earth," that is, a possession of all which is excellent here below, to consign him to a future glory, as Canaan was a type of heaven. For meekness is the best cement and combining of friendships, it is a great endearment of us to our company. It is an ornament to have "a meek and quiet spirit,"[u] a prevention of quarrels, and pacifier of wrath;[x] it purchaseth peace, and is itself a quietness of spirit: it is the greatest affront to all injuries in the world; for it returns them upon the injurious, and makes them useless, ineffective, and innocent; and is an antidote against all the evil consequents of anger and adversity, and tramples upon the usurping passions of the irascible faculty.

9. But the greatest part of this paysage and landscape is sky: and as a man, in all countries, can see more of heaven than of the earth he dwells on; so also he may in this promise. For although the christian hears the promise of "the inheritance of the earth," yet he must place his eye, and fix his heart, upon heaven, which, by looking downward also upon this promise, as in a vessel of limpid water, he may see by reflection, without looking upwards by a direct intuition. It is heaven that is designed by this promise, as well as by any of the rest; though this grace takes in also the refreshments of the earth by equivalence, and a suppletory design. But "here we have no abiding city," and therefore, no inheritance; this is not our country, and therefore here cannot be our portion; unless we choose, as did the prodigal, to go into a strange country, and spend our portion with riotous and beastly living, and forfeit our Father's blessing. The devil, carrying our blessed Saviour to a high mountain, showed him all the kingdoms of the world; but, besides that they were offered upon ill conditions, they were not eligible by him upon any. And neither are they to be chosen by us for our inheritance and portion evangelical: for the gospel is founded upon "better promises," and therefore, the hopes of a christian ought not to determine

[n] Matt. xi. 5.

[o] Rom. v. 3. Gaudet patientia duris.

[p] James i. 2, 3. [q] 2 Cor. vii. 10.

[r] James iv. 9, 10.

Sic enim per oculos cùm notas turpes trahat,
Rursus per ipsos lacrymas fundit pias,
Egressione ut eluat quæ ingressa sunt.

Dum dolemus admissa, admittenda excludimus; et fit quædam de condemnatione culpæ disciplina innocentiæ.—S. AMBROS.

[s] Πραεῖς εἰσιν οἱ κατεσταλμένοι τὰ ἤθη, καὶ παντὸς πάθους ἀπηλλαγμένοι, ὡς μηδεμίαν ἔχειν ταραχὴν ἐνοικοῦσαν αὐτῶν ταῖς ψυχαῖς.—S. BASIL. in Psal. 33.

[t] Mansuetus et æquus secundùm Arist. est εὐτυχῶν μέτριος, et ἀτυχῶν μεγαλόψυχος.

[u] 1 Pet. iii. 4.

[x] Ὁ θυμὸς φόνων αἴτιον, συμφορᾶς σύμμαχον, βλάβης σύνεργον καὶ ἀτιμίας, χρημάτων ἀπώλεια, ἔτι δὲ καὶ φθορᾶς ἀρχηγόν.—ARISTOT.

Ὅσσα τε δαιμονίησι τύχαις βροτοὶ ἄλγε' ἔχουσιν,
Ὧν ἂν μοῖραν ἔχῃς, πρᾴως φέρε, μηδ' ἀγανάκτει.
PYTHAG. Carm. Aur.

Æquam memento rebus in arduis
Servare mentem; non secùs in bonis
Ab insolenti temperatam
Lætitiâ, moriture Deli.
HORAT. Carm. lib. ii. Od. 3.

Quem res plùs nimio delectavere secundæ,
Mutatæ quatient.——————Ad Fusc.

upon any thing less than heaven. Indeed our blessed Saviour chose to describe this beatitude in the words of the Psalmist, so inviting his disciples to an excellent precept, by the insinuation of those Scriptures which themselves admitted. But as the earth, which was promised to the meek man in David's psalm, was no other earth but the *terra promissionis*, the land of Canaan; if we shall remember that this land of promise was but a transition and an allegory to a greater and more noble, that it was but a type of heaven, we shall not see cause to wonder why the holy Jesus, intending heaven for the reward of this grace also, together with the rest, did call it "the inheritance of the earth." For now is revealed to us "a new heaven and a new earth, a habitation made without hands, eternal in the heavens." And he understands nothing of the excellency of christian religion, whose affections dwell below, and are satisfied with a portion of dirt and corruption. "If we be risen with Christ, let us seek those things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God." But if a christian desires to take possession of this earth in his way, as his inheritance or portion, he hath reason to fear it will be his all. We have but one inheritance, one country; and here we are "strangers and pilgrims." Abraham told Dives that he had "enjoyed his good things here;" he had "the inheritance of the earth," in the crass material sense; and, therefore, he had no other portion but what the devils have. And when we remember that persecution is the lot of the church, and that poverty is her portion, and her quantum is but "food and raiment" at the best, and that patience is her support, and hope her refreshment, and self-denial her security, and meekness is all her possession and title to a subsistence; it will appear certain, that as Christ's "kingdom is not of this world," so neither shall his saints have their portion in that which is not his kingdom. They are miserable if they do not reign with him, and he never reigned here; but "if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him" hereafter. True it is, Christ promised to him that should lose any interest for his sake, the restitution of "a hundred-fold in this world." But as the sense of that cannot be literal, for he cannot receive a hundred mothers or a hundred wives; so whatsoever that be, it is to be enjoyed "with persecution." And then such a portion of the earth as Christ hath expressed in figure, and shall, by way of recompence, restore us, and such a recompence as we can enjoy with persecution, and such an enjoyment as is consistent with our having lost all our temporals, and such an acquist and purchase of it as is not destructive of the grace of meekness; all that we may enter into our account as part of our lot, and the emanation from the holy promise. But in the foot of this account we shall not find any great affluence of temporal accruements. However it be, although when a meek man hath earthly possessions, by this grace he is taught how to use them, and how to part with them; yet if he hath them not, by the virtue here commanded, he is not suffered to use any thing violent towards the acquiring them, not so much as a violent passion, or a stormy imagination; for then he loses his meekness, and whatever he gets can be none of the reward of this grace. He that fights for temporals (unless by some other appendant duty he be obliged) loses his title, by striving incompetently for the reward; he cuts off that hand by which alone he can receive it. For unless he be indeed meek, he hath no right to what he calls "the inheritance of the earth;" and he that is not content to want the inheritance of the earth when God requires him, is not meek. So that if this beatitude be understood in a temporal sense, it is an offer of a reward upon a condition we shall be without it, and be content too: for, in every sense of the word, meekness implies a just satisfaction of the spirit, and acquiescence in every estate or contingency whatsoever, though we have no possessions but of a good conscience, no bread but that of carefulness, no support but from the Holy Spirit, and a providence ministering to our natural necessities, by an extemporary provision. And certain it is, the meekest of Christ's servants, the apostles and the primitive christians, had no other verification of this promise but this, that "rejoicing in tribulation, and knowing how to want, as well as how to abound, through many tribulations they entered into the kingdom of heaven:" for that is the country in which they are co-heirs with Jesus. But if we will certainly understand what this reward is, we may best know it by understanding the duty; and this we may best learn from him that gave it in commandment. "Learn of me, for I am meek," said the holy Jesus: and to him was promised, that "the uttermost ends of the earth should be his inheritance;" and yet he died first, and went to heaven, before it was verified to him in any sense, but only of content, and desire, and joy in suffering, and in all variety of accident. And thus also, if we be meek, we may receive the inheritance of the earth.

10. The acts of this grace are: 1. To submit to all the instances of Divine Providence,[y] not repining at any accident which God hath chosen for us, and given us as part of our lot, or a punishment of our deserving, or an instrument of virtue; not envying the gifts, graces, or prosperities of our neighbours. 2. To pursue the interest and employment of our calling in which we are placed, not despising the meanness of any work, though never so disproportionable to our abilities. 3. To correct all malice, wrath, evil-speaking, and inordinations of anger, whether in respect of the object or the degree. 4. At no hand to entertain any thoughts of revenge or retaliation of evil. 5. To be affable and courteous in our deportment towards all persons of our society and intercourse. 6. Not to censure or reproach the weakness of our neighbour, but support his burden,

[y] Non si malè nunc, et olim
Sic erit ———
Rebus angustis animosus atque
Fortis appare: sapienter idem
Contrahes vento nimiùm secundo
Turgida vela.—Hor. lib. ii. Od. 10.

cover and cure his infirmities. 7. To excuse what may be excused, lessening severity, and being gentle in reprehension. 8. To be patient in afflictions, and thankful under the cross. 9. To endure reproof, with shame at ourselves for deserving it, and thankfulness to the charitable physician that offers the remedy.[z] 10. To be modest and fairly mannered toward our superiors, obeying, reverencing, speaking honourably of, and doing honour to, aged persons, and all whom God hath set over us, according to their several capacities. 11. To be ashamed and very apprehensive of the unworthiness of a crime; at no hand losing our fear of the invisible God, and our reverence to visible societies, or single persons.[a] 12. To be humble in our exterior addresses and behaviour in churches and all holy places. 13. To be temperate in government, not imperious, unreasonable, insolent, or oppressive, lest we provoke to wrath those, whose interest of person and of religion we are to defend or promote. 14. To do our endeavour to expiate any injury we did, by confessing the fact, and offering satisfaction, and asking forgiveness.

11. Fourthly: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." This grace is the greatest indication of spiritual health, when our appetite is right, strong, and regular; when we are desirous of spiritual nourishment, when we long for manna, and "follow Christ for loaves," not of a low and terrestrial gust, but of that "bread which came down from heaven." Now there are two sorts of holy repast which are the proper objects of our desires. The bread of heaven, which is proportioned to our hunger; that is, all those immediate emanations from Christ's pardon of our sins, and redemption from our former conversation, holy laws, and commandments. To this food there is also a spiritual beverage to quench our thirst: and this is the effects of the Holy Spirit, who first "moved upon the waters" of baptism, and afterwards became to us "the breath of life," giving us holy inspirations and assistances, refreshing our wearinesses, cooling our fevers, and allaying all our intemperate passions, making us holy, humble, resigned, and pure, "according to the pattern in the mount," even "as our Father is pure." So that the first redemption and pardon of us by Christ's merits is the bread of life, for which we must hunger; and the refreshments and daily emanations of the Spirit, who is the spring of comforts and purity, is that drink which we must thirst after: a being first reconciled to God by Jesus, and a being sanctified and preserved in purity by the Holy Spirit, is the adequate object of our desires. Some, to hunger and thirst best, fancy the analogy and proportion of the two sacraments, the waters of baptism, and the food of the eucharist; some, the bread of the patin, and the wine of the chalice. But it is certain they signify one desire, expressed by the most impatient and necessary of our appetites, hungering and thirsting. And the object is whatsoever is the principle or the effect, the beginning, or the way, or the end of righteousness; that is, the mercies of God, the pardon of Jesus, the graces of the Spirit, a holy life, a holy death, and a blessed eternity.

12. The blessing and reward of this grace is fulness or satisfaction: which relates immediately to heaven, because nothing here below can satisfy us. The grace of God is our viaticum, and entertains us by the way; its nature is to increase, not to satisfy, the appetites: not because the grace is empty and unprofitable, as are the things of the world; but because it is excellent, but yet in order to a greater perfection; it invites the appetite by its present goodness, but it leaves it unsatisfied, because it is not yet arrived at glory: and yet the present imperfection in respect of all the good of this world's possession, is rest and satisfaction, and is imperfect only in respect of its own future complement and perfection; and our hunger continues, and our needs return, because all we have is but an antepast. But the glories of eternity are also the proper object of our desires; that is the reward of God's grace, this is "the crown of righteousness." "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; and when I awake up after thy likeness, I shall be satisfied with it."[b] The acts of this virtue are multiplied according to its object; for they are only, 1. to desire, and 2. pray for, and 3. labour for, all that which is righteousness in any sense: 1. for the pardon of our sins; 2. for the graces and sanctification of the Spirit; 3. for the advancement of Christ's kingdom; 4. for the reception of the holy sacrament, and all the instruments, ordinances, and ministries of grace; 5. for the grace of perseverance; 6. and finally, for the crown of righteousness.

13. Fifthly: "Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy." Mercy is the greatest mark and token of the holy, elect, and predestinate persons in the world. "Put ye on, my beloved, as the elect of God, the bowels of mercy, holy and precious."[c] For mercy is an attribute, in the manifestation of which as all our happiness consists,[d] so God takes greatest complacency and delights in it above all his other works. "He punishes to the third and fourth generation, but shows mercy unto thousands." Therefore the Jews say, that Michael flies with one wing, and Gabriel with two; meaning, that the pacifying angel, the minister of mercy, flies swift, but the exterminating angel, the messenger of wrath, is slow. And we are called to our approximation to God by the practice

[z] Πρῶτον ἀγαθῶν, τὸ ἀναμάρτητον· δεύτερον δὲ, αἰσχύναι. Melis. Disc. 19.

Neque ulli patientius reprehenduntur quàm qui maximè laudari merentur.—Plin. lib. vii. c. 10.

Θρασυστομεῖν γὰρ οὐ πρέπει τοὺς ἥσσονας.—Æsch. Ἱκέτιδες.

[a] Salva res est, propter spem salutis quam promittit indoles erubescentis.—Comœd.

Γηράσκων δ' ἀστοῖσι μεταπρέπει, οὐδὲ τις αὐτὸν
Βλάπτειν οὐδ' ἀιδοῦς οὐδὲ δίκης ἐθέλει.—Theog.

[b] Psalm xvii. 15. [c] Col. iii. 12.

[d] Neque enim sunt isti audiendi qui virtutem duram et quasi ferream esse volunt; quæ quidem est cùm in multis rebus, tum in amicitiâ, tenera atque tractabilis, ut et bonis amici quasi diffundantur, et incommodis contrahantur.—Lælius apud M. T. Cic.

of this grace; for we are made "partakers of the Divine nature" by being "merciful as our heavenly Father is merciful." This mercy consists in the affections, and in the effects and actions. In both which the excellency of this christian precept is eminent above the goodness of the moral precept of the old philosophers, and the piety and charity of the Jews by virtue of the Mosaic law. The Stoic philosophers affirm it to be the duty of a wise man to succour and help the necessities of indigent and miserable persons; but at no hand to pity them, or suffer any trouble or compassion in our affections: for they intended that a wise person should be dispassionate, unmoved, and without disturbance in every accident, and object, and concernment. But the blessed Jesus, who came to reconcile us to his Father, and purchase us an entire possession, did intend to redeem us from sin, and make our passions obedient and apt to be commanded, even and moderate in temporal affairs, but high and active in some instances of spiritual concernment; and in all instances, that the affection go along with the grace; that we must be as merciful in our compassion, as compassionate in our exterior expressions and actions. The Jews, by the prescript of their law, were to be merciful to all their nation and confederates in religion; and this their mercy was called justice: "He hath dispersed abroad and given to the poor, his righteousness (or justice) remaineth for ever." But the mercies of a christian are to extend to all: "Do good to all men, especially to the household of faith."[e] And this diffusion of a mercy, not only to brethren, but to aliens and enemies, is that which St. Paul calls "goodness,"[f] still retaining the old appellative for Judaical mercy, "righteousness:" "For scarcely for a righteous[g] man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man some will even dare to die." So that the christian mercy must be a mercy of the whole man, the heart must be merciful, and the hand operating in "the labour of love;" and it must be extended to all persons of all capacities, according as their necessity requires, and our ability permits, and our endearments and other obligations dispose of and determine the order.

14. The acts of this grace are: 1. To pity the miseries of all persons, and all calamities, spiritual or temporal, having a fellow-feeling in their afflictions. 2. To be afflicted and sad in the public judgments imminent or incumbent upon a church, or state, or family. 3. To pray to God for remedy for all afflicted persons. 4. To do all acts of bodily assistance to all miserable and distressed people, to relieve the poor, to redeem captives, to forgive debts to disabled persons, to pay debts for them, to lend them money, to feed the hungry and clothe the naked, to rescue persons from dangers, to defend and relieve the oppressed, to comfort widows and fatherless children, to help them to right that suffer wrong; and, in brief, to do any thing of relief, support, succour, and comfort. 5. To do all acts of spiritual mercy, to counsel the doubtful, to admonish the erring, to strengthen the weak, to resolve the scrupulous, to teach the ignorant, and any thing else which may be instrumental to his conversion, perseverance, restitution, and salvation, or may rescue him from spiritual dangers, or supply him in any ghostly necessity. The reward of this virtue is symbolical to the virtue itself, the grace and glory differing in nothing but degrees, and every virtue being a reward to itself. "The merciful shall receive mercy;" mercy "to help them in time of need;" mercy from God, who will not only give them the great mercies of pardon and eternity, but also dispose the hearts of others to pity and supply their needs, as they have done to others. For the present, there is nothing more noble than to be beneficial to others, and to "lift up the poor out of the mire," and rescue them from misery; it is to do the work of God:[h] and for the future, nothing is a greater title to a mercy, at the day of judgment, than to have shown mercy to our necessitous brother; it being expressed to be the only rule and instance in which Christ means to judge the world, in their mercy and charity, or their unmercifulness, respectively: "I was hungry and ye fed me," or ye fed me not: and so we stand or fall in the great and eternal scrutiny. And it was the prayer of St. Paul, (Onesiphorus showed kindness to the great apostle,) "The Lord show him a mercy in that day." For a cup of charity, though but full "of cold water, shall not lose its reward."

15. Sixthly: "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God." This purity of heart includes purity of hands. "Lord, who shall dwell in thy tabernacle? even he that is of clean hands and a pure heart;" that is, "he that hath not given his mind unto vanity, nor sworn to deceive his neighbour."[i] It signifies justice of action and candour of spirit, innocence of manners and sincerity of purpose; it is one of those great circumstances that consummate charity: "for the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and faith unfeigned."[k] "A pure heart;" that is, a heart free from all carnal affections, not only in the matter of natural impurity, but also spiritual and immaterial: such as are heresies, (which are therefore impurities, because they mingle secular interest or prejudice with persuasions in religion,) seditions, hurtful and impious stratagems, and all those which St. Paul enumerates to be "works" or "fruits of the flesh." "A good conscience;" that is, a conscience either innocent or penitent, a state of grace, either a not having prevaricated, or a being restored to our baptismal purity. "Faith unfeigned;" that also is the purity of sincerity, and excludes hypocrisy, timorous and half persuasions, neutrality and indifferency in matters of salvation. And all these do integrate the whole duty of charity. But purity, as it is a special grace, signifies only honesty and

[e] Gal. vi. 10. [f] Rom. v. 7.

[g] Syrus interpres non legit ὑπὲρ δικαίου, sed ἀδίκου, injusti.

[h] Bona comparat præsidia misericordia; et habet in adversis auxilia qui in secundis commodat.—Publius.

Deus est mortali juvare mortalem, atque hæc est ad æternitatem viâ.—Seneca.

[i] Psalm xxiv. 3, 4.

[k] 1 Tim. i. 5.

uprightness of soul, without hypocrisy to God and dissimulation towards men; and then a freedom from all carnal desires, so as not to be governed or led by them. Chastity is the purity of the body, simplicity is the purity of the spirit; both are the sanctification of the whole man, for the entertainment of the Spirit of purity and the Spirit of truth.

16. The acts of this virtue are: 1. To quit all lustful thoughts, not to take delight in them, not to retain them or invite them, but, as objects of displeasure, to avert them from us. 2. To resist all lustful desires, and extinguish them by their proper correctories and remedies. 3. To refuse all occasions, opportunities, and temptations to impurity; denying to please a wanton eye, or to use a lascivious gesture, or to go into a danger, or to converse with an improper, unsafe object; "hating the garment spotted with the flesh," so St. Jude calls it; and "not to look upon a maid," so Job; "not to sit with a woman that is a singer," so the son of Sirach. 4. To be of a liberal soul, not mingling with affections of money and inclinations of covetousness, not doing any act of violence, rapine, or injustice. 5. To be ingenuous in our thoughts, purposes, and professions, speaking nothing contrary to our intentions, but being really what we seem. 6. To give all our faculties and affections to God, without dividing interests between God and his enemies, without entertaining of any one crime in society with our pretences for God. 7. Not to lie in sin, but instantly to repent of it[l] and return, "purifying our conscience from dead works." 8. Not to dissemble our faith or belief when we are required to its confession, pretending a persuasion complying with those from whom secretly we differ. Lust, covetousness, and hypocrisy, are the three great enemies of this grace; they are the motes of our eyes, and the spots of our souls. The reward of purity is the vision beatifical. If we are "pure as God is pure, we shall" also "see him as he is: when we awake up after his likeness, we shall behold his presence." To which in this world we are consigned by freedom from the cares of covetousness, the shame of lust, the fear of discovery, and the stings of an evil conscience, which are the portion of the several impurities here forbidden.

17. Seventhly: "Blessed are the peace-makers; for they shall be called the children of God. The wisdom of God is first pure, and then peaceable:"[m] that is the order of the beatitudes. As soon as Jesus was born, the angels sang a hymn, "Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will towards men;" signifying the two great errands upon which Christ was despatched in his legation from heaven to earth. He is "the Prince of Peace." "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man ever shall see God." The acts of this grace are: 1. To mortify our anger, peevishness, and fiery dispositions, apt to enkindle upon every slight accident, inadvertency, or misfortune of a friend or servant. 2. Not to be hasty, rash, provocative, or upbraiding in our language. 3. To live quietly and serenely in our families and neighbourhoods. 4. Not to backbite, slander, misreport, or undervalue any man, carrying tales, or sowing dissension between brethren. 5. Not to interest ourselves in the quarrels of others, by abetting either part, except where charity calls us to rescue the oppressed; and then also to do a work of charity without mixtures of uncharitableness. 6. To avoid all suits of law, as much as is possible, without intrenching upon any other collateral obligation towards a third interest, or a necessary support for ourselves or great conveniency for our families; or, if we be engaged in law, to pursue our just interests with just means and charitable maintenance. 7. To endeavour by all means to reconcile disagreeing persons. 8. To endeavour, by affability and fair deportment, to win the love of our neighbours. 9. To offer satisfaction to all whom we have wronged or slandered, and to remit the offences of others, and, in trials of right, to find out the most charitable expedient to determine it, as by indifferent arbitration, or something like it. 10. To be open, free, and ingenuous, in reprehensions and fair expostulations with persons whom we conceive to have wronged us, that no seed of malice or rancour may be latent in us, and, upon the breath of a new displeasure, break out into a flame. 11. To be modest in our arguings, disputings, and demands, not laying great interest upon trifles. 12. To moderate, balance, and temper our zeal, by the rules of prudence and the allay of charity, that we quarrel not for opinions, nor entitle God in our impotent and mistaken fancies, nor lose charity for a pretence of an article of faith. 13. To pray heartily for our enemies, real or imaginary, always loving and being apt to benefit their persons, and to cure their faults by charitable remedies. 14. To abstain from doing all affronts, disgraces, slightings, and uncomely jeerings and mockings of our neighbour, not giving him appellatives of scorn or irrision. 15. To submit to all our superiors in all things, either doing what they command, or suffering what they impose; at no hand lifting our heel against those upon whom the characters of God, and the marks of Jesus, are imprinted in signal and eminent authority; such as are principally the king, and then the bishops, whom God hath set to "watch over our souls." 16. Not to invade the possessions of our neighbours, or commence war, but when we are bound by justice and legal trust to defend the rights of others, or our own, in order to our duty. 17. Not to "speak evil of dignities," or undervalue their persons, or publish their faults, or upbraid the levities of our governors; knowing that they also are designed by God, to be converted to us for castigation and amendment of us. 18. Not to be busy in other men's affairs. And then "the peace of God will rest upon us."[n] The reward is no less than the adoption and inheritance of sons; for "he hath given unto us power to be called the sons of God;" for he is the Father of peace, and the sons of peace are the sons of God, and therefore

[l] Plato vocat puritatem ἀπόκρισιν χειρόνων ἀπὸ βελτιόνων.
[m] James iii. 17.
[n] Phil. iv. 9. 1 Thess. v. 23. 2 Thess. iii. 16. Heb. xiii. 20.

have a title to the inheritance of sons, to be heirs with God, and co-heirs with Christ, in the kingdom of peace, and essential and never-failing charity.[o]

18. Eighthly: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." This being the hardest command in the whole discipline of Jesus, is fortified with a double blessedness; for it follows immediately, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you;" meaning, that all persecution for a cause of righteousness, though the affliction be instanced only in reproachful language, shall be a title to the blessedness. Any suffering, for any good or harmless action, is a degree of martyrdom. It being the greatest testimony in the world of the greatest love, to quit[p] that for God which hath possessed our most natural, regular, and orderly affections. It is a preferring God's cause before our own interest; it is a loving of virtue without secular ends; it is the noblest, the most resigned, ingenuous, valiant act in the world, to die for God, whom we never have seen; it is the crown of faith, the confidence of hope, and our greatest charity. The primitive churches living under persecution commenced many pretty opinions concerning the state and special dignity of martyrs, apportioning to them one of the three coronets which themselves did knit, and supposed as pendants to the great "crown of righteousness." They made it suppletory of baptism, expiatory of sin, satisfactory of public penances; they placed them in bliss[q] immediately, declared them to need no after-prayer, such as the devotion of those times used to pour upon the graves of the faithful: with great prudence they did endeavour to alleviate this burden, and sweeten the bitter chalice; and they did it by such doctrines, which did only remonstrate this great truth, That since "no love was greater than to lay down our lives," nothing could be so great but God would indulge to them. And indeed, whatsoever they said in this had no inconvenience, nor would it now, unless men should think mere suffering to be sufficient to excuse a wicked life, or that they be invited to dishonour an excellent patience with the mixture of an impure action. There are many who would die for Christ if they were put to it, and yet will not quit a lust[r] for him: those are hardly to be esteemed Christ's martyrs: unless they be "dead unto sin," their dying for an article or a good action will not pass the great scrutiny. And it may be boldness of spirit, or sullenness, or an honourable gallantry of mind, or something that is excellent in civil and political estimate, moves the person, and endears the suffering; but that love only "which keeps the commandments" will teach us to die for love, and from love to pass to blessedness through the red sea of blood. And, indeed, it is more easy to die for chastity, than to live with it:[s] and many women have been found, who suffered death under the violence of tyrants for defence of their holy vows and purity, who, had they long continued amongst pleasures, courtships, curiosities, and importunities of men, might perchance have yielded that to a lover, which they denied to an executioner. St. Cyprian observes, that our blessed Lord, in admitting the innocent babes of Bethlehem first to die for him, did, to all generations of christendom, consign this lesson, That only persons holy and innocent were fit to be Christ's martyrs. And I remember, that the prince of the Latin poets,[t] over against the regions and seats of infants, places in the shades below persons that suffered death wrongfully; but adds, that this their death was not enough to place them in such blessed mansions, but the Judge first made inquiry into their lives, and accordingly designed their station. It is certain, that such dyings, or great sufferings, are heroical actions, and of power to make great compensations, and redemptions of time, and of omissions and imperfections; but if the man be unholy, so also are his sufferings:[u] for heretics have died, and vicious persons have suffered in a good cause, and a dog's neck may be cut off in sacrifice, and swine's blood may fill the trench about the altar: but God only accepts the sacrifice which is pure and spotless, first seasoned with salt, then seasoned with fire. The true martyr must have all the preceding graces, and then he shall receive all the beatitudes.

19. The acts of this duty are: 1. Boldly to confess the faith, nobly to exercise public virtues, not to be ashamed of any thing that is honest, and rather to quit our goods, our liberty, our health, and life itself, than to deny what we are bound to affirm, or to omit what we are bound to do, or to pretend contrary to our present persuasion. 2. To rejoice in afflictions; counting it honourable to be conformable to Christ, and to wear the cognizance of christianity, whose certain lot it is to suffer the hostility and violence of enemies, visible and invisible. 3. Not to revile our persecutors, but to bear the cross with evenness, tranquillity, patience, and charity. 4. To offer our sufferings to the glory of God, and to join them with the passions of Christ, by doing it in love to God, and obedience to his sanctions, and testimony of some part of his religion, and designing it as a part of duty. The reward is "the kingdom of heaven;" which can be no other but eternal salvation, in case the martyrdom be consummate: and "they also shall be made perfect:"[x] so the words of the reward were read in Clement's time. If it be less, it keeps its proportion: all suffering persons are the combination of saints; they make the church, they are the people of the kingdom, and heirs of the

[o] Rom. viii. 17.

[p] ——Dulce periculum est,
O Lenæe, sequi deum
Cingentem viridi tempora pampino.
Hor. lib. iii. Od. 25.

[q] Animas prælio aut suppliciis peremptorum æternas putant. Hinc moriendi contemptus.—C. Tacitus de Judæis.

[r] Non est autem consentaneum, qui metu non frangatur, eum frangi cupiditate; nec qui invictum se à labore præstiterit, vinci à voluptate.—Cic. de Offic. lib. i.

[s] Tertul. de Castit.

[t] Hos juxta falso damnati crimine mortis.
Nec verò hæ sine sorte datæ, sine judice, sedes;
Quæsitor Minos urnam movet; ille silentûm
Conciliumque vocat, vitasque et crimina discit.
Virg. Æneid. 6.

[u] Athleta non vincit statim quia eruitur, nec ideo transnatant quia se spoliant.—Sever. Ep. 2.

[x] Ὅτι αὐτοὶ ἔσόνται τέλειοι.

covenant. For if they be but confessors, and confess Christ in prison, though they never preach upon the rack or under the axe, yet "Christ will confess them before his heavenly Father;" and "they shall have a portion where they shall never be persecuted any more."[y]

THE PRAYER.

I.

O blessed Jesus, who art become to us the fountain of peace and sanctity, of righteousness and charity, of life and perpetual benediction, imprint in our spirits these glorious characterisms of christianity, that we by such excellent dispositions may be consigned to the infinity of blessedness, which thou camest to reveal, and minister, and exhibit to mankind. Give us great humility of spirit; and deny us not, when we beg sorrow of thee, the mourning and sadness of true penitents, that we may imitate thy excellencies, and conform to thy sufferings. Make us meek, patient, indifferent, and resigned in all accidents, changes, and issues of Divine Providence. Mortify all inordinate anger in us, all wrath, strife, contention, murmurings, malice, and envy: and interrupt, and then blot out, all peevish dispositions and morosities, all disturbances and unevenness of spirit or of habit, that may hinder us in our duty. Oh teach me so to "hunger and thirst after" the ways of "righteousness," that it may be "meat and drink" to me "to do thy Father's will." Raise my affections to heaven and heavenly things, fix my heart there, and prepare a treasure for me, which I may receive in the great diffusions and communications of thy glory. And, in this sad interval of infirmity and temptations, strengthen my hopes, and fortify my faith, by such emissions of light and grace from thy Spirit, that I may relish those blessings which thou preparest for thy saints with so great appetite, that I may despise the world and all its gilded vanities, and may desire nothing but the crown of righteousness, and the paths that lead thither, the graces of thy kingdom and the glories of it; that when I have served thee in holiness and strict obedience, I may reign with thee in the glories of eternity: for thou, O holy Jesus, art our hope, and our life, and glory, our exceeding great reward. Amen.

II.

Merciful Jesu, who art infinitely pleased in demonstrations of thy mercy, and didst descend into a state of misery, suffering persecution and affronts, that thou mightest give us thy mercy, and reconcile us to thy Father, and make us partakers of thy purities; give unto us tender bowels, that we may suffer together with our calamitous and necessitous brethren, that we, having a fellow-feeling of their miseries, may use all our powers to help them, and ease ourselves of our common sufferings. But do thou, O holy Jesu, take from us also all our great calamities, the carnality of our affections, our sensualities and impurities, that we may first be pure, then peaceable, living in peace with all men, and preserving the peace which thou hast made for us with our God, that we may never commit a sin which may interrupt so blessed an atonement. Let neither hope nor fear, tribulation nor anguish, pleasure nor pain, make us to relinquish our interest in thee, and our portion of the everlasting covenant. But give us hearts constant, bold, and valiant, to confess thee before all the world in the midst of all disadvantages and contradictory circumstances, choosing rather to beg, or to be disgraced, or afflicted, or to die, than quit a holy conscience, or renounce an article of christianity: that we, either in acts, when thou shalt call us, or always in preparation of mind, suffering with thee, may also reign with thee in the church triumphant, O holy and most merciful Saviour Jesu. Amen.

DISCOURSE X.

A Discourse upon that Part of the Decalogue, which the Holy Jesus adopted into the Institution and Obligation of Christianity.

1. WHEN the holy Jesus had described the characterisms of christianity, in these eight graces and beatitudes, he adds his injunctions, that in these virtues they should be eminent and exemplar, that they might adorn the doctrine of God; for he intended that the gospel should be as leaven in a lump of dough, to season the whole mass; and that christians should be the instruments of communicating the excellency and reputation of this holy institution to all the world. Therefore, Christ calls them salt, and light; and the societies of christians, "a city set upon a hill," and "a light set in a candlestick," whose office and energy is to illuminate all the vicinage; which is also expressed in these preceptive words: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven;" which I consider not only as a circumstance of other parts, but as a precise duty itself, and one of the sanctions of christianity; which hath so confederated the souls of the disciples of the institution, that it hath in some proportion obliged every man to take care of his brother's soul.[a] And since reverence to God, and charity to our brother, are the two greatest ends which the best laws can have, this precept of exemplary living is enjoined in order to them both: we must "shine as lights in the world," that God may be glorified, and our brother edified; that the excellency of the act may endear the reputation of the

[y] Sic etiam olim legebatur hæc periodus; ὅτι ἕξουσι τόπον ὅπου οὐ διωχθήσονται.

[a] Ὅπερ ἐστὶν ἐν σώματι ψυχὴ, τοῦτ' εἰσὶν ἐν κόσμῳ Χριστιανοί.—JUST. MART.

Sic S. Paulus, ἐν οἷς φαίνεσθε ὡς φωστῆρες ἐν κόσμῳ.—Phil. ii. 15.

religion, and invite men to confess God, according to the sanctions of so holy an institution. And if we be curious that vanity do not mingle in the intention, and that the intention do not spoil the action, and that we suffer not our lights to shine, that men may magnify us, and not glorify God; this duty is soon performed, by way of adherence to our other actions, and hath no other difficulty in it, but that it will require our prudence and care, to preserve the simplicity of our purposes, and humility of our spirit, in the midst of that excellent reputation, which will certainly be consequent to a holy and exemplary life.

2. But, since the holy Jesus had set us up to be lights in the world, he took care we should not be stars of the least magnitude, but eminent, and such as might, by their great emissions of light, give evidence of their being immediately derivative from the Sun of righteousness. He was now giving his law; and meant to retain so much of Moses, as Moses had of natural and essential justice and charity, and superadd many degrees of his own; that as far as Moses was exceeded by Christ in the capacity of a lawgiver, so far christianity might be more excellent and holy than the Mosaical sanctions. And, therefore, as a preface to the christian law, the holy Jesus declares, that "unless our righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees," that is, of the stricter sects of the Mosaical institution, "we shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Which not only relates to the prevaricating practices of the Pharisees, but even to their doctrines and commentaries upon the law of Moses, as appears evidently in the following instances. For if all the excellency of christianity had consisted in the mere command of sincerity, and prohibition of hypocrisy, it had nothing in it proportionable to those excellent promises and clearest revelations of eternity there expressed; nor of a fit employment for the designation of a special and a new Lawgiver, whose laws were to last for ever, and were established upon foundations stronger than the pillars of heaven and earth.

3. But St. Paul, calling the law of Moses, "a law of works,"[b] did well insinuate what the doctrine of the Jews was, concerning the degrees and obligations of justice: for besides that it was a law of works, in opposition to the law of faith, (and so the sense of it is formerly explicated,[c]) it is also a law of works, in opposition to the law of the Spirit; and it is understood to be such a law, which required the exterior obedience; such a law, according to which St. Paul so lived, that no man could reprove him; that is, the judges could not tax him with prevarication; such a law, which, being in very many degrees carnal and material, did not with much severity exact the intention and purposes spiritual. But the gospel is "the law of the Spirit." If they failed in the exterior work, it was accounted to them for sin; but to christians nothing becomes a sin, but a failing and prevaricating spirit. For the outward act is such an emanation of the interior, that it enters into the account, for the relation's sake, and for its parent. When God hath put a duty into our hands, if our spirits be right, the work will certainly follow; but the following work receives its acceptation, not from the value the christian law hath precisely put upon it, but because the spirit from whence it came hath observed its rule. The law of charity is acted and expressed in works, but hath its estimate from the spirit. Which discourse is to be understood in a limited and qualified signification. For then also God required the heart, and interdicted the very concupiscences of our irregular passions, at least in some instances; but because much of their law consisted in the exterior, and the law appointed not, nor yet intimated, any penalty to evil thoughts, and because the expiation of such interior irregularities was easy, implicit, and involved in their daily sacrifices, without special trouble; therefore the old law was "a law of works," that is, especially and in its first intention. But this being less perfect, the holy Jesus inverted the order. 1. For very little of christianity stands upon the outward action (Christ having appointed but two sacraments immediately): and, 2. a greater restraint is laid upon the passions, desires, and first motions of the Spirit, than under the severity of Moses: and, 3. they are threatened with the same curses of a sad eternity, with the acts proceeding from them: and, 4. because the obedience of the spirit does in many things excuse the want of the outward act, God always requiring at our hands what he hath put in our power, and no more: and, 5. lastly, because the spirit is the principle of all actions,[d] moral and spiritual, and certainly productive of them, when they are not impeded from without; therefore the holy Jesus hath secured the fountain, as knowing that the current must needs be healthful and pure, if it proceeds through pure channels, from a limpid and unpolluted principle.

4. And, certainly, it is much for the glory of God, to worship him with a religion, whose very design looks upon God as "the Searcher of our hearts" and Lord of our spirits; who judges the purposes as a God, and does not only take his estimate from the outward action as a man. And it is also a great reputation to the institution itself, that it purifies the soul, and secures the secret cogitations of the mind. It punishes covetousness, as it judges rapine; it condemns a sacrilegious heart,[e] as soon as an irreligious hand; it detests hating of our brother, by the same aversation which it expresses against doing him affronts. He that curses in his heart, shall die the death of an explicit and bold blasphemer; murmuring and repining is against the laws of christianity; but either by the

[b] Rom. iii. 27.

[c] Vide Considerat. of Christ's first Preaching, n. 3.

[d] Οὐ γὰρ δοκεῖν δίκαιος, ἀλλ' εἶναι, θέλει,
Βαθεῖαν ἄλοκα διὰ φρενὸς καρπούμενος,
Ἀφ' ἧς τὰ κεδνὰ βλαστάνει βουλεύματα.
Amphiar. apud Æschyl.

[e] Josephus reprehendit Polybium, quòd mortem Antiochi inflictam dixit ob cogitatum scelus sacrilegii, putans pœnam non irrogari nisi ob perpetratum facinus: τὸ γὰρ μηκέτι ποιῆσαι τὸ ἔργον βουλευσάμενον, οὐκ ἦν τιμωρίας ἄξιόν.

remissness of Moses's law, or the gentler execution of it, or the innovating or lessening glosses of the Pharisees, he was esteemed innocent whose actions were according to the letter, not whose spirit was conformed to the intention and more secret sanctity of the law. So that our righteousness must therefore exceed the Pharisaical standard, because our spirits must be pure as our hands, and the heart as regular as the action; our purposes must be sanctified, and our thoughts holy; we must love our neighbour as well as relieve him, and choose justice with adhesion of the mind, as well as carry her upon the palms of our hands. And, therefore, the prophets, foretelling the kingdom of the gospel, and the state of this religion, call it "a writing the laws of God in our hearts." And St. Paul distinguishes the gospel from the law, by this only measure: We are all Israelites, of the seed of Abraham, heirs of the same inheritance; only now we are not to be accounted Jews, for the outward conformity to the law, but for the inward consent and obedience to those purities, which were secretly signified by the types of Moses. They of the law were "Jews outwardly;" their "circumcision was outward in the flesh," their "praise was of men:"[f] we are "Jews inwardly;" our "circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, and our praise is of God;" that is, we are not judged by the outward act, but by the mind and the intention; and though the acts must follow in all instances where we can, and where they are required, yet it is the less principal, and rather significative, than by its own strength and energy operative, and accepted.

5. St. Clement of Alexandria saith, the Pharisees' righteousness consisted in the not doing evil;[g] and that Christ superadded this also, that we must do the contrary good, and so exceed the Pharisaical measure. They would not wrong a Jew, nor many times relieve him; they reckoned their innocence by not giving offence, by walking blameless, by not being accused before the judges sitting in the gates of their cities. But the balance in which the Judge of quick and dead weighs christians, is, not only the avoiding evil, but doing good; the "following peace with all men, and holiness;" the proceeding "from faith to faith;" the "adding virtue to virtue;" the persevering "in all holy conversation and godliness." And therefore, St. Paul,[h] commending the grace of universal charity, says, that "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law;" implying, that the prime intention of the law was, that every man's right be secured, that no man receive wrong. And, indeed, all the decalogue consisting of prohibitions rather than precepts, saving that each table hath one positive commandment, does not obscurely verify the doctrine of St. Clement's interpretation. Now, because the christian charity abstains from doing all injury, therefore it is the fulfilling of the law: and because it is also patient and liberal, that it suffers long, and is kind; therefore the charity commanded in Christ's law, exceeds that charity which the scribes and Pharisees reckoned as part of their righteousness. But Jesus himself does, with great care in the particulars, instance in what he would have the disciples to be eminent, above the most strict sect of the Jewish religion. 1. In practising the moral precepts of the decalogue, with a stricter interpretation; 2. and in quitting the permissions and licenses, which, for the hardness of their heart, Moses gave them, as indulgences to their persons and securities against the contempt of too severe laws.

6. The severity of exposition was added but to three commandments, and in three indulgences the permission was taken away. But, because our great Lawgiver repeated also other parts of the decalogue in his after-sermons,[i] I will represent, in this one view, all that he made to be christian by adoption.

The First Commandment.

7. The first commandment Christ often repeated and enforced, as being the basis of all religion, and the first endearment of all that relation, whereby we are capable of being the sons of God; as being the great commandment of the law, and comprehensive of all that duty we owe to God, in the relations of the virtue of religion: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord;" and "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength."[k] This is the first commandment; that is, this comprehends all that which is moral and eternal in the first table of the decalogue.

8. The duties of this commandment are: 1. To worship God alone, with actions proper to him; and, 2. to love, and, 3. obey him with all our faculties. 1. Concerning worship. The actions proper to the honour of God are, to offer sacrifice, incense, and oblations; making vows to him, swearing by his name as the instrument of secret testimony, confessing his incommunicable attributes, and praying to him for those graces which are essentially annexed to his dispensation; as remission of sins, gifts of the Spirit, and the grace of sanctification, and life eternal. Other acts of religion, such as are uncovering the head, bowing the knee, falling upon our face, stooping to the ground, reciting praises, are, by the consent of nations, used as testimonies of civil or religious veneration, and do not always pass for confessions of a Divinity; and, therefore, may be, without sin, used to angels, or kings, or governors, or to persons in any sense more excellent than ourselves, provided they be intended to express an excellency no greater than is proper to their dignities and persons; not in any sense given to an idol, or false gods. But the first sort are such, which all the world hath consented to be actions of Divine and incommunicable adoration; and such which God also, in several religions, hath reserved as his own appropriate regalities; and are idolatry, if given to any angel or man.

[f] Rom. ii. 28, 29.

[g] Virtus est vitio caruisse———
Optimus est qui minimis urgetur.

[h] Rom. xiii. 10.

[i] Luke xviii. 20. Mark x. 19. Matt. xix. 18. Rom. xiii. 9.

[k] Matt. xxii. 37. Mark xii. 30. Luke x. 27.

9. The next duties are: 2. Love; 3. and obedience; but they are united in the gospel: "This is love, that we keep his commandments." And since we are, for God's sake, bound also to love others, this love is appropriate to God by the extension of parts, and the intension of degrees. The extension signifies, that we must serve God with all our faculties; for all division of parts is hypocrisy, and a direct prevarication: our heart must think what our tongue speaks, our hands act what we promise or purpose; and God's enemies must have no share, so much as in appearance or dissimulation. Now no creature can challenge this; and if we do justice to our neighbour, though unwillingly, we have done him no injury; for in that case he only who sees the irregularity of our thoughts is the person injured. And when we swear to him, our heart must swear as well as our tongue, and our hands must pay what our lips have promised; or else we provoke him with an imperfect sacrifice; we love him not with all our mind, with all our strength, and all our faculties.

10. But the difficulty and question of this commandment lies in the intention. For it is not enough to serve God with every capacity, passion, and faculty; but it must be every degree of every faculty, all the latitude of our will, all the whole intention of our passions, all the possibility and energy of our senses and our understanding: which, because it is to be understood according to that moderate sentence and account which God requires of us, set in the midst of such a condition, so attended, and depressed, and prejudiced, the full sense of it I shall express in several propositions.

11. First: The intention of the love to which we are obliged, requires not the degree which is absolutely the greatest, and simply the most perfect. For there are degrees of grace, every one of which is pleasing to God, and is a state of reconciliation and atonement: and he that "breaks not the bruised reed," nor "quenches the smoking flax," loves to cherish those endeavours which, beginning from small principles, pass through the variety of degrees, and give demonstration, that though it be our duty to contend for the best, yet this contention is with an enemy; and that enemy makes an abatement; and that abatement being an imperfection, rather than a sin, is actually consistent with the state of grace, the endeavour being in our power, and not the success; the perfection is that which shall be our reward, and therefore is not our present duty. And, indeed, if to do the best action, and to love God as we shall do in heaven, were a present obligation, it would have been clearly taught us, what is simply the best action; whereas now, that which is of itself better, in certain circumstances is less perfect, and sometimes not lawful; and concerning those circumstances, we have no rules, nor any guide but prudence and probable inducements: so that it is certain, in our best endeavours we should only increase our scruples, instead of doing actions of the highest perfections; we should erect a tyranny over our consciences, and no augmentation of any thing but the trouble. And, therefore, in the law of Moses, when this commandment was given in the same words, yet that the sense of it might be clear, the analogy of the law declared that their duty had a latitude, and that God was not so strict a taskmaster, but that he left many instances of piety to the voluntary devotion of his servants, that they might receive the reward of "free-will offerings." But if these words had obliged them to the greatest degree, that is, to all the degrees of our capacities in every instance, every act of religion had been duty and necessity.

12. And thus also it was in the gospel. Ananias and Sapphira were killed, by sentence from heaven, for not performing what was in their power at first not to have promised; but because they brought an obligation upon themselves which God brought not, and then prevaricated, they paid the forfeiture of their lives. St. Paul took no wages of the Corinthian churches, but wrought night and day with his own hand;[1] but himself says he had power to do otherwise. "There was laid upon him a necessity to preach," but no necessity to preach without wages and support. There is a good and a better in virginity and marriage; and yet there is no command in either, but that we abstain from sin: we are left to our own election for the particular, having "no necessity, but power in our will."[m] David prayed "seven times a day," and Daniel prayed "three times;" and both were beloved of God. The christian masters were not bound to manumit their slaves, and yet were commended if they did so. Sometimes the christians fled in persecution; St. Paul did so, and St. Peter did so, and St. Cyprian did so, and St. Athanasius, and many more; but time was, when some of these also chose to suffer death rather than to fly. And if to fly be a permission, and no duty, there is certainly a difference of degrees in the choice; to fly is not so great a suffering as to die, and yet a man may innocently choose the easier. And our blessed Lord himself, who never failed of any degree of his obligations, yet at some time prayed with more zeal and fervour than at other times, as a little before his passion. Since, then, at all times he did not do actions of that degree which is absolutely the greatest; it is evident that God's goodness is so great, as to be content with such a love which parts no share between him and sin; and leaves all the rest under such a liberty, as is only encouraged by those extraordinary rewards and crowns proportioned to heroical endeavours. It was a pretty question, which was moved in the solitudes of Nitria, concerning two religious brothers;[n] the one gave all his goods to the poor at once, the other kept the inheritance, and gave all the revenue. None of all the fathers knew which was absolutely the better; at once to renounce all, or, by repetition of charitable acts, to divide it into portions: one act of charity in an heroical degree, or an habitual charity in the degree of virtue. This instance is probation enough, that the opinion of such a necessity of doing the best action, simply and indefinitely, is impossible to be safely acted,

[1] 2 Cor. xi. 8, 9. [m] 1 Cor. vii. 37. [n] Histor. Lansid.

because it is impossible to be understood. Two talents shall be rewarded, and so shall five, both in their proportions: "he that sows sparingly shall reap sparingly," but he shall reap: "every man as he purposes in his heart, so let him give." The best action shall have the best reward; and though he is the happiest who rises highest, yet he is not safest that enters into the state of disproportion to his person. I find, in the lives of the later reputed saints, that St. Teresa à Jesu made a vow to do every thing which she should judge to be the best.[o] I will not judge the person, nor censure the action, because possibly her intention and desires were of greatest sanctity; but whosoever considers the story of her life, and the strange repugnancies in the life of man to such undertakings, must needs fear to imitate an action of such danger and singularity. The advice which, in this case, is safest to be followed, is, that we employ our greatest industry, that we fall not into sin, and actions of forbidden nature; and then strive, by parts and steps, and with much wariness, in attempering our zeal, to superadd degrees of eminence, and observation of the more perfect instances of sanctity; that, doing some excellencies which God hath not commanded, he may be the rather moved to pardon our prevaricating so many parts of our necessary duty. If love transport us, and carry us to actions sublime and heroical, let us follow so good a guide, and pass on with diligence, and zeal, and prudence, as far as love will carry us:[p] but let us not be carried to actions of great eminence, and strictness, and unequal severities, by scruple and pretence of duty; lest we charge our miscarriages upon God, and call the yoke of the gospel insupportable, and Christ a hard task-master. But we shall pass from virtue to virtue with more safety, if a spiritual guide take us by the hand; only remembering, that if the angels themselves, and the beatified souls, do now, and shall hereafter, differ in degrees of love and glory, it is impossible the state of perfection should be confined to the highest love, and the greatest degree, and such as admits no variety, no increment, or difference of parts and stations.

13. Secondly: Our love to God consists not in any one determinate degree, but hath such a latitude as best agrees with the condition of men, who are of variable natures, different affections and capacities, changeable abilities, and which receive their heightenings and declensions according to a thousand accidents of mortality. For when a law is regularly prescribed to persons, whose varieties and different constitutions cannot be regular or uniform, it is certain God gives a great latitude of performance, and binds not to just atoms and points. The laws of God are like universal objects, received into the faculty, partly by choice, partly by nature; but the variety of perfection is by the variety of the instruments, and disposition of the recipient; and they are excelled by each other in several senses, and by themselves at several times. And so is the practice of our obedience, and the entertainments of the Divine commandments; for some are of malleable natures, others are morose; some are of healthful and temperate constitutions, others are lustful, full of fancy, full of appetite; some have excellent leisure and opportunities of retirement, others are busy in an active life, and cannot, with advantage, attend to the choice of the better part; some are peaceable and timorous, and some are in all instances serene; others are of tumultuous and unquiet spirits: and these become opportunities of temptation on one side, and on the other occasions of virtue: but every change of faculty and variety of circumstance hath influence upon morality; and, therefore, their duties are personally altered, and increase in obligation, or are slackened by necessities, according to the infinite alteration of exterior accidents and interior possibilities.

14. Thirdly: Our love to God must be totally exclusive of any affection to sin, and engage us upon a great, assiduous, and laborious care, to resist all temptations, to subdue sin, to acquire the habits of virtues, and live holily; as it is already expressed in the Discourse of Repentance. We must prefer God as the object of our hopes, we must choose to obey him rather than man, to please him rather than satisfy ourselves, and we must do violence to our strongest passions, when they once contest against a Divine commandment. If our passions are thus regulated, let them be fixed upon any lawful object whatsoever, if, at the same time, we prefer heaven and heavenly things, that is, would rather choose to lose our temporal love than our eternal hopes; (which we can best discern by our refusing to sin upon the solicitation or engagement of the temporal object;) then, although we feel the transportation of a sensual love towards a wife, or child, or friend, actually more pungent and sensible than passions of religion are, they are less perfect, but they are not criminal. Our love to God requires that we do his commandments, and that we do not sin; but in other things we are permitted, in the condition of our nature, to be more sensitively moved by visible than by invisible and spiritual objects. Only this; we must ever have a disposition and a mind prepared to quit our sensitive and pleasant objects, rather than quit a grace, or commit a sin. Every act of sin is against the love of God, and every man does many single actions of hostility and provocation against him; but the state of the love of God is that which we actually call the state of grace. When Christ reigns in us, and sin does not reign, but the spirit is quickened, and the lusts are mortified; when we are habitually virtuous, and do acts of piety, temperance, and justice, frequently, easily, cheerfully, and with a successive, constant, moral, and humane industry, according to the talent which God hath intrusted to us in the banks of nature and grace; then we are in the love of God, then we "love him with all our heart." But if sin grows upon us, and is committed more frequently, or gets a victory with less difficulty, or is obeyed more readily, or entertained with a freer complacency; then we love not God as he requires;

[o] Πᾶν τὸ βέλτιστον φαινόμενον ἔστω σοι νόμος ἀπαράβατος.—Epict. c. 75.

[p] Ξὺν τῷ δικαίῳ γὰρ μέγ' ἔξεστι φρονεῖν.—Sophoc. Ajac.

we divide between him and sin, and God is not the Lord of all our faculties. But the instances of Scripture are the best exposition of this commandment; for David "followed God with all his heart, to do that which was right in his eyes;"[q] and Josiah "turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might."[r] Both these kings did it: and yet there was some imperfection in David, and more violent recessions: for so saith the Scripture of Josiah, "Like unto him was there no king before him;" David was not so exact as he, and yet he "followed God with all his heart." From which these two corollaries are certainly deducible: that to love God with all our heart admits variety of degrees, and the lower degree is yet a love with all our heart; and yet to love God requires a holy life, a diligent walking in the commandments, either according to the sense of innocence or of penitence, either by first or second counsels, by the spirit of regeneration, or the spirit of renovation and restitution. The sum is this: the sense of this precept is such as may be reconciled with the infirmities of our nature, but not with a vice in our manners; with the recession of single acts, seldom done, and always disputed against, and long fought with, but not with an habitual aversation, or a ready obedience to sin, or an easy victory.

15. This commandment, being the sum of the first table, had, in Moses's law, particular instances which Christ did not insert into his institution; and he added no other particular, but that which we call the third commandment, concerning veneration and reverence to the name of God. The other two, viz. concerning images and the sabbath, have some special considerations.

The Second Commandment.

16. The Jews receive daily offence against the catechisms of some churches, who, in the recitation of the decalogue, omit the second commandment, as supposing it to be a part of the first, according as we account them; and their offence rises higher, because they observe, that in the New Testament, where the decalogue is six times repeated, in special recitation and in summaries, there is no word prohibiting the making, retaining, or respect of images.[s] Concerning which things christians consider, that God forbade the Jews the very having and making images and representments, not only of the true God, or of false and imaginary deities, but of visible creatures,[t] which, because it was but of temporary reason, and relative consideration of their aptness to superstition, and their conversing with idolatrous nations, was a command proper to the nation, part of their covenant, not of essential, indispensable, and eternal reason, not of that which we usually call "the law of nature." Of which also God gave testimony, because himself commanded the signs and representment of seraphim to be set upon the mercy-seat, toward which the priest and the people made their addresses in their religious adorations; and of the brazen serpent, to which they looked when they called to God for help against the sting of the venomous snakes. These instances tell us, that to make pictures or statues of creatures is not against a natural reason; and that they may have uses which are profitable, as well as be abused to danger and superstition. Now, although the nature of that people was apt to the abuse, and their intercourse with the nations in their confines was too great an invitation to entertain the danger; yet christianity hath so far removed that danger, by the analogy and design of the religion, by clear doctrines, revelations, and infinite treasures of wisdom, and demonstrations of the Spirit, that our blessed Lawgiver thought it not necessary to remove us from superstition by a prohibition of the use of images and pictures: and, therefore, left us to the sense of the great commandment, and the dictates of right reason, to take care that we do not dishonour the invisible God with visible representations of what we never saw, nor cannot understand, nor yet convey any of God's incommunicable worship in the fore-named instances to any thing but himself. And for the matter of images we have no other rule left us in the New Testament; the rules of reason and nature, and the other parts of the institution, are abundantly sufficient for our security. And possibly St. Paul might relate to this, when he affirmed, concerning the fifth, that "it was the first commandment with promise." For in the second commandment to the Jews, as there was a great threatening, so also a greater promise of "showing mercy to a thousand generations." But because the body of this commandment was not transcribed into the christian law, the first of the decalogue which we retain, and in which a promise is inserted, is the fifth commandment. And, therefore, the wisdom of the church was remarkable in the variety of sentences concerning the permission of images. At first, when they were blended in the danger and impure mixtures of gentilism, and men were newly recovered from the snare, and had the relics of a long custom to superstitious and false worshippings, they endured no images, but merely civil; but as the danger ceased, and christianity prevailed, they found that pictures had a natural use of good concernment, to move less knowing people by the representment and declaration of a story; and then they, knowing themselves permitted to the liberties of christianity, and the restraints of nature and reason, and not being still weak under prejudice and childish dangers, but fortified by the excellency of a wise religion, took them into lawful uses, doing honour to saints, as unto the absent emperors, according to the custom of the empire; they erected statues to their honour, and transcribed

[q] 1 Kings xiv. 8. [r] 2 Kings xxiii. 25.

[s] Ὁ Μωσῆς τὰς δοκίμους καὶ γλαφυρὰς τέχνας, ζωγραφίαν καὶ ἀνδριαντοποιΐαν, ἐκ τῆς κατ' αὐτὸν πολιτείας ἐξήλασε. Philo de Gigant.

Vide Exod. xxxiv. 13. Deut. iv. 16. vii. 5. Num. xxxiii. 52.

[t] Imò et Ecclesia 8 Novemb. celebrat martyrium Claudii Nicostrati et sociorum, qui, cùm peritissimi fuerant statuarii, mortem potiùs ferre, quàm Gentilibus simulacra facere, maluerunt.

Ἄγαλμα οὐ κατεσκεύασε, διὰ τὸ μὴ νομίζειν ἀνθρωπόμορφον εἶναι τὸν Θεόν.—Diodor. Sic de Moyse.

a history, and sometimes a precept, into a table, by figures making more lasting impressions than by words and sentences. While the church stood within these limits, she had natural reason for her warrant, and the custom of the several countries, and no precept of Christ to countermand it: they who went farther were unreasonable, and, according to the degree of that excess, were superstitious.

17. The duties of this commandment are learned by the intents of it: for it was directed against the false religion of the nations who believed the images of their gods to be filled with the Deity; and it was also a caution, to prevent our low imaginations of God, lest we should come to think God to be like man.[u] And thus far there was indispensable and eternal reason in the precept: and this was never lessened in any thing by the holy Jesus, and obliges us christians to make our addresses and worshippings to no God but the God of the christians, that is, of all the world; and not to do this in or before an image of him, because he cannot be represented. For the images of Christ and his saints, they come not into either of the two considerations; and we are to understand our duty by the proportions of our reverence to God, expressed in the great commandment. Our fathers in christianity, as I observed now, made no scruple of using the images and pictures of their princes and learned men; which the Jews understood to be forbidden to them in the commandment. Then they admitted, even in the utensils of the church, some celatures and engravings; such was that Tertullian speaks of, "the good shepherd in the chalice." Afterwards they admitted pictures, but not before the time of Constantine; for in the council of Eliberis they were forbidden. And in succession of time, the scruples lessened with the danger, and all the way they signified their belief to be, that this commandment was only so far retained by Christ as it relied upon natural reason, or was a particular instance of the great commandment; that is, images were forbidden where they did dishonour God, or lessen his reputation, or estrange our duties, or became idols, or the direct matter of superstitious observances, charms, or senseless confidences; but they were permitted to represent the humanity of Christ, to remember saints and martyrs, to recount a story, to imprint a memory, to do honour and reputation to absent persons, and to be the instruments of a relative civility and esteem. But, in this particular, infinite care is to be taken of scandal and danger, of a forward and zealous ignorance, or of a mistaking and peevish confidence; and where a society hath such persons in it, the little good of images must not be violently retained, with the greater danger and certain offence of such persons, of whom consideration is to be had in the cure of souls. I only add this, that the first christians made no scruple of saluting the statues of their princes, and were confident it made no entrenchment upon the natural prohibition contained in this commandment; because they had observed, that exterior inclinations and addresses of the body, though in the lowest manner, were not proper to God, but in Scripture found also to be communicated to creatures, to kings, to prophets, to parents, to religious persons:[x] and because they found it to be death to do affront to the pictures and statues of their emperors, they concluded in reason, (which they also saw verified by the practice and opinion of all the world,) that the respect they did at the emperor's statue was accepted as a veneration to his person. But these things are but sparingly to be drawn into religion, because the customs of this world are altered, and their opinions new; and many, who have not weak understandings, have weak consciences; and the necessity for the entertainment of them is not so great as the offence is, or may be.

The Third Commandment.

18. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain."[y] This our blessed Saviour repeating, expresses it thus: "It hath been said to them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself;" to which Christ adds, out of Num. xxx. 2. "But thou shalt perform thy oaths unto the Lord." The meaning of the one we are taught by the other. We must not invocate the name of God in any promise in vain, that is, with a lie: which happens either out of levity, that we change our purpose, which at first we really intended; or when our intention at that instant was fallacious, and contradictory to the undertaking. This is to "take the name of God," that is, to use it, to take it into our mouths, for vanity; that is, according to the perpetual style of Scripture, for a lie. "Every one hath spoken vanity to his neighbour,"[z] that is, hath lied unto him; for so it follows, "with flattering lips, and with a double heart;" and "swearing deceitfully" is by the Psalmist called "lifting up his soul unto vanity."[a] And Philo the Jew,[b] who well understood the law and the language of his nation, renders the

[u] Τὸν ἀόρατον εἰκονογραφεῖν ἢ διαπλάσσειν οὐχ ὅσιον.—PHILO de Legatione.

Prioribus 170 annis templa quidem ædificabant [Romani], simulacrum verò nullum effigiatum faciebant; perindè atque nefas esset meliora per deteriorum similitudines exprimere. —PLUTARCH. Numa.

Εἴη γὰρ ἓν τοῦτο μόνος θεὸς, περιέχον ἡμᾶς ἅπαντας καὶ γῆν καὶ θάλατταν, ὃ καλοῦμεν οὐρανὸν, καὶ κόσμον, καὶ τὴν τῶν ἀυτῶν φύσιν. τούτου δὴ τίς ἂν εἰκόνα πλάττειν θαρρήσειε, νοῦν ἔχων, ὁμοίαν τινὶ τῶν παρ' ἡμῖν; ἀλλ, ἐᾶν δεῖ πᾶσαν ζοανοποιΐαν, τέμενος ἀφορίσαντας, καὶ σηκὸν ἀξιόλογον τιμᾶν εἴδους χωρίς.—STRAB. lib. xvi.

Ὀφθαλμοῖς οὐχ ὁρᾶται, οὐδένι ἔοικεν· διόπερ ἀυτὸν οὐδεὶς ἐκμαθεῖν ἐξ εἰκόνος δύναται. ANTISTH.

[x] Gen. xxiii. 12. xxvii. 29. xlii. 6. and xlviii. 12. 1 Sam. xx. 41. 1 Kings i. 16.

[y] Apud Romanos sancitum est, ut si per Deum jurans quis pejeraret, ad Deum ipsum plectendus remitteretur, quem satis esse idoneum suæ majestatis vindicem dicebant.—L. Jurisjurandi, C. de Rebus Credit. et Jurejur.

Sin per genium principis quis jurans pejerâsset, castigabatur fustibus, cum hoc elogio, Temerè ne jura.—Si duo Patroni, Sect. fin. de Jurejur.

Lysander dixit homines uti posse pro suo commodo juramentis, sicut pueri astragalis.—PLUTARCH. in Lysand.

Idem in Æmylio ait, Macedonas usos esse juramento uti monetâ.

[z] Psalm xii. 2.

[a] Psalm xxiv. 4.

[b] Οὐκ ἔλαβεν ἐπὶ ματαίῳ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ· μάρτυρα δὲ καὶ καλεῖν ἐπὶ ψεύδει θεὸν ἀνοσιώτατον.—PHILO.

sense of this commandment to be, "to call God to witness to a lie." And this is to be understood only in promises, for so Christ explains it, by the appendix out of the law, "Thou shalt perform thy oaths:" for lying in judgment, which is also with an oath, or taking God's name for witness, is forbidden in the ninth commandment. To this Christ added a further restraint. For whereas, by the natural law, it was not unlawful to swear by any oath that implied not idolatry, or the belief of a false god, (I say,) any grave and prudent oath, when they spake a grave truth; and whereas it was lawful for the Jews in ordinary intercourse to swear by God, so they did not swear to a lie, (to which also swearing to an impertinency might be reduced by a proportion of reason, and was so accounted of in the practice of the Jews,) but else, and in other cases, they used to swear by God, or by a creature, respectively; for, "they that swear by him shall be commended," saith the Psalmist;[c] and "swearing to the Lord of hosts," is called "speaking the language of Canaan."[d] Most of this was rescinded; Christ forbade "all swearing," not only swearing to a lie, but also swearing to a truth in common affairs; not only swearing commonly by the name of God, but swearing commonly "by heaven," and "by the earth, by our head," or by any other oath: only let our speech be yea, or nay; that is, plainly affirming or denying.[e] In these, I say, Christ corrected the license and vanities of the Jews and gentiles. For as the Jews accounted it religion to name God, and therefore would not swear by him, but in the more solemn occasions of their life; but in trifles they would swear by their fathers, or the light of heaven, or the ground they trod on: so the Greeks were also careful not to swear by the gods lightly, much less fallaciously; but they would swear by any thing about them, or near them, upon an occasion as vain as their oath.[f] But because these oaths are either indirectly to be referred to God, (and Christ instances in divers,) or else they are but a vain testimony, or else they give a divine honour to a creature, by making it a judge of truth and discerner of spirits; therefore Christ seems to forbid all forms of swearing whatsoever. In pursuance of which law, Basilides, being converted at the prayers of Potamiæna, a virgin-martyr, and required by his fellow-soldiers to swear upon some occasion then happening, answered, it was not lawful for him to swear, for he was a christian; and many of the fathers have followed the words of Christ in so severe a sense, that their words seem to admit no exception.

19. But here a grain of salt must be taken, lest the letter destroy the spirit. First, it is certain the holy Jesus forbade a custom of swearing;[g] it being great irreligion to despise and lessen the name of God, which is the instrument and conveyance of our adorations to him, by making it common and applicable to trifles and ordinary accidents of our life. He that swears often, many times swears false, and, however, lays by that reverence which, being due to God, the Scripture determines it to be due to his name: his "name is to be loved and feared." And therefore Christ commands that our "communication be yea, yea," or "nay, nay;" that is, our ordinary discourses should be simply affirmative or negative. In order to this, Plutarch[h] affirms out of Phavorinus, that the reason why the Greeks forbade children, who were about to swear by Hercules, to swear within doors, was, that by this delay and preparation, they might be taught not to be hasty or quick in swearing, but all such invocations should be restrained and retarded by ceremony: and Hercules himself was observed never to have sworn in all his lifetime but once. 2. Not only customary swearing is forbidden, but all swearing upon a slight cause. St. Basil upbraids some christians, his contemporaries, with the example of Clinias the Pythagorean, who, rather than he would swear, suffered a mulct of three talents. And all the followers of Pythagoras admitted no oath, unless the matter were grave, necessary, and charitable: and the wisest and gravest persons among the heathens were very severe in their counsels concerning oaths. 3. But there are some cases in which the interests of kingdoms and bodies politic, peace and confederacies, require the sanction of promissory oaths; and they whom we are bound to obey, and who may kill us if we do not, require that their interests be secured by an oath: and that in this case, and all that are equal, our blessed Saviour did not forbid oaths, is certain, not only by the example of christians, but of all the world before and since this prohibition, understanding it to be of the nature of such natural bands and securities, without which, commonwealths, in some cases, are not easily combined, and therefore to be a thing necessary, and therefore not to be forbidden. Now what is by christians to be esteemed a slight cause, we may determine by the account we take of other things. The glory of God is certainly no light matter; and therefore, when that is evidently and certainly concerned, not fantastically, and by vain and imaginary consequences, but by prudent and true estimation, then we may lawfully swear. We have St. Paul's example, who well understood the precept of his Master, and is not to be supposed easily to have done any violence to it; but yet we find religious affirmations, and God invoked for "witness as a record upon his soul," in his epistles to the Romans,

[c] Psalm lxiii. 11. [d] 1 Sam. xx. 17. Isa. xix. 18.

[e] Ἁπλᾶ γὰρ ἐστι τῆς ἀληθείας ἔπη.—Æschyl. Ὅπλων κρίσις.

[f] Ecce negas, jurasque mihi per templa Tonantis. Non credo, jura, Verpe, per Anchialum, id est, per Elohim Hebræorum.—Mart. lib. xi. Ep. 95.

Vide Harmenopulum in Plin. lib. v. c. 27. et Scalig. de Emend. Temp. in Append. Libror.

Μὴ προπετῶς κατὰ τῶν θεῶν ὀμνύειν, ἀλλὰ κατὰ τῶν προστυγχανόντων.—Interp. in Hom. Euseb. lib. vi. Hist. cap. 4.

[g] Vide Ecclus. xxiii. 9, 11, 13.

Dominus et Jacobus ideo prohibuerunt jusjurandum, non ut illud prorsus è rebus humanis tollerent, sed quia caveremus à perjurio non facilè jurando.—S. August. Ser. 28. de Verbis Apost.

[h] Ῥωμαϊκκὴ ἐπίσχεσίς ἐστι τῆς πρὸς τὸν ὅρκον εὐχερείας καὶ ταχύτητος τὸ γινόμενον. ὡς Φαβωρῖνος ἔλεγε· τὸ γὰρ ὥσπερ ἐκ παρασκευῆς μέλλησιν ἐμποιεῖ, καὶ βουλεύσασθαι δίδωσι.

Galatians, and Corinthians.[i] But these oaths were only assertory. Tertullian affirmeth, that christians refused to swear by the genius of their prince, because it was a demon; but they sware by his health, and their solemn oath was by God, and Christ, and the Holy Spirit, and the majesty of the emperor. The fathers of the Ephesine council made Nestorius and Victor swear; and the bishops at Chalcedon sware by the health of their princes. But as St. Paul did it extra-judicially, when the glory of God was concerned in it, and the interest of souls; so the christians used to swear in a cause of piety and religion, in obedience, and upon public command, or for the ends of charity and justice, both with oaths promissory and assertory, as the matter required: with this only difference, that they never did swear in the causes of justice or charity, but when they were before a magistrate; but if it were in a cause of religion, and in matters of promise, they did indeed swear among themselves, but always to or in communities and societies, obliging themselves by oath not to commit wickedness, robberies, sacrilege, not to deceive their trust, not to detain the pledge; which rather was an act of direct intercourse with God, than a solemn or religious obligation to man. Which very thing Pliny also reports of the christians.

20. The sum is this:[k] Since the whole subject matter of this precept is oaths promissory, or vows, all promises with oaths are regularly forbidden to christians, unless they be made to God or God's vicegerent, in a matter not trifling. For, in the first case, a promise made to God, and a swearing by God to perform the promise, to him is all one; for the name of God being the instrument and determination of all our addresses, we cannot be supposed to speak to God without using of his name explicitly, or by implication: and therefore he that promises to God, makes a promise, and uses God's name in the promise; the promise itself being in the nature of a prayer, or solemn invocation of God. In the second case, when the public necessity requires it, of which we are not judges, but are under authority, we find the lawfulness by being bound to believe, or not to contradict, the pretence of its necessity; only care is to be taken that the matter be grave or religious, that is, it is to be esteemed and presumed so by us, if the oath be imposed by our lawful superiors, and to be cared for by them: or else it is so to be provided for by ourselves, when our intercourse is with God, as in vows and promises passed to God; being careful that we do not offer to God goat's hair, or the fumes of mushrooms, or the blood of swine; that is, things either impious or vain. But in our communication, that is, in our ordinary intercourse with men, we must promise by simple testimony, not by religious adjurations, though a creature be the instrument of the oath.

21. But this forbids not assertory oaths at all, or deposing in judgment; for of this Christ speaks not here, it being the proper matter of another commandment: and since (as St. Paul affirms) "an oath is the end of all controversy,"[l] and that the necessity of commonwealths requires that a period should be fixed to questions, and a rule for the nearest certainty for judgment; whatsoever is necessary is not unlawful; and Christ, who came to knit the bonds of government faster by the stricture of more religious ties, cannot be understood to have given precepts to dissolve the instruments of judicature and prudent government. But concerning assertory oaths, although they are not forbidden, but supposed in the ninth commandment to be done before our judges in the cause of our neighbour; yet because they are only so supposed, and no way else mentioned, by permission or intimation, therefore they are to be estimated by the proportions of this precept concerning promissory oaths: they may be taken in judgment and righteousness, but never lightly, never extra-judicially; only a less cause, so it be judicial, may authorize an assertory than a promissory oath; because many cases occur, in which peace and justice may be concerned, which without an oath are indeterminable, but there are but few necessities to confirm a promise by an oath. And therefore the reverence of the name of God ought not to be intrenched upon in accidents of little or no necessity; God, not having made many necessities in this case, would not, in the matter of promise, give leave to use his name but when an extraordinary case happens. An oath in promises is of no use for ending questions and giving judicial sentences; and the faith of a christian, and the word of a just person, will do most of the work of promises: and it is very much to the disreputation of our religion or ourselves, if we fall into hypocrisy or deceit, or if a christian asseveration were not of value equal with an oath. And therefore Christ forbidding promissory oaths, and commanding so great simplicity of spirit and honesty, did consonantly to the design and perfection of his institution, intending to make us so just and sincere, that our religion being infinite obligation to us, our own promises should pass for bond enough to others, and the religion receive great honour, by being esteemed a sufficient security and instrument of public intercourse.[m] And this was intimated by our Lord himself, in that reason he is pleased to give of the prohibition of swearing: "Let your communication be Yea, yea, Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more, cometh of evil:"[n] that is,

[i] Rom. i. 9. 2 Cor. xi. 31. Gal. i. 20.

[k] Τὸ ναὶ καὶ τὸ οὐ συλλαβαι δύο· ἀλλ' ὅμως τὸ κράτιστον τῶν ἀγαθῶν, ἡ ἀλήθεια, καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος ὅρος τῆς πονηρίας, τὸ ψεῦδος, τοῖς μικροῖς ῥήμασι πολλάκις ἐμπεριέχεται.—S. Basil. lib. de Spir. S.

Necessitas magnum humanæ imbecilitatis præsidium; quicquid cogit, excusat.—Sen.

[l] Heb. vi. 16.

[m] Μὴ ὀμνύναι θεούς ἀσκεῖν γὰρ αὐτὸν δεῖν ἀξιόπιστον παρέχειν.—Hierocl.

Vide Marc. Anton. in Descriptione Viri Boni, lib. iii. μήτε ὅρκου δεόμενος· Τῶν δικαίων ναί ἐστι ναί, καὶ οὐ ἐστιν οὔ, tritum est; ita scil. ut facta dictis respondere justorum sit.

Κάλλιστον, καὶ βιοφιλέστατον, καὶ ἁρμοστὸν τῇ λογικῇ φύσει τὸ ἀνώμοτον, οὕτως ἀληθεύειν ἐφ' ἑκάστους δεδιδαγμένη, ὡς λόγους ὅρκους εἶναι νομίζεσθαι—Philo.

Verbum sacerdotis apud Christianæ ecclesiæ ministros etiam hodie manet loco juramenti. Ad eundem sensum apud antiquos fuerunt verba illa prætoris ex edicto perpetuo, "Sacerdotem Vestalem et flaminem dialem in omni mea jurisdictione jurare non cogam."—A. Gell. lib. x. c. 15.

[n] Matt. v. 37.

as good laws come from ill manners, the modesty of clothing from the shame of sin, antidotes and physic by occasion of poisons and diseases; so is swearing an affect of distrust, and want of faith or honesty, on one or both sides. Men dare not trust the word of a christian, or a christian is not just and punctual to his promises, and this calls for confirmation by an oath. So that oaths suppose a fault, though they are not faults always themselves; whatsoever is more than yea or nay, is not always evil, but it always cometh of evil. And, therefore, the Essenes esteemed every man that was put to his oath no better than an infamous person, a perjurer, or at least suspected, not esteemed a just man: and the heathens would not suffer the priest of Jupiter to swear, because all men had great opinion of his sanctity and authority: and the Scythians derided Alexander's caution and timorous provision, when he required an oath of them: "Nos religionem in ipsa fide novimus,[o] Our faith is our bond:" and they who are willing to deceive men will not stick to deceive God, when they have called God to witness.[p] But I have a caution to insert for each, which I propound as an humble advice to persons eminent and publickly interested.

22. First: That princes, and such as have power of decreeing the injunction of promissory oaths, be very curious and reserved, not lightly enjoining such promises, neither in respect of the matter trivial, nor yet frequently,[q] nor without great reason enforcing. The matter of such promises must be only what is already matter of duty or religion; for else the matter is not grave enough for the calling of God to testimony: but when it is a matter of duty, then the oath is no other than a vow, or promise, made to God in the presence of men. And because christians are otherwise very much obliged to do all which is their duty, in matters both civil and religious, of obedience and piety; therefore it must be an instant necessity, and a great cause, to superinduce such a confirmation as derives from the so sacredly invocating the name of God; it must be when there is great necessity that the duty be actually performed, and when the supreme power either hath not power sufficient to punish the delinquent, or may miss to have notice of the delict. For in these cases it is reasonable to bind the faith of the obliged persons by the fear of God after a more special manner; but else there is no reason sufficient to demand of the subject any further security than their own faith and contract. The reason of this advice relies upon the strictness of the words of this precept against promissory oaths, and the reverence we owe to the name of God. Oaths of allegiance are fit to be imposed in a troubled state, or to a mutinous people; but it is not so fit to tie the people by oath, to abstain from transportations of metal, or grain, or leather, from which, by penalties, they are with as much security, and less suspicion of iniquity, restrained.

23. Secondly: Concerning assertory oaths and depositions in judgment, although a greater liberty may be taken in the subject matter of the oath, and we may, being required to it, swear in judgment, though the cause be a question of money, or our interest, or the rights of a society; and St. Athanasius purged himself by oath before the emperor Constantius: yet it were a great pursuance and security of this part of christian religion, if, in no case, contrary oaths might be admitted, in which, it is certain, one part is perjured to the ruin of their souls, to the intricating of the judgment, to the dishonour of religion;[r] but that such rules of prudence and reasonable presumption be established, that upon the oath of that party which the law shall choose, and, upon probable grounds, shall presume for, the sentence may be established. For, by a small probability, there may a surer judgment be given, than upon the confidence of contradictory oaths; and after the sin the judge is left to the uncertainty of conjectures as much as if but one part had sworn; and to much more, because such an oath is, by the consent of all men, accepted as a rule to determine in judgment. By these discourses we understand the intention of our blessed Master in this precept: and I wish by this, or any thing else, men would be restrained from that low, cheap, unreasonable, and inexcusable vice of customary swearing, to which we have nothing to invite us that may lessen the iniquity, for which we cannot pretend temptation, nor allege infirmity, but it begins by recklessness and a malicious carelessness, and is continued by the strength of habit, and the greatest immensity of folly. And I consider that christian religion, being so holy an institution, to which we are invited by so great promises, in which we are instructed by so clear revelations, and to the performance of our duties compelled by the threatenings of a sad and unprofitable eternity, should more than sufficiently endear the performance of this duty to us. The name of a christian is a high and potent antidote against all sin, if we consider aright the honour of the name, the undertaking of our covenant, and the reward of our duty. The Jews eat no swine's flesh, because they are of Moses, and the Turks drink no wine, because they are Mahometans; and yet we swear, for all we are christians, than which there is not in the world a greater conviction of our baseness and irreligion. Is the authority of the holy Jesus so despicable? are his laws so unreasonable, his rewards so little, his threatenings so small, that we must needs, in contempt of all this, profane the great name of God, and trample under foot the laws of Jesus, and cast away the hopes of heaven, and enter into security to be possessed by hell-torments for swearing, that is, for speaking like a fool, without reason, without pleasure, without reputation, much to our disesteem, much to the trouble of civil and wise persons with whom we join in society and intercourse? Cer-

[o] Curtius, lib. vii.

[p] Qui non reverentur homines, fallent Deos.—Cicero pro Roscio.

[q] Οὐ γὰρ πίστεως τεκμήριον πολυορκία, ἀλλὰ ἀπιστίας ἐστὶ, παρὰ τοῖς εὐφρονοῦσι.—Philo in Decal.

[r] Ἀλλ' οἵπερ πρότεροι ὑπὲρ ὅρκια δηλήσαντο
—— τέρενα χρόα γῦπες ἔδονται.—Hom. Iliad. lib. iv.

tainly hell will be heated seven times hotter for a customary swearer, and every degree of his unreasonableness will give him a new degree of torment, when he shall find himself in flames for being a stupid, an atheistical, an irreligious fool. This only I desire should be observed, that our blessed Master forbids not only swearing by God, but by any creature; for every oath by a creature does involve and tacitly relate to God. And therefore, saith Christ, "Swear not by heaven, for it is the throne of God;"[s] and he that sweareth by the throne of God, "sweareth by it, and by him that sitteth thereon." So that it is not a less matter to swear by a creature than to swear by God; for a creature cannot be the instrument of testimony, but as it is a relative to God; and it, by implication, calls the God of that creature to witness. So that although, in such cases in which it is permitted to swear by God, we may, in those cases, express our oath in the form of advocating and calling the creature; (as did the primitive christians swearing by the health of their emperor, and as Joseph swearing by the life of Pharaoh, and as Elisha swearing by the life of Elias,[t] and as did St. Paul, protesting "by the rejoicing he had in Jesus Christ,"[u] and as we, in our forms of swearing in courts of judicature, touch the Gospels, saying, So help me God, and the contents of this book;" and in a few ages lately past, bishops and priests sometimes swore upon the cross, sometimes upon the altar, sometimes by their holy order;) yet we must remember that this, in other words and ceremonies, is but a calling God for witness; and he that swears by the cross, swears by the holy crucifix, that is, Jesus crucified thereon. And these, and the like forms, are, therefore, not to be used in ordinary communication, because they relate to God; they are as obligatory as the immediate invocation of his holiness and majesty; and it was a Judaical vanity to think swearing by creatures was less obliging:[x] they are just with the same restraints made to be religious as the most solemn invocation of the holy and reverend name of God, lawful or unlawful as the other: unless the swearing by a creature come to be spoiled by some other intervening circumstance, that is, with a denying it to relate to God; for then it becomes superstition as well as profanation, and it gives to a creature what is proper to God; or when the creature is contemptible, or less than the gravity of the matter, as if a man should swear by a fly, or the shadow of a tree; or when there is an indecorum in the thing, or something that does, at too great distance, relate to God: for that which, with greatest vicinity, refers to God in several religions, is the best instrument of an oath, and nearest to God's honour; as in christianity are the holy sacrament, the cross, the altar, and the Gospels; and, therefore, too great a distance may be an indecency next to a disparagement. This only may be added to this consideration; that although an oath, which is properly calling God or God's relative into testimony, is to be understood according to the former discourse; yet there may be great affirmations or negations respectively, and confirmed by forms of vehement asseveration, such as the customs of a nation or consent shall agree upon: and those do, in some cases, promote our belief, or confirm our pretensions, better than a plain yea or no; because, by such consent, the person renders himself infamous if he breaks his word or trust. And although this will not come under the restraint of Christ's words, because they are not properly oaths, but circumstances of earnest affirmation or negation; yet these are human attestations, introduced by custom or consent; and as they come not under the notion of swearing, so they are forms of testimony and collateral engagement of a more strict truth.

The Fourth Commandment.

24. The holy Jesus having specified the great commandment of "loving God with all our heart," in this one instance of hallowing and keeping his name sacred, that is, from profane and common talk, and less prudent and unnecessary intercourses, instanced in no other commandment of Moses: but having frequent occasion to speak of the sabbath, for ever expresses his own dominion over the day, and that he had dissolved the bands of Moses in this instance; that now we were no more obliged to that rest which the Jews religiously observed by prescript of the law;[y] and by divers acts against securities of the then received practices, did desecrate the day, making it a broken yoke, and the first great instance of christian liberty. And when the apostle gave instructions that "no man should judge his brother in a holy day, or new moons, or the sabbath-days,"[z] he declared all the Judaical feasts to be obliterated by the sponge which Jesus tasted on the cross; it was within the manuscript of ordinances, and there it was cancelled. And there was nothing moral in it, but that we do honour to God for the creation, and to that, and all other purposes of religion, separate and hallow some portion of our time. The primitive church kept both the sabbath and the Lord's day till the time of the Laodicean council, about three hundred years after Christ's nativity, and almost in every thing made them equal; and, therefore, did not esteem the Lord's day to be substituted in the place of the obliterated sabbath, but a feast celebrated by great reason and perpetual

[s] Ὀμνυμι δ' ἱερὸν αἰθέρ', οἴκησιν Διός.—SOPHOC. Menal. Qui per salutem suam jurat, Deum jurare videtur; respectu enim divini numinis jurat.—ULPIAN. J. C. Concil. Chalc. c. 25.

[t] 2 Kings ii. 2. [u] 1 Cor. xv. 31. Vide suprà, num. 19.

[x] Per tua jurares sacra, tuumque caput.—MART. Deut. xxx. 19. Isa. i. 2. Micah i. 2. S. August. Epist. ad Publicolam; et lib. li. Duo Patroni, Sect. Si quis juraverit; et lib. Non erit, D. de Jurejurando. Tertul. ad Scap.

Testor, chara, deos—teque, tuumque
Dulce caput, magicas invitam accingier artes.
VIRGIL. lib. iv. Æneid.

Perque suos illam quondam jurâsse recordor,
Perque meos oculos; et doluere mei.
OVID.

[y] Καὶ μετὰ τὸ σαββατίσαι ἑορταζέτω ὁ φιλόχριστος τὴν κυριακήν. Ἀνὴρ ἀγαθὸς πᾶσαν ἡμέραν ἑορτὴν ἡγεῖται.—IGNAT. Ep. ad Magnes. Diog. Clem. Apost. Constit. lib. vii. c. 24. et lib. viii. Tertul. Monog. Canon. Apost. 65. et Zonar. in eund. Vide etiam Synod. Laodic.

[z] Col. ii. 16.

consent, without precept or necessary Divine injunction. But the liberty of the church was great: they found themselves disobliged from that strict and necessary rest which was one great part of the sabbatic rites, only they were glad of the occasion to meet often for offices of religion, and the day served well for the gaining and facilitating the conversion of the Jews, and for the honourable sepulture of the synagogue, it being kept so long, like the forty days' mourning of Israel for the death of their father Jacob; but their liberty they improved not to license, but as an occasion of more frequent assemblies. And there is something in it for us to imitate, even to sanctify the name of God in the great work of the creation, reading his praises in the book of his creatures, and taking all occasions of religious acts and offices, though in none of the Jewish circumstances.

25. Concerning the observation of the Lord's day, which now the church observes, and ever did, in remembrance of the resurrection, because it is a day of positive and ecclesiastical institution, it is fit that the church, who instituted the day, should determine the manner of its observation. It was set apart in honour of the resurrection; and it were not ill if all churches would, into the weekly offices, put some memorial of that mystery, that the reason of the festival might be remembered with the day, and God thanked with the renewing of the offices. But because religion was the design of the feast, and leisure was necessary for religion, therefore to abstain from suits of law and servile works;[a] but such works as are of necessity and charity, (which, to observe, are of themselves a very good religion,) is a necessary duty of the day;[b] and to do acts of public religion is the other part of it. So much is made matter of duty by the intervention of authority: and though the church hath made no more prescriptions in this, and God hath made none at all; yet he who keeps the day most strictly, most religiously, he keeps it best, and most consonant to the design of the church, and the ends of religion, and the opportunity of the present leisure, and the interests of his soul. The acts of religion proper for the day are prayers and public liturgies, preaching, catechizing, acts of charity, visiting sick persons, acts of eucharist to God, of hospitality to our poor neighbours, of friendliness and civility to all, reconciling differences; and after the public assemblies are dissolved, any act of direct religion to God, or of ease and remission to servants, or whatsoever else is good in manners, or in piety, or in mercy. What is said of this great feast of the christians is to be understood to have a greater severity and obligation in the anniversary of the resurrection, of the ascension, of the nativity of our blessed Saviour, and of the descent of the Holy Spirit in Pentecost. And all days festival to the honour of God, in remembrance of the holy apostles, and martyrs, and departed saints, as they are with prudence to be chosen and retained by the church, so as not to be unnecessary, or burdensome, or useless; so they are to be observed by us, as instances of our love of the communion of saints, and our thankfulness for the blessing and the example.

The Fifth Commandment.

26. "Honour thy father and thy mother." This commandment Christ made also to be christian, by his frequent repetition and mention of it in his sermons and laws, and so ordered it, that it should be the band of civil government and society. In the decalogue God sets this precept immediately after the duties that concern himself, our duty to parents being in the confines with our duty to God, the parents being, in order of nature, next to God, the cause of our being and production, and the great almoners of eternity, conveying to us the essences of reasonable creatures, and the charities of Heaven. And when our blessed Saviour, in a sermon to the Pharisees, spake of duty to parents, he rescued it from the impediments of a vain tradition, and secured this duty, though against a pretence of religion towards God, telling us that God would not himself accept a gift which we took from our parents' needs. This duty to parents is the very firmament and band of commonwealths. He that honours his parents will also love his brethren, derived from the same loins, he will dearly account of all his relatives and persons of the same cognation;[c] and so families are united, and of them cities and societies are framed. And because parents and patriarchs of families and of nations had regal power, they who, by any change, succeeded in the care and government of cities and kingdoms, succeeded in the power and authority of fathers, and became so, in estimate of law and true divinity, to all their people. So that the duty here commanded is due to all our

[a] Feriis jurgia amovento, easque in famulis operibus patratis habento.—CICER. de Leg. lib. ii.

[b] Quippe etiam festis quædam exercere diebus
Fas et jura sinunt; rivos deducere nulla
Religio vetuit, segeti prætendere sepem,
Insidias avibus moliri, incendere vepres,
Balantûmque gregem fluvio mersare salubri.
VIRGIL. apud Macrob.

De ferocia Tiberii dedit testimonium Tacit. lib. iii. Annal. his verbis: Quemne diem vacuum pœna? ubi inter sacra et vota, quo tempore verbis etiam profanis abstinere mos esset, vincula et laqueus inducantur?

Ἑορτὴ οὐδὲν ἄλλο ἐστιν ἢ τὰ δέοντα πράττειν.—THUCYD. lib. i.

Ἕκαστος ὑμῶν σαββατιζέτω πνευματικῶς, μελέτῃ νόμου χαίρων, οὐ σώματος ἀνέσει, δημιουργίαν θεοῦ θαυμάζων, οὐχ ἑωλα ἐσθίων, καὶ χλιαρὰ πίνων, καὶ μεμετρημένα βαδίζων, καὶ ὀρχήσει καὶ κρότοις νοῦν οὐκ ἔχουσι χαίρων.—S. IGNAT. Ep. ad Magnes.

Judæi serviliter observant diem sabbati, ad luxuriam, ad ebrietatem. Quanto meliùs fœminæ eorum lanam facerent, quàm illo die in Menianis saltarent?—S. AUGUST. Tract. 4. in Joan. Et in Psal. xcii. idem ferè.

[c] Ὁ λοιδορῶν τὸν πατέρα δυσφημεῖ λόγῳ·
Τὴν εἰς τὸ θεῖον δὲ μελετᾷ βλασφημίαν.—MENAND.

Ἐμφανεῖς θεοὶ, μιμούμενοι τὸν ἀγέννητον ἐν τῷ ζωοπλαστεῖν.—De Parentibus dixit Philo ad Decal.

Vivet extento Proculeius ævo,
Notus in fratres animi paterni:
Illum aget pennâ metuente solvi
Fama superstes.—HOR. lib. ii. Od. 2.

Τοὺς τε γονεῖς τίμα, τοὺς τ' ἄγχιστ' ἐκγεγαῶτας.—HIEROCL.

Cùm tibi sint fratres, fratres ulciscere læsos:
Cùmque pater tibi sit, jura tuere patris.
Necessaria præsidia vitæ debentur his maximè.
CICER. Offic. 3.

fathers in the sense of Scripture and laws, not only to our natural, but to our civil fathers, that is, to kings and governors. And the Scripture adds, mothers; for they also, being instruments of the blessing, are the objects of the duty. The duty is, "honour;" that is, reverence, and support, if they shall need it. And that which our blessed Saviour calls, "not honouring our parents,"[d] in St. Matthew, is called in St. Mark, "doing nothing for them;"[e] and honour is expounded by St. Paul,[f] to be "maintenance," as well as "reverence." Then we honour our parents, if with great readiness we minister to their necessities, and communicate our estate, and attend them in sicknesses, and supply their wants, and, as much as lies in us, give them support, who gave us being.

The Sixth Commandment.

27. "Thou shalt do no murder."[g] So it was said to them of old time. He that kills shall be guilty of judgment; that is, he is to die by the sentence of the judge. To this Christ makes an appendix: "But I say unto you, he that is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment." This addition of our blessed Saviour, as all the other, which are severer explications of the law than the Jews admitted, was directed against the vain and imperfect opinion of the lawyers, who thought to be justified by their external works; supposing, if they were innocent in matter of fact, God would require no more of them than man did; and what, by custom or silence of the laws, was not punishable by the judge, was harmless before God; and this made them to trust in the letter, to neglect the duties of repentance, to omit asking pardon for their secret irregularities, and the obliquities and aversations of their spirits; and this St. Paul also complains of, that, neglecting "the righteousness of God, they sought to establish their own,"[h] that is, according to man's judgment. But our blessed Saviour tells them, that such an innocence is not enough; God requires more than conformity, and observation of the fact, and exterior piety, placing justice not in legal innocency, or not being condemned in judgment of the law and human judicature, but in the righteousness of the spirit also: for the first acquits us before man, but by this we shall be held upright in judgment before the Judge of all the world. And therefore, besides abstinence from murder or actual wounds, Christ forbids all "anger without cause against our brother," that is, against any man.

28. By which not the first motions are forbidden; the twinklings of the eye, as the philosophers call them, the propassions and sudden and irresistible alterations; for it is impossible to prevent them, unless we could give ourselves a new nature,[i] any more than we can refuse to wink with our eye when a sudden blow is offered at it; or refuse to yawn when we see a yawning sleepy person: but by frequent and habitual mortification, and by continual watchfulness, and standing in readiness against all inadvertencies, we shall lessen the inclination, and account fewer sudden irreptions. A wise and meek person should not kindle at all, but after violent and great collision; and then, if like a flint he sends a spark out, it must as soon be extinguished as it shows, and cool as soon as sparkle. But, however, the sin is not in the natural disposition. But when we entertain it, though it be, as Seneca expresses it, "cum voluntate non contumaci,"[k] without a determination of revenge, then it begins to be a sin. Every indignation against the person of the man, in us is pride and self-love; and towards others ungentleness, and an immorigerous spirit. Which is to be understood, when the cause is not sufficient, or when the anger continues longer, or is excessive in the degrees of its proportion.

29. The causes of allowable anger are, when we see God dishonoured, or a sin committed, or any irregularity, or fault in matter of government; a fault against the laws of a family or good manners, disobedience or stubbornness: which, in all instances where they may be prudently judged such by the governor, yet possibly they are not all direct sins against God and religion. In such cases we may "be angry." But then we may also sin, if we exceed in time, or measure of degree.

30. The proportion of time St. Paul expresses, by "not letting the sun set upon our anger." Leontius Patricius [l] was one day extremely and unreasonably angry with John, the patriarch of Alexandria; at evening, the patriarch sent a servant to him with this message: "Sir, the sun is set." Upon which Patricius reflecting, and the grace of God making the impression deep, visible, and permanent, he threw away his anger, and became wholly subject to the counsel and ghostly aids of the patriarch. This limit St. Paul borrowed from the Psalmist; for that which in the fourth Psalm, verse 4, we read, "Stand in awe, and sin not," the Septuagint reads, "Be angry, but sin not." And this measure is taken from the analogy of the law of the Jews, that a malefactor should not hang upon the accursed tree after the sun was set: and if the laws laid down their just anger against malefactors as soon as the sun descended and took off his beams from beholding the example; much more is it reasonable that a private anger, which is not warranted by authority, not measured by laws, not examined by solemnities of justice, not made reasonable by considering the degree of the causes, not made charitable by intending the public good, not secured from injuriousness by being disinterested, and such an anger in which the party is judge, and witness, and executioner; it is (I say) but reason such an anger should unyoke, and go to bed with the sun, since justice and authority laid by the rods and axes

[d] Matt. xv. 6. [e] Mark vii. 12.
[f] 1 Tim. v. 17, 18.
Γονέας τιμήσωμεν ὑπερβαλλόντως, σώματος ὑπηρεσίας καὶ χρημάτων χορηγίαν αὐτοῖς ὑπέχοντες ὅτι μάλιστα προθυμοτάτην.—Hierocl.
Φέρει δ' ἐπὶ τὴν ἐπιμυθίαν αὐτοὺς, καὶ τὸ τῶν δουλικωτέρων ὑπηρετημάτων ἄπτεσθαι ποτὲ τοὺς παῖδας, ὥστε καὶ πόδας ἀπονίψαι.—Hierocl. apud Stobæum.
[g] Lev. xxiv. 21. Num. xxxv. 16, 17. [h] Rom. x. 3.
[i] S. Hieron. Epist. ad Demetriad.
[k] Seneca, lib. ii. de Ira, c. 4.
[l] Leontius Cypr. Episc. in Vita ipsius, c. 14.

as soon as the sun unteamed his chariot. Plutarch reports, that the Pythagoreans were strict observers of the very letter of this caution;[m] for if anger had boiled up to the height of injury or reproach, before sunset they would shake hands, salute each other, and depart friends; for they were ashamed that the same anger, which had disturbed the counsels of the day, should also trouble the quiet and dreams of the night, lest anger, by mingling with their rest and nightly fancies, should grow natural and habitual. Well, anger must last no longer; but neither may a christian's anger last so long; for if his anger last a whole day, it will certainly, before night, sour into a crime. A man's anger is like the spleen; at the first it is natural, but in its excess and distemper it swells into a disease; and, therefore, although to be angry at the presence of certain objects is natural, and therefore is indifferent, because he that is an essential enemy to sin never made sin essential to a man; yet, unless it be also transient, and pass off at the command of reason and religion, it quickly becomes criminal. The meaning is, that it be no more but a transient passion, not permanent at all; but that the anger against the man pass into indignation against the crime, and pity of the person, till the pity grows up into endeavours to help him. For an angry, violent, and disturbed man, is like that white bramble of Judea, of which Josephus reports, that it is set on fire by impetuous winds, and consumes itself, and burns the neighbour-plants. And the evil effects[n] of a violent and passionate anger are so great, so dangerous, so known to all the world, that the very consideration of them is the best argument in the world to dispute against it; families and kingdoms have suffered horrid calamities; and whatsoever is violent in art or nature, hath been made the instrument of sadness, in the hands of anger.

31. The measure of the degree is to be estimated by human prudence, that it exceed not the value of the cause, nor the proportion of other circumstances, and that it cause no eruption into indiscretions or indecencies. For, therefore, Moses's anger, though for God and religion, was reproved, because it went forth into a violent and troubled expression, and showed the degree to be inordinate. For it is in this passion as in lightning, which if it only breaks the cloud and makes a noise, shows a tempest and disturbance in nature, but the hurt is none; but if it seizes upon a man, or dwells upon a house, or breaks a tree, it becomes a judgment and a curse. And as the one is a mischief in chance and accident, so the other is in morality and choice: if it passes from passion into action, from a transient violence to a permanent injury, if it abides, it scorches the garment or burns the body; and there is no way to make it innocent, but to remove and extinguish it; and, while it remains, to tie the hands, and pare the nails, and muzzle it, that it may neither scratch, nor bite, nor talk. An anger in God's cause may become unhallowed, if it sees the sun rise and set: and an anger in the cause of a man is innocent, according to the degrees of its suddenness and discontinuance; for, by its quickness and volatile motion it shows, that it was, 1. unavoidable in its production; or, 2. that it was harmless in the event; or, 3. quickly suppressed: according to which several cases, anger is either, 1. natural; or, 2. excusable; or, 3. the matter of a virtue.

32. The vulgar Latin Bible, in this precept of our blessed Saviour, reads not the appendix, "without a cause," but indefinitely, "he that is angry with his brother;" and St. Jerome affirms, that the clause, "without a cause," is not to be found in the true Greek copies: upon supposition of which, because it is not to be imagined that all anger, in all causes and in all degrees, is simply unlawful; and St. Paul distinguishes being angry from committing a sin, "Be angry, but sin not;" these words are left to signify such an anger as is the crime of homicide in the heart, like the secret lusting called by Christ "adultery in the heart;" and so here is forbidden, not only the outward act, but the inward inclinations to murder, that is, an anger[o] with deliberation and purpose of revenge; this being explicative and additional to the precept forbidding murder: which also our blessed Saviour seems to have intended, by threatening the same penalty to this anger or spiritual homicide which the law inflicted upon the actual and external; that is, judgment or condemnation. And because this prohibition of anger is an explication and more severe commentary upon the sixth commandment, it is more than probable that this anger, to which condemnation is threatened, is such an anger as hath entertained something of mischief in the spirit. And this agrees well enough with the former interpretation, save that it affirms no degree of anger to be criminal, as to the height of condemnation, unless it be with a thought of violence or desires of revenge; the other degrees receiving their heightenings and declensions, as they keep their distance or approach to this. And besides, by not limiting or giving caution concerning the cause, it restrains the malice only, or the degree; but it permits other causes of anger to be innocent besides those spiritual and moral, of the interests of God's glory and religion. But this is also true, whichsoever of the readings be retained. For the irascible faculty, having in nature an object proper to its constitution and natural design, if our anger be commenced upon an object naturally troublesome, the anger is very natural, and no where said to be irregular. And he who is angry with a servant's unwariness or inadvertency, or the remissness of a child's spirit and application to his studies, or on any sudden displeasure, is not in any sense guilty of pre-

[m] Εἴ ποτε προαχθεῖεν εἰς λοιδορίαν ὑπ' ὀργῆς, πριν ἢ τὸν ἥλιον δῦναι, τὰς δεξιὰς ἐμβάλλοντες ἀλλήλοις καὶ ἀσπασάμενοι διελύοντο.—Plutarch

[n] Iræ Thyesten exitio gravi
Stravere, et altis urbibus ultimæ
Stetere causæ cur perirent
Funditus, imprimeretque muris
Hostile aratrum exercitus insolens.
Horat. lib. i. Od. 16.

[o] Καὶ πάσῃ ὀργῇ ἑπεσθαί τίνα ἡδονὴν τὴν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐλπίδος τοῦ τιμωρήσασθαι.—Arist. 2. Rhet.

varicating the sixth commandment, unless, besides the object, he adds an inequality of degree, or unhandsome circumstance or adjunct. And, possibly, it is not in the nature of man to be strict in discipline, if the prohibitions of anger be confined only to causes of religion:[p] and it were hard that such an anger, which is innocent in all effects, and a good instrument of government, should become criminal and damnable; because some instances of displeasure are in actions not certainly and apparently sinful. So that our blessed Saviour, forbidding us to be "angry without a cause," means such causes which are not only irregularities in religion, but deflections in manners; and an anger may be religious, and political, and economical, according as it meets with objects proper to it in several kinds. It is sometimes necessary, that a man carry a tempest in his face and a rod in his hand; but for ever let him have a smooth mind, or at least under command, and within the limits of reason and religion; that he may steer securely, and avoid the rocks of sin: for then he may reprove a friend that did amiss, or chastise an offending son, or correct a vicious servant. The sum is this: There are no other bounds to hallow, or to allow and legitimate anger, but that, 1. The cause be religion, or matter of government: 2. That the degree of the anger, in prudent accounts, be no bigger than the cause: 3. That if it goes forth, it be not expressed in any action of uncharitableness, or unseasonable violence: 4. Whether it goes forth or abides at home, it must not dwell long any where; nor abide in the form of a burning coal, but at the most of a thin flame, thence passing into air salutary and gentle, fit to breathe, but not to blast. There is this only nicety to be observed: that although an anger arising for religion, or in the matter of government, cannot innocently abide long; yet it may abide till it hath passed forth into its proper and temperate expression, whether of reprehension or chastisement, and then it must sit down. But if the anger arises from another cause, (provided it be of itself innocent, not sinful in the object or cause,) the passion in its first spring is also innocent, because it is natural, and on the sudden unavoidable: but this must be suppressed within, and is not permitted to express itself at all: for in that degree in which it goes out of the mouth, or through the eyes, or from the hand, in that degree it is violent, ought to be corrected and restrained; for so that passion was intended to be turned into virtue. For this passion is like its natural parent or instrument: and if choler keeps in its proper seat, it is an instrument of digestion; but if it goes forth into the stranger regions of the body, it makes a fever: and this anger, which commences upon natural causes, though so far as it is natural it must needs be innocent, yet when any consent of the will comes to it, or that it goes forth in any action or voluntary signification, it also becomes criminal. Such an anger is only permitted to be born and die; but it must never take nourishment, or exercise any act of life.

33. But if that prohibition be indefinite, then it is certain, the analogy of the commandment, of which this is an explication, refers it to revenge or malice: it is an anger that is wrath, an anger of revenge or injury, which is here prohibited. And I add this consideration: That since it is certain, that Christ intended this for an explication of the prohibition of homicide, the clause of "without cause,"[q] seems less natural and proper. For it would intimate, that though anger of revenge is forbidden, when it is rash and unreasonable; yet that there might be a case of being angry, with a purpose of revenge and recompence, and that in such a case it is permitted to them, to whom in all other it is denied, that is, to private persons; which is against the meekness and charity of the gospel. More reasonable it is, that as no man might kill his brother, in Moses's law, by his own private authority; so an anger is here forbidden, such an anger which no qualification can permit to private persons; that is, an anger with purposes of revenge.

34. But Christ adds, that a further degree of this sin is, when our anger breaks out in contumelies and ill language, and receives its increment according to the degree and injury of the reproach. There is a homicide in the tongue, as well as in the heart; and he that kills a man's reputation[r] by calumnies, or slander, or open reviling, hath broken this commandment. But this is not to be understood so, but that persons in authority, or friends,[s] may reprehend a vicious person in language proper to his crime, or expressive of his malice or iniquity. Christ called Herod, "fox:" and although St. Michael "brought not a railing accusation" against Satan, yet the Scripture calls him "an accuser," and Christ calls him "the father of lies;" and St. Peter, "a devourer," and "a roaring lion;" and St. John call Diotrephes, "a lover of pre-eminence," or ambitious. But that which is here forbidden, is not a representing the crimes of the man for his emendation, or any other charitable or religious end, but a reviling him to do him mischief, to murder his reputation; which also shows, that whatever is here forbidden is, in some sense or other, accounted

[p] Si ira non fuerit, nec doctrina proficit, nec judicia stant, nec crimina compescuntur.—S. CHRYSOST.

Si nulla ira ex virtute surgeret, Divinæ animadversionis impetum per gladium Phinehas non placâsset.—S. GREG. lib. v. Moral.

Πιθανότατοι γὰρ ἀπὸ τῆς φύσεως οἱ ἐν τοῖς πάθεσιν εἰσι, καὶ κυμαίνει ὁ κυματιζόμενος, καὶ χαλεπαίνει ὀργιζόμενος, κ. τ. λ.—ARIST. Poetic.

[q] Εἰκῆ significat *in vanum*; i. e. non solùm extra causam, sed et extra modum.

[r] ——— Δεινὴν δὲ βροτῶν ὑπαλεύεο φήμην.
Φήμη γάρ τε κακὴ πέλεται· κούφη μὲν ἀεῖραι
Ῥεῖα μάλ', ἀργαλέη δὲ φέρειν, χαλεπὴ δ' ἀποθέσθαι.
HESIOD. Ἔργ. lib. ii.

[s] ——— Insuevit pater optimus hoc me,
Ut fugerem exemplis vitiorum quæque notando:
Quum me hortaretur parcè, frugaliter, atque
Viverem uti contentus eo quod mî ipse parâsset;
Nonne vides Albi ut malè vivat filius, utque
Barrus inops? ———
——— A turpi meretricis amore
Cùm deterreret; Sectani dissimilis sis.
Ne sequerer mœchas ———
——— Deprensi non bella est fama Treboni,
Aiebat. ———
HORAT. Sat. iv. lib. i.

homicide; the anger in order to reproach, and both in order to murder, subject to the same punishment, because forbidden in the same period of the law; save only that, according to the degrees of sin, Christ proportions several degrees of punishment in the other world, which he apportions to the degrees of death which had ever been among the Jews, viz. the sword, and stoning to death, which were punishments legal and judicial; and the burning infants in the valley of Hinnom, which was a barbarous and superstitious custom used formerly by their fathers, in imitation of the Phœnician accursed rites.

35. The remedies against anger, which are prescribed by masters of spiritual life, are partly taken from rules of prudence, partly from piety, and more precise rules of religion. In prudence: 1. Do not easily entertain, or at all encourage, or willingly hear, or promptly believe, tale-bearers and reporters of other men's faults: for oftentimes we are set on fire by an *ignis fatuus*, a false flame, and an empty story. 2. Live with peaceable people, if thou canst. 3. Be not inquisitive into the misdemeanours of others, or the reports which are made of you. 4. Find out reasons of excuse, to alleviate and lessen the ignorances of a friend, or carelessnesses of a servant. 5. Observe what object is aptest to inflame thee, and, by special arts of fortification, stop up the avenues to that part. If losses, if contempt, if incivilities, if slander, still make it the greatest part of your employment to subdue the impotency of that passion that is more apt to raise tempests. 6. Extirpate petty curiosities of apparel, lodging, diet, and learn to be indifferent in circumstances; and if you be apt to be transported with such little things, do some great thing, that shall cut off their frequent intervening. 7. Do not multiply secular cares, and troublesome negociations, which have variety of conversation with several humours of men, and accidents of things; but frame to thyself a life, simple as thou canst, and free from all affectations. 8. Sweeten thy temper, and allay the violence of thy spirit, with some convenient, natural, temperate, and medicinal solaces; for some dispositions we have seen inflamed into anger, and often assaulted by peevishness, through immoderate fasting and inconvenient austerities. 9. A gentle answer is an excellent remora to the progresses of anger, whether in thyself or others. For anger is like the waves of a troubled sea; when it is corrected with a soft reply, as with a little strand, it retires, and leaves nothing behind it but froth and shells; no permanent mischief.[t] 10. Silence is an excellent art: and that was the advice which St. Isaac,[u] an old religious person in the primitive church, is reported to have followed; to suppress his anger within his breast, and use what means he could there to strangle it, but never permitting it to go forth in language. Anger and lust being like fire, which if you enclose, suffering it to have no emission, it perishes and dies; but give it the smallest vent, and it rages to a consumption of all it reaches. And this advice is coincident with the general rule which is prescribed in all temptations, that anger be suppressed in its cradle and first assaults.[x] 11. Lastly: let every man be careful, that in his repentance, or in his zeal, or his religion, he be as dispassionate and free from anger as possible; lest anger pass upon him in a reflex act, which was rejected in the direct. Some mortifiers, in their contestation against anger, or any evil or troublesome principle, are like criers of assizes, who, calling for silence, make the greatest noise; they are extremely angry, when they are fighting against the habit or violent inclinations to anger.

36. But, in the way of more strict religion, it is advised, 1. That he who would cure his anger should pray often. It is St. Austin's counsel to the bishop Auxilius, that, like the apostles in a storm, we should awaken Christ, and call to him for aid, lest we shipwreck in so violent passions and impetuous disturbances. 2. Propound to thyself the example of meek and patient persons; remembering always, that there is a family of meek saints, of which Moses is the precedent; a family of patient saints, under the conduct of Job. Every one in the mountain of the Lord shall be gathered to his own tribe, to his own family, in the great day of jubilee: and the angry shall perish with the effects of anger; and peevish persons shall be vexed with the disquietness of an eternal worm, and sting of a vexatious conscience, if they suffer here the transportations and saddest effects of an unmortified, habitual, and prevailing anger. 3. Above all things endeavour to be humble, to think of thyself as thou deservest, that is, meanly and unworthily; and in reason, it is to be presumed, thou wilt be more patient of wrong, quiet under affronts and injuries, susceptive of inconveniences, and apt to entertain all adversities, as instruments of humiliation, deleteries of vice, corrections of indecent passions and instruments of virtue. 4. All the reason, and all the relations, and all the necessities of mankind, are daily arguments against the violences and inordinations of anger. For he that would not have his reason confounded, or his discourse useless, or his family be a den of lions; he that would not have his marriage a daily duel, or his society troublesome, or his friendship formidable, or his feasts bitter; he that delights not to have his discipline cruel, or his government tyrannical, or his disputations violent, or his civilities unmannerly; or his charity be a rudeness, or himself brutish as a bear, or peevish as a fly, or miserable upon every accident, and in all the changes of his life, must mortify his anger. For it concerns us as much as peace, and wisdom, and nobleness, and charity, and felicity are worth, to be at peace in our breasts, and to be

[t] Terminum etiam marinis fluctibus fabricator descripsit; arena maris exigua sæpè inter duas acies intercapedo est: si reprimere iram non potes, memento quia indignabundum mare nil ultra spumam et fluctuationem effert.—Simocatta.

[u] Ex quo factus sum monachus, statui apud me, ut iracundia extra guttur meum non procederet, dixit S. Isaac Eremita.

[x] Melius enim est negare primum iræ introitum, etiam de causa probabili satis et gloriosa, quàm admissam ejicere.—S. Aug. ad Profuturum.

pleased with all God's providence, and to be in charity with every thing, and with every man.

The Seventh Commandment.

37. "Thou shalt not commit adultery." These two commandments are immediate to each other, and of the greatest cognation; for anger and lust work upon one subject; and the same fervours of blood which make men revengeful, will also make men unchaste.[y] But the prohibition is repeated in the words of the old commandment: so "it was said to them of old;" which was not only a prohibition of the violation of the rights of marriage, but was, even among the Jews, extended to signify all mixture of sexes not matrimonial. For adultery, in Scripture, is sometimes used to signify fornication, and fornication for adultery; as it is expressed in the permissions of divorce, in the case of fornication: and by Moses's law, fornication also was forbidden; and it was hated also, and reproved, in the natural. But it is very probable, that this precept was restrained only to the instance of adultery in the proper sense, that is, violation of marriage; for Moses did, in other annexes of the law, forbid fornication. And as a blow or wound was not esteemed, in Moses's law, a breach of the sixth commandment; so neither was any thing but adultery esteemed a violation of the seventh, by very many of their own doctors: of which I reckon this a sufficient probation, because they permitted stranger virgins and captives to fornicate; only they believed it sinful in the Hebrew maidens. And when two harlots pleaded before Solomon for the bastard child, he gave sentence of their question, but nothing of their crime. Strangers,[z] with the Hebrews, signified, many times, harlots; because they were permitted to be such, and were entertained to such purposes. But these were the licenses of a looser interpretation; God having, to all nations, given sufficient testimony of his detestation of all concubinate not hallowed by marriage: of which, among the nations, there was abundant testimony; in that the harlots were not permitted to abide in the cities, and wore veils, in testimony of their shame and habitual indecencies; which we observe in the story of Thamar,[a] and also in Chrysippus. And, although it passed without punishment, yet never without shame, and a note of turpitude. And the abstinence from fornication was one of the precepts of Noah, to which the Jews obliged the stranger-proselytes, who were only proselytes of the house: and the apostles enforce it upon the gentiles, in their first decree at Jerusalem, as renewing an old stock of precepts and obligations, in which all the converted and religious gentiles did communicate with the Jews.

38. To this Christ added, that the eyes must not be adulterous; his disciples must not only abstain from the act of unlawful concubinate, but from the impurer intuition of a wife of another man: so, according to the design of his whole sermon, opposing the righteousness of the Spirit to that of the law, or of works, in which the Jews confided. Christians must have chaste desires, not indulging to themselves a liberty of looser thoughts;[b] keeping the threshold of their temples pure, that the Holy Ghost may observe nothing unclean in the entry of his habitation. For he that lusts after a woman wants nothing to the consummation of the act but some convenient circumstances; which, because they are not in our power, the act is impeded, but nothing of the malice abated. But so severe in this was our blessed Master, that he commanded us rather to "put our eyes out," than to suffer them to become an offence to us, that is, an inlet of sin, or an invitation or transmission of impurity: by "putting our eyes out," meaning the extinction of all incentives of lust, the rejection of all opportunities and occasions, the quitting all conditions of advantage which ministers fuel to this hell-fire. And by this severity we must understand all beginnings, temptations, likenesses, and insinuations and minutes of lust and impurity, to be forbidden to christians; such as are all morose delectations in vanity, wanton words, gestures, balls, revellings, wanton diet, garish and lascivious dressings and trimmings of the body, looser banquetings: all "making provisions for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts of it," all lust of concupiscence, and all "lust of the eye," and all lust of the hand, unclean contracts, are to be rescinded, all lust of the tongue and palate, all surfeiting and drunkenness: for it is impossible to keep the spirit pure, if it be exposed to all the entertainment of enemies. And if Christ forbade the wanton eye, and placed it under the prohibition of adultery, it is certain, whatsoever ministers to that vice, and invites to it, is within the same restraint; it is the eye, or the hand, or the foot, that is to be cut off. To this commandment fastings and severe abstinences are apt to be reduced, as being the proper abscission of the instruments and temptations of lust, to which Christ invites by the mixed proposition of threatening and reward; for "better it is to go to heaven with but one eye, or one foot," that is, with a body half nourished, than with full meals and an active lust to "enter into hell." And in this our blessed Lord is a Physician rather than a Lawgiver: for abstinence from all impure concubinate, and morose delectations so much as in thought, being the commandment of God; that Christ bids us retrench the occasions and insinuations of lust, it is a facilitating

[y] Ubi furoris insederit virus, libidinis quoque incendium necesse est penetrare.—Cassian.

——— Numquid ego à te
Magno prognatam deposco Consule———
Velatamque stolâ, mea cùm conferbuit ira?
Horat. Serm. lib. i. Sat. 2.

[z] Ξένας vocârunt Græci meretrices et peregrinas, ad morem et ad verbum Hebræorum; et Menandrum transferens, Terentius peregrinam vocat Andriam.

[a] Gen. xxxviii. 14.

[b] Nihil refert quibus membris adulteraveris, dixit Archesilaus philosophus.—Plutarch.

Ἀρχὴ τοῦ ἔρωτος ὅρασις.—Plato.

Ut jam servaris bene corpus, adultera mens est:
Omnibus exclusis intus adulter erit.—Ovid.

Incesta est etiam sine stupro quæ stuprum quærit.—Seneca.

Πόθεν τοτ' ἄρα γίνεται μοιχῶν γένος; ἐκ κριθιῶντος ἀνδρὸς ἐν ἀφροδισίοις.—Cleanthes

the duty, not a new severity, but a security and caution of prudence.

The Eighth Commandment.

39. "Thou shalt not steal." To this precept Christ added nothing; because God had already, in the decalogue, fortified this precept with a restraint upon the desires.[c] For the tenth commandment forbids all coveting of our neighbour's goods:[d] for the wife there reckoned, and forbidden to be desired from another man, is not a restraint of libidinous appetite, but of the covetous; it being accounted part of wealth to have a numerous family, many wives, and many servants: and this also God, by the prophet Nathan, upbraided to David, as an instance of David's wealth and God's liberality. But yet this commandment Christ adopted into his law, it being prohibited by the natural law, or the law of right reason, commonwealths not being able to subsist without distinction of dominion, nor industry to be encouraged but by propriety, nor families to be maintained but by defence of just rights and truly purchased possessions. And this prohibition extends to all injustice, whether done by force or fraud; whether it be by ablation, or prevention, or detaining of rights; any thing in which injury is done, directly or obliquely, to our neighbour's fortune.[e]

The Ninth Commandment.

40. "Thou shalt not bear false witness." That is, thou shalt not answer in judgment against thy neighbour falsely:[f] which testimony, in the law, was given solemnly and by oath, invoking the name of God. "I adjure thee by God that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ," said the high priest to the blessed Jesus, that is, speak upon thy oath; and then he told them fully, though they made it the pretence of murdering him, and he knew they would do so. Confessing and witnessing truth is giving glory to God: but false witness is high injustice, it is inhumanity and treason against the quietness, or life, or possession of a just person; it is in itself irregular and unreasonable, and, therefore, is so forbidden to christians, not only as it is unjust, but as it is false. For a lie in communication and private converse is also forbidden, as well as unjust testimony;[g] "Let every man speak truth with his neighbour,"[h] that is, in private society: and whether a lie be in jest or earnest, when the purpose is to deceive and abuse, though in the smallest instance, it is in that degree criminal as it is injurious.[i] I find not the same affirmed in every deception of our neighbours, wherein no man is injured, and some are benefited; the error of the affirmation being nothing but a natural irregularity, nothing malicious, but very charitable. I find no severity superadded by Christ to this commandment, prohibiting such discourse, which, without injury to any man, deceives a man into piety or safety. But this is to be extended no farther: in all things else we must be severe in our discourses, and "neither lie in a great matter nor a small, for the custom thereof is not good," saith the son of Sirach. I could add, concerning this precept, that Christ, having left it in that condition he found it in the decalogue, without any change or alteration of circumstance, we are commanded to give true testimony in judgment; which, because it was under an oath, there lies upon us no prohibition, but a severity of injunction, to swear truth in judgment when we are required. The securing of testimonies was by the sanctity of an oath, and this remains unaltered in christianity.

The Tenth Commandment.

41. "Thou shalt not covet." This commandment we find no where repeated in the gospel by our blessed Saviour; but it is inserted in the repetition of the second table, which St. Paul mentioned to the Romans: for it was so abundantly expressed in the enclosures of other precepts,[k] and the whole design of Christ's doctrines, that it was less needful specially to express that which is every where affixed to many precepts evangelical. Particularly it is inherent in the first beatitude, "Blessed are the poor in spirit;" and it means, that we should not wish our neighbour's goods with a deliberate entertained desire, but that, upon the commencement of the motion, it be disbanded instantly: for he that does not at the first address and incitement of the passion suppress it, he hath given it that entertainment which, in every period of staying, is a degree of morose delectation in the appetite. And to this I find not Christ added any thing; for the law itself, forbidding to entertain the desire, hath commanded the instant and present suppression; they are the same thing, and cannot reasonably be distinguished. Now that Christ, in the instance of adultery, hath commanded to abstain also from occasions and accesses towards the lust, in this is not the same severity; because the

[c] Crescit indulgens sibi dirus hydrops,
Nec sitim pellit, nisi causa morbi
Fugerit venis, et aquosus albo
Corpore languor.—HORAT. lib. ii. Od. 2.

[d] Ὁ γὰρ τοῖς ἀλλοτρίοις ἐπικεχηνὼς, κοινὸς πόλεως ἐχθρός· βουλήσει μὲν πάντων, δυνάμει δὲ τὰ τῶν τίνων ἀφαιρούμενος.—PHILO in Exposit. Gener.

Κλοπὴ μὲν χρημάτων ἀνελεύθερον.
PLATO, lib. x. de Leg.

Δὼς ἀγαθὴ, ἅρπαξ δὲ κακὴ, θανάτοιο δότειρα.
HESIOD, lib. i. Ἔργ.

[e] Paulus J. C. lib. i. D. de Furtis. Ulpian. l. Probrum, D. de Verborum Significatione.

[f] Οὐ γὰρ ἐπὶ ψεύδεσσι πατὴρ Ζεὺς ἔσσετ' ἀρωγός.
HOMER, lib. iv. Il.

Ὅς δὲ κε μαρτυρίησιν ἑκὼν ἐπίορκον ὀμόσσας
Ψεύσεται, ἐν δὲ δίκην βλάψας, νήκεστον ἄασθη,
Τοῦ δὲ τ' ἀμαυροτέρη γενεὴ μετόπισθε λέλειπται.
HESIOD, lib. i. Ἔργ.

[g] Ἀλήθεια ἐστι μεγάλη ἀρχὴ τῆς ἀρετῆς.—PIND.

Ψεῦδος δὲ μισεῖ πᾶς σοφὸς καὶ χρήσιμος.
MENAND.

[h] Ephes. iv. 25.

[i] Epaminondam ne joco quidem mentitum fuisse narrant fidi scriptores.—PROBUS.
Idem de Aristide refert Plutarchus.

[k] Furtum quoque sine ulla attrectatione fieri posse solâ mente, atque animo ut furtum fiat annitente.—A. GELL. lib. xi. c. 18.

Has patitur pœnas peccandi sola voluntas.
Nam scelus intra se tantùm qui cogitat ullum,
Facti crimen habet.——JUVENAL.

Non minùs esse turpe oculos quàm pedes in aliena immittere, dixit Xenocrates.

vice of covetousness is not such a wild fire as lust is, not inflamed by contact, and neighbourhood of all things in the world: every thing may be instrumental to libidinous desires, but to covetous appetites there are not temptations of so different natures.

42. Concerning the order of these commandments, it is not unusefully observed, that, if we account from the first to the last, they are of greatest perfection which are last described; and he who is arrived to that severity and dominion of himself, as not to desire his neighbour's goods, is very far from actual injury, and so in proportion; it being the least degree of religion to confess but one God. But, therefore, vices are to take their estimate in the contrary order: he that prevaricates the first commandment is the greatest sinner in the world; and the least is he that only covets without any actual injustice. And there is no variety or objection in this, unless it be altered by the accidental difference of degrees; but in the kinds of sin the rule is true: this only, the sixth and seventh are otherwise in the Hebrew Bibles than ours, and in the Greek otherwise in Exodus than in Deuteronomy; and, by this rule, it is a greater sin to commit adultery than to kill; concerning which we have no certainty, save that St. Paul, in one respect, makes the sin of uncleanness the greatest of any sin, whose scene lies in the body: "Every sin is without the body, but he that commits fornication sins against his own body."

THE PRAYER.

O eternal Jesus, Wisdom of thy Father, thou light of Jews and gentiles, and the great Master of the world, who, by thy holy sermons and clearest revelations of the mysteries of thy Father's kingdom, didst invite all the world to great degrees of justice, purity, and sanctity, and instruct us all in a holy institution, give us understanding of thy laws; that, the light of thy celestial doctrine illuminating our darknesses, and making bright all the recesses of our spirits and understandings, we may direct our feet, all the lower man, the affections of the inferior appetite, to walk in the paths of thy commandments. Dearest God, make us to live a life of religion and justice, of love and duty; that we may adore thy majesty, and reverence thy name, and love thy mercy, and admire thy infinite glories and perfections, and obey thy precepts. Make us to love thee for thyself, and our neighbours for thee: make us to be all love and all duty: that we may adorn the gospel of thee, our Lord, walking worthy of our vocation; that as thou hast called us to be thy disciples, so we may walk therein, doing the work of faithful servants, and may receive the adoption of sons, and the gift of eternal glory, which thou hast reserved for all the disciples of thy holy institution. Make all the world obey thee as a Prophet; that, being redeemed and purified by thee our High Priest, all may reign with thee, our King, in thy eternal kingdom, O eternal Jesus, Wisdom of thy Father. Amen.

OF THE THREE ADDITIONAL PRECEPTS WHICH CHRIST SUPERINDUCED, AND MADE PARTS OF THE CHRISTIAN LAW.

DISCOURSE XI.

Of Charity, with its Parts, Forgiving, Giving, not Judging.

OF FORGIVENESS.—PART I.

1. THE holy Jesus coming to reconcile all the world to God, would reconcile all the parts of the world one with another, that they may rejoice in their common band and their common salvation. The first instance of charity forbade to christians all revenge of injuries; which was a perfection and endearment of duty beyond what either most of the old philosophers,[a] or the laws of the nations, or of Moses, ever practised or enjoined. For revenge was esteemed to unhallowed, unchristian natures, as sweet as life, a satisfaction of injuries, and the only cure of maladies and affronts. Only laws of the wisest commonwealths commanded that revenge should be taken by the judge; a few cases being excepted, in which, by sentence of the law, the injured person, or his nearest relative, might be the executioner of the vengeance: as among the Jews, in the case of murder; among the Romans, in the case of an adulteress, or a ravished daughter, the father might kill the adulteress or the ravisher. In other things the judge only was to be the avenger. But Christ commanded his disciples, rather than to take revenge, to expose themselves to a second injury, rather "offer the other cheek," than be avenged for a blow on this; "for vengeance belongs to God," and he will retaliate: and to that "wrath we must give place," saith St. Paul;[b] that is, "in well-doing" and evil-suffering "commit ourselves to his righteous judgment," leaving room for his execution, who will certainly do it, if we snatch not the sword from his arm.

2. But some observe, that our blessed Saviour instanced but in smaller injuries: he that bade us suffer a blow on the cheek, did not oblige us tamely

[a] Plutarchus tamen multa præclara dicit de charitate erga inimicos. "Simplicitati et magnanimitati atque bonitati plus loci hic est quàm in amicitiis.——Oblatâ occasione ulciscendi inimicum, eum missum facere æquanimitatis est. Qui verò miseratur inimicum afflictum, et opem fert indigenti, et filiis ejus ac familiæ adverso ipsorum tempore operam suam studiumque defert, hunc qui non amat, huic pectus atrum est atque adamantinum," &c.—De Cap. ex Inim. Utilit.

Et Cicero dixit Cæsari; Pompeii statuas restituendo, tuas defixisti.

Justitiæ primum munus est, ut ne cui noceas, nisi lacessitus injuriâ.—CIC. de Offic.

Exod. xxi. 23. Levit. xxiv. 20. Deut. xix. 21.

Idcirco judiciorum vigor, jurisque publici tutela videtur in medio constituta, ne quisquam sibi ipsi permittere valeat ultionem.—HONOR. et THEOD. in Cod. Theodos.

[b] Rom. xii. 19.

to be sacrificed; he that enjoined us to put up the loss of our coat and cloak, did not signify his pleasure to be, that we should suffer our family to be turned out of doors, and our whole estate aliened and cancelled, especially we being otherwise obliged to provide for them under the pain of the curse of infidelity. And indeed there is much reason our defences may be extended, when the injuries are too great for our sufferance, or that our defence bring no greater damage to the other than we divert from ourselves. But our blessed Saviour's prohibition is instanced in such small particulars, which are no limitations of the general precept, but particulars of common consideration. "But I say unto you, resist not evil:"[c] so our English Testament reads it; but the word signifies "avenge not evil;" and it binds us to this only, that we be not avengers of the wrong, but rather suffer twice than once to be avenged. He that is struck on the face may run away, or may divert the blow, or bind the hand of his enemy; and he whose coat is snatched away, may take it again, if without injury to the other we may do it. We are sometimes bound to "resist evil:" every clearing of our innocence, refuting of calumnies, quitting ourselves of reproach, is a resisting evil; but such which is hallowed to us by the example of our Lord himself and his apostles. But this precept is clearly expounded by St. Paul: "Render not evil for evil;"[d] that is, be not revenged. You may either secure or restore yourselves to the condition of your own possessions or fame, or preserve your life, provided that no evil be returned to him that offers the injury. For so sacred are the laws of Christ, so holy and great is his example, so much hath he endeared us who were his enemies, and so frequently and severely hath he preached and enjoined forgiveness, that he who knows not to forgive, knows not to be like a christian, and a disciple of so gentle a Master.

3. So that the smallness or greatness of the instance alters not the case in this duty: in the greatest matters we are permitted only to an innocent defence, in the smallest we may do so too: I may as well hold my coat fast as my gold, and I may as well hide my goods as run away, and that is a defence; and if my life be in danger, I must do no more but defend myself; save only that defence, in case of life, is of a larger signification than in case of goods. I may wound my enemy, if I cannot else be safe; I may disarm him, or in any sense disable him; and this is extended even to a liberty to kill him, if my defence necessarily stands upon so hard conditions: for although I must not give him a wound for a wound,[e] because that cannot cure me, but is certainly revenge; yet when my life cannot be otherwise safe than by killing him, I have used that liberty which nature hath permitted me, and Christ hath not forbidden, who only interdicted revenge, and forbade no defence which is charitable and necessary, and not blended with malice and anger. And it is as much charity to preserve myself as him, when I fear to die.

4. But although we find this no where forbidden, yet it is very consonant to the excellent mercy of the gospel, and greatly laudable, if we choose rather to lose our life, in imitation of Christ, than save it by the loss of another's, in pursuance of the permissions of nature. When nature only gives leave, and no lawgiver gives command to defend our lives, and the excellence of christianity highly commends dying for our enemies, and propounds to our imitation the greatest example that ever could be in the world; it is a very great imperfection, if we choose not rather to obey an insinuation of the holy Jesus, than with greediness and appetite pursue the bare permissions of nature. But in this we have no necessity. Only this is to be read with two cautions: 1. So long as the assaulted person is in actual danger, he must use all arts and subterfuges which his wit or danger can supply him with, as, passive defence, flight, arts of diversion, entreaties, soft and gentle answers, or whatsoever is in its kind innocent, to prevent his sin and my danger; that when he is forced to his last defence, it may be certain he hath nothing of revenge mingled in so sad a remedy. 2. That this be not understood to be a permission to defend our lives against an angry and unjust prince:[f] for if my lawful prince should attempt my life with rage, or with the abused solemnities of law; in the first case the sacredness of his person, in the second, the reverence and religion of authority, are his defensatives, and immure him, and bind my hands, that I must not lift them up, but to Heaven, for my own defence and his pardon.

5. But the vain pretences of vainer persons have here made a question where there is no scruple; and if I may defend my life with the sword, or with any thing which nature and the laws forbid not, why not also mine honour, which is as dear as life, which makes my life without contempt, useful to my friend, and comfortable to myself? For to be reputed a coward, a baffled person, and one that will take affronts, is to be miserable and scorned, and to invite all insolent persons to do me injuries. May I not be permitted to fight for mine honour, and to wipe off the stains of my reputation? Honour is dear as life, and sometimes dearer. To this I have many things to say. For that which men in this question call honour, is nothing but a reputation amongst persons vain, unchristian in their deportment, empty and ignorant souls, who count that the standard of honour which is the instrument of reprobation; as if to be a gentleman were to be no christian. They that have built their reputation upon such societies, must take new estimates of it, according as the wine, or fancy, or custom, or some great fighting person shall determine it; and whatsoever invites a quarrel is a rule of honour. But then it is a sad consideration to remember, that it is accounted honour not to recede from any thing we have said or done: it is honour not to take the lie, in the mean time it is not dishonourable to lie indeed, but to

[c] Μὴ ἀντιστῆναι τῷ πονηρῷ sumitur sensu generali pro omni retaliatione.

[d] Rom. xii. 17.

[e] Succurram perituro, sed ut ipse non peream; nisi si futurus ero magni hominis aut magnæ rei merces.—Sen.

[f] Privatas inimicitias, non principis, ulciscar, dixit Tiberius. —Tacit. Annal. lib. iii

be told so; and not to kill him that says it, and venture my life and his too, that is a forfeiture of reputation. A mistress's favour, in idle discourse, a jest, a jealousy, a health, a gaiety, any thing must engage two lives in hazard, and two souls in ruin; or else they are dishonoured. As if a life, which is so dear to a man's self, which ought to be dear to others, which all laws, and wise princes, and states, have secured by the circumvallation of laws and penalties, which nothing but heaven can recompense for the loss of, which is the breath of God, which to preserve Christ died, the Son of God died; as if this were so contemptible a thing, that it must be ventured for satisfaction of a vicious person, or a vain custom, or such a folly which a wise and a severe person had rather die than be guilty of. Honour is from him that honours; now certainly God and the king are the fountains of honour; right reason and religion, the Scripture and the laws, are the best rules of estimating honour: and if we offer to account our honours by the senseless and illiterate discourses of vain and vicious persons, our honour can be no greater than the fountain from whence it is derivative; and at this rate Harpaste, Seneca's wife's fool, might have declared Thersites an honourable person, and every bold gladiator in a Roman theatre, or a fighting rebel among the slaves of Sparta, or a trooper of Spartacus's guard, might have stood upon their honour upon equal and as fair a challenge. Certainly there is no greater honour than to be like the holy Jesus; and he is delectable in the eyes of God, and so are all his relatives and followers, by participation of his honour; and nothing can be more honourable than to do wise and excellent actions, according to the account of Divine and human laws: and if either God or the king can derive honour upon their subjects, then whatsoever is contrary to that which they honour must needs be base, dishonourable, and inglorious.

6. But if we be troubled for fear of new and succeeding injuries, and will needs fight, and, as much as lies in us, kill our brother to prevent an injury,[g] nothing can be more unworthy of a christian, nothing can be more inhuman. Cato, pleading in the Roman senate in the behalf of the Rhodian ambassadors, who came to beg peace of the commonwealth, which had entertained an anger and some thoughts of war against them, upon pretence that the Rhodians would war with them when they durst, discoursed severely and prudently against such unreasonable purposes. And the life of men, and the interests of states, is not like the trade of fencers, whose lot is to conquer if they strike first, to die if they be prevented: man's life is not established upon so unequal and unreasonable necessities, that either we must first do an injury, or else it is certain we must receive a mischief. God's providence and care, in his government of the world, is more vigilant and merciful; and he protects persons innocent and just in all cases, except when he means to make an injury the instrument of a grace, or a violent death to be the gate of glory. It was not ill answered of Merope to king Polyphontes, who therefore killed his brother, because he had entertained a purpose to have killed him: "You should only have done the same injury to him which he did to you; you should still have had a purpose to kill him:" for his injustice went no farther; and it is hard to requite ill and uncertain purposes with actual murder, especially when we are as much secured by the power of laws, as the whole commonwealth is, in all its greatest interests. And, therefore, for christians to kill a man to prevent being baffled or despised, is to use an extreme desperate remedy, infinitely painful and deadly, to prevent a little griping in the belly, foreseen as possible to happen, it may be, three years after. But besides, this objection supposes a disease almost as earnestly to be cured as this of the main question; for it represents a man keeping company with lewd and debauched persons, spending his time in vanity, drunken societies, or engaged in lust, or placing his scene amongst persons apt to do affronts and unworthy misdemeanours; and indeed an affront, an injury, a blow, or a loud disgrace, is not the consequent of not fighting, but a punishment for engaging in loose, baser, and vicious company. If the gallants of the age would find an honest and a noble employment, or would be delicate in the choice of their friends and company, or would be severe in taking accounts of themselves and of their time, would live as becomes persons wise and innocent, that is, like christians, they would soon perceive themselves removed far from injuries, and yet farther from trouble, when such levities of mischance or folly should intervene. But suppose a man affronted or disgraced, it is considerable whether the man deserved it or not. If he did, let him entertain it for his punishment, and use it for an instrument of correction and humility; if he did not, as an instrument of fortitude and despite of lower things. But to venture lives to abolish a past act, is madness, unless in both those lives there was not good enough to be esteemed greater, and of better value, than the light affront had in it of misery and trouble. Certainly those persons are very unfortunate, in whose lives much more pleasure is not than there is mischief in a light blow, or a lighter affront, from a vain or an angry person. But suppose there were not, yet how can fighting or killing my adversary wipe off my aspersion, or take off my blow, or prove that I did not lie? For it is but an ill argument to say, If I dare kill him, then I did not lie; or if I dare fight, then he struck me not; or if I dare venture damnation, then I am an honourable person. And yet further, who gave me power over my own life, or over the life of another, that I shall venture my own, and offer to take his? God and God's vicegerent only are the lords of lives; who made us judges, and princes, or gods? and if we be not such, we are murderers and villains.

[g] Ἐι γὰρ σ' ἔμελλεν, ὡς σὺ φῄς, κτείνειν πόσις,
Χρὴ καὶ σὲ μέλλειν, ὡς χρόνος δῄθεν παρῆν.—Eurip.
Quis hoc statuit unquam, aut cui concedi sine summo omnium periculo potest, ut eum jure potuerit occidere, à quo metuisse se dicat, ne ipse posteriùs occideretur?—Cicero.

When Moses would have parted the duellists that fought in Egypt, the injurious person asked him, "Who made thee a judge or ruler over us? wilt thou kill me, as thou didst the Egyptian yesterday?" meaning, he had no power to kill, none to judge of life and death, unless he had been made a ruler. Yea, but flesh and blood cannot endure a blow or a disgrace. Grant that too; but take this into the account, "Flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God." And yet, besides this, those persons have but a tender stock of reason, and wisdom, and patience, who have not discourse enough to make them bear an injury,[h] which the philosophy of the gentiles, without the light of christianity, taught them to tolerate with so much equanimity and dispassionate entertainment. That person is not a man, who knows not how to suffer the inconvenience of an accident and indiscretion of light persons; or if he could not, yet certainly that is a mad impatience, when a man, to remedy the pain of a drop of scalding water, shall drench himself in the liquid flames of pitch and a bituminous bath.

7. Truth is, to fight a duel is a thing that all kingdoms are bound to restrain with highest severity; it is a consociation of many the worst acts that a person ordinarily can be guilty of; it is want of charity, of justice, of humility, of trust in God's providence; it is therefore pride, and murder, and injustice, and infinite unreasonableness, and nothing of a christian, nothing of excuse, nothing of honour is in it, if God and wise men be admitted judges of the lists. And it would be considered, that every one that fights a duel must reckon himself as dead or dying (for however any man flatters himself by saying he will not kill, if he could avoid it; yet rather than be killed he will, and to the danger of being killed his own act exposes him): now, is it a good posture for a man to die with a sword in his hand, thrust at his brother's breast, with a purpose, either explicit or implicit, to have killed him? Can a man die twice, that, in case he miscarries and is damned for the first ill dying, he may mend his fault, and die better the next time? Can his vain, imaginary, and fantastic shadow of reputation, make him recompence for the disgrace and confusion of face, and pains and horrors of eternity? Is there no such thing as forgiving injuries, nothing of the discipline of Jesus in our spirits? are we called by the name of Christ, and have nothing in us but the spirit of Cain, and Nimrod, and Joab? If neither reason nor religion can rule us, neither interest nor safety can determine us, neither life nor eternity can move us, neither God nor wise men be sufficient judges of honour to us; then our damnation is just, but it is heavy; our fall is certain, but it is cheap, base, and inglorious. And let not the vanities, or the gallants of the world, slight this friendly monition, rejecting it with a scorn, because it is talking like a divine: it were no disparagement if they would do so too, and believe accordingly; and they would find a better return of honour in the crowns of eternity by talking like a divine, than by dying like a fool; by living in imitation and obedience to the laws of the holy Jesus, than by perishing or committing murder, or by attempting it, or by venturing it, like a weak, impotent, passionate, and brutish person. Upon this chapter it is sometimes asked, whether a virgin may not kill her ravisher to defend her chastity? Concerning which, as we have no special and distinct warrant, so there is, in reason and analogy of the gospel, much for the negative. For since his act alone cannot make her criminal, and is no more than a wound in my body, or a civil or a natural inconvenience, it is unequal to take a life in exchange for a lesser injury, and it is worse that I take it myself. Some great examples we find in story, and their names are remembered in honour; but we can make no judgment of them, but that their zeal was reprovable for its intemperance, though it had excellency in the matter of the passion.

8. But if we may not secure our honour, or be revenged for injuries by the sword, may we not crave the justice of the law, and implore the vengeance of the judge, who is appointed "for vengeance against evil doers?" and the judge being the king's officer, and the king God's vicegerent, it is no more than imploring God's hand; and that is "giving place to wrath," which St. Paul speaks of, that is, permitting all to the Divine justice. To this I answer, that it is not lawful to go to law for every occasion or slighter injury, because it is very distant from the mercies, forgiveness, and gentleness of a christian, to contest for trifles;[i] and it is certain that the injuries, or evil, or charges of trouble and expense, will be more vexatious and afflictive to the person contested, than a small instance of wrong is to the person injured. And it is a great intemperance of anger and impotence of spirit, a covetousness and impatience, to appeal to the judge for determination concerning a lock of camels' hair, or a goat's beard; I mean any thing that is less than the gravity of laws, or the solemnity of a court, and that does not outweigh the inconveniences of a suit. But this we are to consider in the expression of our blessed Saviour, "If a man will sue thee at the law, and take thy cloak, let him have thy coat also."[k] Which words are a particular instance in pursuit of the general precept, "Resist not," or "avenge not, evil." The primitive christians (as it happens in the first fervours of a discipline) were sometimes severe in observation of the letter, not subtly distinguishing counsels from precepts, but swallowing all the words of Christ without chewing or discrimination. They abstained from tribunals,[l] unless they were

[h] Οὗτος κράτιστός ἐστ' ἀνήρ, ——————
"Οστις ἀδικεῖσθαι πλεῖστ' ἐπίσταται βροτῶν.
Menand.

[i] Σχέτλιοι ἄνθρωποι ——————
Ποίων ἐκ τ' ἐρίδων καὶ λεσχομάχων πεπλάνησθε
Ἄνθρωποι, κενεῆς οἰήσεος ἔμπλεοι ἀσκοί.
Timon Phlias.

Inhumanum verbum est, at quidem pro justo receptum, ultio; et à contumeliâ non differt nisi ordine. Qui dolorem regerit, tantùm excusatiùs peccat.—Seneca, lib. ii. de Irâ, c. 32.

[k] Matt. v. 40.

[l] Οὐ δικάζονται τοῖς ἁρπάζουσι.—Athenag.

forced thither by persecutors; but went not thither to repeat their goods. And if we consider suits of law as they are wrapped in circumstances of action and practice, with how many subtleties and arts they are managed, how pleadings are made mercenary, and that it will be hard to find right counsel that shall advise you to desist, if your cause be wrong, (and therefore there is great reason to distrust every question, since, if it be never so wrong, we shall meet advocates to encourage us and plead for it,[m]) what danger of miscarriages, of uncharitableness, anger, and animosities, what desires to prevail, what care and fearfulness of the event, what innumerable temptations do intervene, how many sins are secretly insinuated in our hearts and actions; if a suit were of itself never so lawful, it would concern the duty of a christian to avoid it, as he prays against temptations, and cuts off the opportunities of a sin. It is not lawful for a christian to sue his brother at the law, unless he can be patient if he loses, and charitable if he be wronged, and can prosecute his end without any mixture of covetousness, or desires to prevail without envy, or can believe himself wrong when his judge says he is, or can submit to peace when his just cause is oppressed, and rejected, and condemned, and, without pain or regret, can sit down by the loss of his right, and of his pains and his money. And if he can do all this, what need he go to law? He may with less trouble and less danger take the loss singly, and expect God's providence for reparation, than disentitle himself to that by his own frowardness, and take the loss when it comes laden with many circumstances of trouble.

9. But however by accident it may become unlawful to go to law in a just cause, or in any, yet by this precept we are not forbidden. To go to law for revenge we are simply forbidden, that is, to return evil for evil; and therefore all those suits which are for vindictive sentences,[n] not for reparative, are directly criminal. To follow a thief to death, for spoiling my goods, is extremely unreasonable and uncharitable; for as there is no proportion between my goods and his life, (and therefore I demand it to his evil and injury,) so the putting him to death repairs not my estate: the first makes it in me to be unjust, the latter declares me malicious and revengeful. If I demand an eye for an eye, his eye extinguished will not enlighten mine; and therefore, to prosecute him to such purposes, is to resist or render evil with evil, directly against Christ's sermon. But if the postulation of sentence be in order only to restore myself, we find it permitted by St. Paul, who, when for the scandal's sake, he forbade "going to law before unbelievers," and for the danger and temptation's sake, and the latent irregularity, which is certainly appendant to ordinary litigations, he is angry indefinitely with them that go to law; yet he adviseth that christian arbitrators be appointed for decision of emergent questions. And therefore, when the supreme authority hath appointed and regularly established an arbitrator, the permission is the same. St. Paul[o] is angry, that among christians there should be suits, but it is therefore he is chiefly angry, because christians do wrong: they who should rather suffer wrong, yet that they should do it, and defraud their brother, which in some sense enforces suits; that is it he highly blames. But when injustice is done, and a man is in a considerable degree defrauded, then it is permitted to him to repeat his own before christian arbitrators, whether chosen by private consent or public authority; for that circumstance makes no essential alteration in the question: but then this must be done with as much simplicity and unmingled design as is possible, without any desire of rendering evil to the person of the offender, without arts of heightening the charge, without prolongation, devices, and arts of vexation, without anger and animosities; and then, although accidentally there is some appendant charge to the offending person, that is not accounted upon the stock of revenge, because it was not designed, and is not desired, and is cared for to prevent it as much as may be, and therefore offer was made of private and unchargeable arbitrators; and this being refused, the charge and accidental evil, if it be less than the loss of my sufferance and injury, must be reckoned to the necessities of affairs, and put upon the stock of his injustice, and will not affix a guilt upon the actor. I say, this is true, when the actor hath used all means to accord it without charge, and, when he is refused, manages it with as little as he can, and when it is nothing of his desire, but something of his trouble, that he cannot have his own without the lesser accidental evil to the offender, and that the question is great and weighty in his proportion; then a suit of law is of itself lawful.[p] But then let it be remembered, how many ways afterwards it may become unlawful; and I have no more to add in this article but the saying of the son of Sirach, "He that loves danger shall perish in it." And certainly he had need be an angel that manages a suit innocently; and he that hath so excellent a spirit, as with innocence to run through the infinite temptations of a law-suit, in all probability hath so much holiness as to suffer the injury, and so much prudence as to avoid the danger: and therefore, nothing but a very great defalcation, or ruin of a man's estate, will, from the beginning to the end, justify such a controversy. When the man is put to it so, that he cannot do some other duty without venturing in this, then the grace of God is sufficient for him; but he that enters lightly shall walk dangerously, and a thousand to one but he will fall foully. "It is utterly a fault among you," said St. Paul, "because

[m] Nam lucrosæ hujus et sanguinantis eloquentiæ usus recens, et malis moribus natus, atque in locum teli repertus. QUINTIL. de Orator.

His qui bene facta canerent, non qui malè admissa defenderent, augustior honor apud deos.—Idem.

[n] Nova lex non se vindicat ultione gladii, i. e. privatus christianus vindictam nunquam petit.—TERTULL.

[o] 1 Cor. vi. 1, &c.

[p] Ὦ Πέρση, σὺ δὲ ταῦτα τεῷ ἐνικάτθεο θυμῷ,
Μὴ δὲ σ' ἔρις κακόχαρτος ἀπ' ἔργου θυμὸν ἐρύκοι
Νείκε' ὀπιπτεύοντ', ἀγορῆς ἐπακουὸν ἐόντα·
Ὥρη γὰρ τ' ὀλίγη πέλεται νεικέων τ' ἀγορῶν τε
Ὅτινι μὴ βίος ἔνδον ἐπηετανὸς κατάκειται
Ὡραῖος——————HESIOD. Ἔργ. καὶ Ἡμερ. lib. 1.

ye go to law one with another."[q] It is not always a crime, but ever a fault, and an irregularity, a recession from christian perfection, and an entertaining of a danger, which though we escape through, yet it was a fault to have entered into it, when we might have avoided it. And even then when it is "lawful" for us, it is "not expedient."[r] For so the apostle sums up his reprehension concerning christians going to law: We must "rather take wrong, rather suffer ourselves to be defrauded;"[s] and when we cannot bear the burden of the loss, then, indeed, we are permitted to appeal to christian judges; but then there are so many cautions to be observed, that, it may be, the remedy is worse than the disease. I only observe this one thing, that St. Paul permits it only in the instance of defraudation, or matter of interest; such as are defending of widows, and orphans, and churches, which, in estimation of law, are, by way of fiction, reckoned to be in pupilage and minority; add also repeating our own interests, when our necessities, or the support of our family and relatives, requires it: for all these are cases of charity or duty respectively. But besides the matter of defraudation, we find no instance expressed, nor any equality and parallel of reason, to permit christians in any case to go to law; because, in other things, the sentence is but vindictive, and cannot repair us; and therefore demanding justice is a rendering evil in the proper matter of revenge. Concerning which I know no scruple but in an action of scandal and ill report. But because an innocent and a holy life will force light out of darkness, and humility, and patience, and waiting upon God, will bring glory out of shame; I suppose he who goes to law to regain his credit, attempts the cure by incompetent remedies: if the accusation be public, the law will call him to an account, and then he is upon his defence, and must acquit himself with meekness and sincerity; but this allows not him to be the actor, for then it is rather a design of revenge than a proper deletery of his disgrace, and purgative of the calumny. For if the accusation can be proved, it was no calumny; if it be not proved, the person is not always innocent, and to have been accused leaves something foul in his reputation: and therefore, he that by law makes it more public, propagates his own disgrace, and sends his shame farther than his innocence, and the crime will go whither his absolution shall not arrive.

10. If it be yet further questioned, whether it be lawful to pray for a revenge, or a punishment upon the offender, (I reckon them all one; he that prays for punishment of him that did him personal injury, cannot easily be supposed to separate the punishment from his own revenge,) I answer, that although God be the avenger of all our wrongs, yet it were fit for us to have the affections of brethren, not the designs and purposes of a judge, but leave them to him to whom they are proper. When, in the bitterness of soul, an oppressed person curses sadly, and prays for vengeance, the calamity of the man and the violence of his enemy hasten a curse, and ascertain it. But whatever excuses the greatness of the oppression may make, I know not; but the bitterness of the spirit, besides that it is pitiable as it is a passion, yet it is violent and less christian, as it is active and sends forth prayers. Woe is pronounced "to them by whom the offence cometh;" yet we must "beware of offences," because by them we are engaged in a sin: and he that prays for a revenge hath a revengeful spirit, however it be restrained by laws and exterior tendernesses, from acting such dire purposes. And he that prays for revenge may indeed procure a justice to be done upon the injurious person; but oftentimes it happens then to fall on him when we least wish it, when we also have a conjunct interest in the other's preservation and escape: God so punishing the first wrong, that we also may smart for our uncharitable wishes. For the ground of all this discourse is, that it is part of christian charity to forgive injuries:[t] which forgiveness of the injury, although it may reasonably enough stand with my fair and innocent requiring of my own, which goes no farther than a fair repetition; yet in no case can it stand with the acting and desiring revenge, which also, in the formality of revenge, can have no pretence of charity, because it is ineffective to my restitution. This discourse concerns private persons; whether it concern the question of war, and how far, is not proper for this consideration.

OF ALMS.—PART II.

1. But christian charity hath its effect also in benefits as well as gentleness and innocence: "Give to him that asketh, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away. But when thou doest thine alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth."[a] These are the precepts of the Lord, for the substance and the manner of alms, for the quantity and freeness of the donative, and the simplicity of him that gives; to which add those other words of his, "Sell your possessions, and give alms."[b] This precept, with its circumstances, was intended as a defensative against covetousness and prodigality, and a suppletory to make up the wants, and to make even the breaches, of mankind: in which we shall best understand our obligation, if we consider in what proportion we must give alms, and to what persons, and in what manner.

2. First: For the quantity, we shall best take an estimate of it, if we remember the portion which God allows to christians: "having food and raiment, let us be content with it:"[c] and our blessed Saviour, at the latter end of this sermon, stirs us up to confidence in God, and not to doubt our provisions, by telling that God "feeds the ravens, and clothes the lilies, and he will much rather do it to us," he will clothe us and feed us; no more is in the promise, no more is in our need: and, therefore, whatsoever

[q] 1 Cor. vi. 7. Ὅλως ἥττημα, not παράπτωμα.
[r] Ver. 12.
[s] Ver. 7.

[t] Injuriam qui tulit, oblivisci potest; qui fecit, nunquam. —Tacit.
[a] Matt. v. 42. vi. 3. [b] Luke xii. 33. [c] 1 Tim. vi. 8.

is, beside our needs, natural and personal, that is, proportioning our needs to the condition of our life, and exigence of our calling, and quality of our person, all that can be spared from what we modestly and temperately spend in our support, and the supply of our families, and other necessary incidents, all that is to be spent in charity or religion. He defrauds the poor of their right, who detains from them beyond his own necessary, prudent, and convenient supplies,[d] saith St. Hierom: and this is intended to be a retrenchment of all vain expenses, costly feasts, rich clothes, pompous retinue, and such excrescences of expense which, of themselves, serve no end of piety or just policy, but, by wise and temperate persons, are esteemed unnecessary, and without which the dignity and just value of the person may still be retained. Whatsoever is vainly spent was the portion of the poor;[e] whatsoever we lose in idle gaming, revelling, and wantonness or prodigality, was designed, by Christ, to refresh his own bowels, to fill the bellies of the poor; whatsoever lies in our repository useless and superfluous, all that is the poor man's inheritance: and certainly there is not any greater baseness than to suffer a man to perish, or be in extreme want of that which God gave me for him, and beyond my own needs. It is unthankfulness to God, it is unmercifulness to the poor, it is improvidence to ourselves,[f] it is unfaithfulness in the dispensation of the money of which God made him but the steward, and his chest the bank for the exchange and issuing it to the indigent. And he that is unmerciful and unjust is extremely unlike God. But in taking this estimate concerning our excrescences, we are to proceed according to the rules of prudence, not making determinations in grains and scruples, but in the greater actions and accountable proportions of our estates. And if any man, seeing great necessities of indigent and calamitous persons, shall give beyond his ability,[g] he had the Philippians for his precedent, and he hath God engaged for his payment, and a greater share in heaven for his reward. Only this; as we are to provide for ourselves, so also for our family, and the relatives of our charge and nearer endearments, not only with a provision of the present day's entertainment, but also for all nearer, probable, foreseen, and expected events, such as are portions for our children, dowries for our daughters: but this must not be extended to care and reservations for all possible and far distant events; but so much is to be permitted to the Divine providence as our present duty gives leave. In which, although a prudent guide and a sober reason are to make application to practice, yet the rule in general is, that by so much we are to relieve the poor, as we can deduct from such a portion of good things as God permits us to use for our own support, and reasonable and temporal conveniences of our person and condition; ever remembering, that if we increase in our estate, we also should increase in charity, that in this also may be verified what is written, "He that had much had nothing over, and he that had little had no lack." There is, in the quantity of these donatives, some latitude; but if we "sow sparingly," or if we scatter plentifully, so we shall reap; only we must be careful that no extreme necessity or biting want lies upon any poor man, whom we can relieve, without bringing such a want upon ourselves, which is less than the permissions of fortune which the mercies of God have permitted to us, that is, "food and raiment" proper for us. Under "food and raiment" all the necessaries of our life are to be understood: whatsoever is more than this is counsel and perfection; for which a proportionable reward is deposited in the treasures of eternity.

3. Secondly: If question be made concerning the persons, who are to be the object of our alms, our rule is plain and easy; for nothing is required in the person suscipient and capable of alms, but that he be in misery and want, and unable to relieve himself. This last clause I insert in pursuance of that caution given to the church of Thessalonica by St. Paul, "If any one will not work, neither let him eat;"[h] for we must be careful that our charity, which is intended to minister to poor men's needs, do not minister to idleness and the love of beggary, and a wandering, useless, and unprofitable life. But, abating this, there is no other consideration that can exempt any needy person from participation of your charity; not, though he be your enemy;[i] (for that is it which our blessed Saviour means in the appendix of this precept, "Love your enemies," that is, according to the exposition of the apostle, "if thine enemy hunger, feed him, if he thirst, give him drink;") not, though he be an unbeliever; not, though he be a vicious person;[k] provided only that the vice be such to which your relief ministers no fuel, and adds no flame; and if the mere necessities of his nature be supplied, it will be a fair security against the danger; but if the vice be in the scene of the body, all freer comforts are to be denied him, because they are but incentives of sin, and angels of darkness. This I the rather insert, that the pride and supercilious austerities of some persons become not to them an instrument of excuse from ministering to needy persons, upon pretence their own sins brought them into that condition. For though the causes of our calamities are many times great secrets of Providence, yet suppose the poverty of the man was the effect of his prodigality, or other baseness,

[d] Aliena rapere convincitur, qui ultra sibi necessaria retinere probatur.—GRATIAN. Dist. 42.

[e] Cur eget indignus quisquam te divite?—HOR. lib. ii. Sat. 2. James v. 2, 3.

[f] Callidus effractâ nummos fur auferat arcâ:
Quas dederis, solas semper habebis opes.—MARTIAL.

[g] Hoc nam est maximum incentivum misericordiæ, ut compatiamur alienis calamitatibus quantum possumus, imò interdum plus quàm possumus.—S. AMBR. lib. ii. de Offic.

[h] 2 Thess. iii. 10.

[i] "Οταν δέῃ συγκινδυνεῦσαι φίλῳ ἢ πατρίδι, μὴ μαντεύεσθαι, εἰ συγκινδυνευτέον.
——— καὶ γὰρ ὁ Πύθιος ἐξέβαλε τοῦ ναοῦ τὸν οὐ βοηθήσαντα ἀναιρουμένῳ τῷ φίλῳ.—EPICT. c. 39.

[k] Herodes Atticus, vir Consularis, quum palliatus quidam specie philosophi stipem emendicâsset, respondit, Demus huic aliquid æris cujusmodi est, tanquam homines, non tanquam homini.—A. GELL. lib. ix. c. 2.

it matters not, as to our duty, how he came into it, but where he is; lest we also be denied a visit in our sicknesses, and a comfort in our sorrow, or a counsel in our doubts, or aid in any distress, upon pretence that such sadness was procured by our sins: and ten to one but it was so. "Do good to all," saith the apostle, "but especially to the family of faith;" for to them our charity is most proper and proportioned: to all, viz. who are in need, and cannot relieve themselves; in which number persons that can work are not to be accounted. So that if it be necessary to observe an order in our charity, that is, when we cannot supply and suffice for all our opportunities of mercy, then "let not the brethren of our Lord go away ashamed;" and in other things observe the order and propriety of our own relations, and where there is otherwise no difference, the degree of the necessity is first to be considered.[1] This also, if the necessity be final and extreme, whatever the man be, he is first to be relieved, before the lesser necessities of the best persons or most holy poor. But the proper objects of our charity are old persons, sick or impotent, laborious and poor housekeepers, widows and orphans, people oppressed or persecuted for the cause of righteousness, distressed strangers, captives and abused slaves, prisoners for debt. To these we must be liberal, whether they be holy or unholy, remembering that we are sons of that Father who makes the dew of heaven to drop upon the dwellings of the righteous and the fields of sinners.

4. Thirdly: The manner of giving alms is an office of christian prudence; for in what instances we are to exemplify our charity, we must be determined by our own powers, and others' needs. The Scripture reckons entertaining strangers, visiting the sick, going to prisons, feeding and clothing the hungry and naked; to which, by the exigence of the poor, and the analogy of charity, many other are to be added. The holy Jesus, in the very precept, instanced in lending money to them that need to borrow; and he adds, "looking for nothing again," that is, if they be unable to pay it.[m] Forgiving debts is a great instance of mercy, and a particular of excellent relief; but to imprison men for debt, when it is certain they are not able to pay it, and by that prison will be far more disabled, is an uncharitableness next to the cruelties of savages, and at infinite distance from the mercies of the holy Jesus.

[1] ——— nunc sportula primo
Limine parva sedet turbæ rapienda togatæ.
Ille tamen faciem priùs inspicit, et trepidat ne
Suppositus venias, et falso nomine poscas.
JUVEN. Satyr. 1.

Οἱ τὰς ὀφρῦς αἴροντες ὡς ἀβέλτεροι,
Καὶ Σκέψομαι, λέγοντες· ἄνθρωπος γὰρ ὢν
Σκέψῃ σὺ περὶ τοῦ, δυστυχὴς ὅταν τύχῃ.—MENAND.

[m] Amicitiam si ad fructum nostrum referemus, non ad illius commoda quem diligimus, non erit ista amicitia, sed mercatura quædam utilitatum suarum: prata, et arva, et pecudum greges diliguntur isto modo, quòd fructus ex eis capiuntur; hominum charitas et amicitia gratuita est.—CICER. de Nat. Deor. lib. i.

[n] Qui ne tuberibus propriis offendat amicum
Postulat, ignoscat verrucis illius: æquum est
Peccatis veniam poscentem, reddere rursus.
HORAT. lib. i. Sat. 3.

Ne judices proximum, donec ad ejus locum pertingas.—Prov Judæor.

——— eheu
Quàm temerè in nosmet legem sancimus iniquam!
Nam vitiis nemo sine nascitur; optimus ille est
Qui minimis urgetur. HORAT. ibid.

OF NOT JUDGING.—PART III.

ANOTHER instance of charity our great Master inserted in this sermon, "not to judge our brother:" and this is a charity so cheap and so reasonable, that it requires nothing of us but silence in our spirits. We may perform this duty at the charge of a negative; if we meddle not with other men's affairs, we shall do them no wrong, and purchase to ourselves a peace, and be secured the rather from the unerring sentence of a severe Judge. But this interdict forbids only such judging as is ungentle and uncharitable: in criminal causes, let us find all the ways to alleviate the burden of the man by just excuses, by extenuating or lessening accidents, by abatement of incident circumstances, by gentle sentences, and whatsoever can do relief to the person, that his spirit be not exasperated, that the crime be not the parent of impudence, that he be not insulted on, that he be invited to repentance, and, by such sweetnesses, he be led to his restitution. This also, in questions of doubts, obliges us to determine to the more favourable sense; and we also do need the same mercies, and, therefore, should do well, by our own rigour, not to disentitle ourselves to such possibilities and reserves of charity.[n] But it is foul and base, by detraction and iniquity, to blast the reputation of an honourable action, and the fair name of virtue with a calumny. But this duty is also a part of the grace of justice and of humility, and, by its relation and kindred to so many virtues, is furnished with so many arguments of amity and endearment.

THE PRAYER.

Holy and merciful Jesus, who art the great principle and the instrument of conveying to us the charity and mercies of eternity, who didst love us when we were enemies, forgive us when we were debtors, recover us when we were dead, ransom us when we were slaves, relieve us when we were poor, and naked, and wandering, and full of sadness and necessities; give us the grace of charity, that we may be pitiful and compassionate of the needs of our necessitous brethren, that we may be apt to relieve them, and that, according to our duty and possibilities, we may rescue them from their calamities. Give us courteous, affable, and liberal souls; let us, by thy example, forgive our debtors, and love our enemies, and do to them offices of civility, and tenderness, and relief: always propounding thee for our pattern, and thy

mercies for our precedent, and thy precepts for our rule, and thy Spirit for our guide; that we, showing mercy here, may receive the mercies of eternity by thy merits, and by thy charities, and dispensation, O holy and merciful Jesus. Amen.

DISCOURSE XII.

Of the second additional Precept of Christ; namely, of Prayer.

1. THE soul of a christian is the house of God: "Ye are God's building,"[a] saith St. Paul; but the house of God is the house of prayer: and, therefore, prayer is the work of the soul, whose organs are intended for instruments of the Divine praises; and when every stop and pause of those instruments is but the conclusion of a collect, and every breathing is a prayer, then the body becomes a temple, and the soul is the sanctuary, and more private recess, and place of intercourse. Prayer is the great duty and the greatest privilege of a christian; it is his intercourse with God, his sanctuary in troubles, his remedy for sins, his cure of griefs, and, as St. Gregory calls it, "it is the principal instrument whereby we minister to God, in execution of the decrees of eternal predestination;" and those things which God intends for us, we bring to ourselves by the mediation of holy prayers. Prayer is the "ascent of the mind to God, and a petitioning for such things as we need for our support and duty."[b] It is an abstract and summary of christian religion. Prayer is an act of religion and Divine worship,[c] confessing his power and his mercy; it celebrates his attributes, and confesses his glories, and reveres his person, and implores his aid, and gives thanks for his blessings: it is an act of humility, condescension, and dependence, expressed in the prostration of our bodies, and humiliation of our spirits: it is an act of charity, when we pray for others; it is an act of repentance, when it confesses and begs pardon for our sins, and exercises every grace according to the design of the man, and the matter of the prayer. So that there will be less need to amass arguments to invite us to this duty; every part is an excellence, and every end of it is a blessing, and every design is a motive, and every need is an impulsive to this holy office. Let us but remember how many needs we have, at how cheap a rate we may obtain their remedies, and yet how honourable the employment is, to go to God with confidence, and to fetch our supplies with easiness and joy; and then, without further preface, we may address ourselves to the understanding of that duty by which we imitate the employment of angels and beatified spirits, by which we ascend to God in spirit while we remain on earth, and God descends on earth while he yet resides in heaven, sitting there on the throne of his kingdom.

2. Our first inquiry must be concerning the matter of our prayers; for our desires are not to be the rule of our prayers, unless reason and religion be the rule of our desires. The old heathens prayed to their gods for such things which they were ashamed to name publicly before men;[d] and these were their private prayers, which they durst not, for their indecency or iniquity, make public. And, indeed, sometimes the best men ask of God things not unlawful in themselves, yet very hurtful to them: and, therefore, as by the Spirit of God and right reason we are taught, in general, what is lawful to be asked; so it is still to be submitted to God, when we have asked lawful things, to grant to us in kindness, or to deny us in mercy: after all the rules that can be given us, we not being able, in many instances, to judge for ourselves, unless also we could certainly pronounce concerning future contingencies. But the Holy Ghost being now sent upon the church, and the rule of Christ being left to his church, together with his form of prayer, taught and prescribed to his disciples, we have sufficient instruction for the matter of our prayers, so far as concerns the lawfulness or unlawfulness. And the rule is easy and of no variety. 1. For we are bound to pray for all things that concern our duty, all that we are bound to labour for; such as are glory and grace, necessary assistances of the Spirit, and rewards spiritual, heaven, and heavenly things. 2. Concerning those things which we may, with safety, hope for, but are not matter of duty to us, we may lawfully testify our hope and express our desires by petition; but if, in their particulars, they are under no express promise, but only conveniences of our life and person, it is only lawful to pray for them under condition, that they may conform to God's will and our duty, as they are good, and placed in the best order of eternity. Therefore, 1. For spiritual blessings let our prayers be particularly importunate, perpetual, and persevering: 2. For temporal blessings let them be generally short,[e] conditional, and modest: 3. And whatsoever things are of a mixed nature, and more spiritual than riches, and less necessary than graces, such as are gifts and exterior aids, we may pray for them as we may desire them, and as we may expect them; that is, with more confidence and less restraint than in the

[a] 1 Cor. iii. 9.

[b] Ἀνάβασις νοῦ πρὸς Θεὸν, καὶ αἴτησις τῶν προσηκόντων παρὰ Θεοῦ.—DAMASC. lib. iii. Orthodox. Fid.

[c] Qui fingit sacros auro vel marmore vultus,
Non facit ille deos: qui rogat, ille facit.

[d] Cujusmodi ridet Lucianus in Icaro-Menippo: Ὦ Ζεῦ, τὸ βασιλεῦσαι μοι γένοιτο· ὦ Ζεῦ, τὰ κρόμμυα μοι φῦναι καὶ τὰ σκόροδα· ὦ Ζεῦ, τὸν πατέρα μοι ταχέως ἀποθανεῖν· ὁ δὲ τις ἂν φαίη, εἶθε κληρονομήσαι με τῆς γυναικός· εἶθε λάθοιμι ἐπιβουλεύσας τῷ ἀδελφῷ· γένοιτο μοι νικῆσαι τὴν δίκην, στεφθῆναι τὰ ὀλύμπια· τῶν πλεόντων ὁ μὲν Βορέαν ηὔχετο ἐπιπνεῦσαι, ὁ δὲ Νότον· ὁ δὲ γεωργὸς ἤτει ὑετὸν, ὁ δὲ γναφεὺς ἥλιον.

[e] ——— Si tacito mala vota susurro
Concipimus ——— Pulchra Laverna,
Da mihi fallere, da justum sanctumque videri;
Noctem peccatis, et fraudibus objice nubem.—HORAT
——— Si consilium vis,
Permittes ipsis expendere numinibus, quid
Conveniat nobis, rebusque sit utile nostris;
Nam pro jucundis aptissima quæque dabunt dii.
JUVENAL. Sat. x. 346.
Exorari in perniciem rogantium, sæva benignitas est.
——— Multa petentibus
Desunt multa. Bene est, cui Deus obtulit
Parcâ, quod satis est, manu. HOR. lib. iii. Od. 16.

matter of temporal requests, but with more reservedness, and less boldness of petition, than when we pray for the graces of sanctification. In the first case we are bound to pray; in the second, it is only lawful under certain conditions; in the third, it becomes to us an act of zeal, nobleness, and christian prudence. But the matter of our prayers is best taught us in the form our Lord taught his disciples; which, because it is short, mysterious, and like the treasures of the Spirit, full of wisdom and latent senses, it is not improper to draw forth those excellencies, which are intended and signified by every petition; that, by so excellent an authority, we may know what it is lawful to beg of God.[f]

3. "Our Father, which art in heaven." The address reminds us of many parts of our duty. "If God be our Father, where is" his fear, and reverence, and obedience? "If ye were Abraham's children,[g] ye would do the works of Abraham;" and, "Ye are of your father, the devil, for his works ye do." Let us not dare to call him Father, if we be rebels and enemies; but if we be obedient, then we know he is our Father, and will give us a child's portion, and the inheritance of sons. But it is observable, that Christ, here speaking concerning private prayer, does describe it in a form of plural signification; to tell us, that we are to draw into the communication of our prayers all those who are confederated in the common relation of sons to the same Father. "Which art in heaven,"[h] tells us where our hopes and our hearts must be fixed, whither our desires and our prayers must tend. *Sursum corda;* "Where our treasure is, there must our hearts be also."

4. "Hallowed be thy name." That is, Let thy name, thy essence, and glorious attributes, be honoured and adored in all the world, believed by faith, loved by charity, celebrated with praises, thanked with eucharist; and let thy name be hallowed in us, as it is in itself. Thy name being called upon us, let us walk worthy of that calling; that "our light may shine before men, that they, seeing our good works, may glorify thee, our Father, which art in heaven." In order, also, to the sanctification of thy name, grant that all our praises, hymns, eucharistical remembrances, and representments of thy glories, may be useful, blessed, and effectual, for the dispersing thy fame, and advancing thy honour over all the world. This is a direct and formal act of worshipping and adoration. The name of God is representative of God himself, and it signifies: Be thou worshipped and adored, be thou thanked and celebrated, with honour and eucharist.

5. "Thy kingdom come." That is, As thou hast caused to be preached and published the coming of thy kingdom, the peace and truth, the revelation and glories, of the gospel; so let it come verily and effectually to us, and all the world; that thou mayest truly reign in our spirits, exercising absolute dominion, subduing all thine enemies, ruling in our faculties, in the understanding by faith, in the will by charity, in the passions by mortification, in the members by a chaste and right use of the parts. And as it was more particularly, and in the letter, proper at the beginning of Christ's preaching, when he also taught the prayer, that God would hasten the coming of the gospel to all the world; so now also, and ever it will be, in its proportion, necessary and pious, to pray that it may come still; making greater progress in the world, extending itself where yet it is not, and intending it where it is already; that the kingdom of Christ may not only be in us, in name and form, and honourable appellatives, but in effect and power. This petition, in the first ages of christianity, was not expounded to signify a prayer for Christ's second coming; because, the gospel not being preached to all the world, they prayed for the delay of the day of judgment, that Christ's kingdom upon earth might have its proper increment: but since then, every age, as it is more forward in time, so it is more earnest in desire, to accomplish the intermedial prophecies, that the kingdom of God the Father might come in glories infinite. And, indeed, the kingdom of grace being in order to the kingdom of glory, this, as it is principally to be desired, so may possibly be intended chiefly: which, also, is the more probable, because the address of this prayer being to God the Father, it is proper to observe, that the kingdom of grace, or of the gospel, is called the kingdom of the Son;[i] and that of glory, in the style of the Scripture, is the kingdom of the Father. St. German, patriarch of Constantinople, expounds it with some little difference, but not ill: "Thy kingdom come," that is, let thy Holy Spirit come into us; for "the kingdom of heaven is within us," saith the holy Scripture: and so it intimates our desires, that the promise of the Father, and the prophecies of old, and the Holy Ghost the Comforter, may come upon us. Let that "anointing from above" descend upon us, whereby we may be anointed kings and priests, in a spiritual kingdom and priesthood, by a holy chrism.

6. "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." That is, the whole economy and dispensation of thy providence, be the guide of the world, and the measure of our desire; that we be patient in all accidents, conformable to God's will, both in doing and in suffering; submitting to changes, and even to persecutions, and doing all God's will: which because without God's aid we cannot do, therefore we beg it of him by prayer; but by his aid we are confident we may do it, in the manner of angelical obedience; that is, promptly, readily, cheerfully, and with all our faculties. Or thus: As the angels in heaven serve thee with harmony, concord, and peace;

[f] Oratio hæc, quantum substringitur verbis, tantum diffunditur sensibus.—Tertull. Evangelii Breviarum. Idem l. de Orat. c. 1.

Si tamen rectè et congruenter oramus, nihil aliud dicere possumus quàm quod in Oratione Dominicâ continetur. —S. Aug. ad Frat. in Erem.

[g] Vir bonus vera Dei progenies.—Senec. de Provident.

Καὶ τοῦ μὲν γένος ἐσμέν.—Menand.

Hoc donum excedit omne donum, ut Deus hominem vocet filium.—Leo. Ser. de Nativ.

Matt. xxiii. 8. Eph. iv. 6.

[h] Nihil nos delectet in infimis, qui Patrem habemus in cœlis —Leo. Ser. de Ascens.

[i] Colos. i. 13. Rev. i. 9. Matt. xiii. 41. Luke vi. 20. Matt. xvi. 28.

so let us all join in the service of thy majesty, with peace and purity, and love unfeigned; that as all the angels are in peace, and amongst them there is no persecutor, and none persecuted, there is none afflicting or afflicted, none assaulting or assaulted, but all, in sweetness and peaceable serenity, glorifying thee; so let thy will be done on earth, by all the world, in peace and unity, in charity and tranquillity: that with one heart, and one voice, we may glorify thee our universal Father; having in us nothing that may displease thee, having quitted all our own desires and pretensions, living in angelic conformity, our souls subject to thee, and our passions to our souls; that "in earth," also, "thy will" may "be done," as in the spirit and soul, which is a portion of the heavenly substance. These three petitions are addressed to God, by way of adoration. In the first, the soul puts on the affections of a child, and divests itself of its own interest, offering itself up wholly to the designs and glorifications of God. In the second, it puts on the relation and duty of a subject to her legitimate prince, seeking the promotion of his regal interest. In the third, she puts on the affection of a spouse, loving the same love, and choosing the same objects, and delighting in unions and conformities. The next part descends lower, and makes addresses to God in relation to our own necessities.

7. "Give us this day our daily bread."[k] That is, give unto us all that is necessary for the support of our lives, the bread of our necessity: so the Syriac interpreter reads it: "This day give us the portion of bread, which is day by day necessary." Give us the bread or support which we shall need all our lives; only this day minister our present part. For we pray for the necessary bread or maintenance, which God knows we shall need all our days; but, that we "be not careful for to-morrow," we are taught to pray, not that it be all at once represented or deposited, but that God would minister it as we need it, how he pleases: but our needs are to be the measure of our desires, our desires must not make our needs; that we may be confident of the Divine providence, and not at all covetous: for therefore God feeds his people with extemporary provisions, that by needing always, they may learn to pray to him; and, by being still supplied, may learn to trust him for the future, and thank him for that is past, and rejoice in the present. So God rained down manna, giving them their daily portion; and so all fathers and masters minister to their children and servants, giving them their proportion as they eat it, not the meat of a year at once; and yet no child or servant fears want, if his parent or lord were good, and wise, and rich. And it is necessary for all to pray this prayer: the poor, because they want the bread, and have it not deposited but in the hands of God: "mercy ploughing the fields of heaven," (as Job's expression is,) brings them corn; and "the cattle upon a thousand hills are God's;" and they find the poor man meat. The rich also need this prayer; because, although they have the bread, yet they need the blessing; and what they have now may perish, or be taken from them; and as preservation is a perpetual creation, so the continuing to rich men what God hath already bestowed is a continual giving it. Young men must pray, because their needs are like to be the longer; and old men, because they are present. But all these are to pray but for the present;[1] that which, in estimation of law, is to be reckoned as imminent upon the present, and part of this state and condition. But it is great improvidence, and an unchristian spirit, for old men to heap up provisions, and load their sumpters still the more, by how much their way is shorter. But there is also a bread which came down from heaven, a diviner nutriment of our souls, the food and wine of angels, Christ himself, as he communicates himself in the expresses of his word and sacraments; and if we be destitute of this bread, we are miserable and perishing people. We must pray, that our souls also may feed upon those celestial viands, prepared for us in the antepasts of the gospel, till the great and fuller meal of the supper of the Lamb shall answer all our prayers, and satisfy every desire.

8. "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." Not only those sins of infirmity, invasion, and sudden surprise, which, like excrescences of luxuriant trees, adhere to many actions by inadvertency, and either natural weakness or accidental prejudice; but also all those great sins, which were washed off from our souls, and the stain taken away in baptism; or when by choice, and after the use of reason, we gave up our names to Christ, when we first received the adoption of sons: for even those things were so pardoned, that we must for ever confess and glory in the Divine mercy, and still ascertain it, by performing what we then promised, and which were the conditions of our covenant. For although Christ hath taken off the guilt, yet still there remains the disreputation; and St. Paul calls himself "the chiefest of sinners," not referring to his present condition, but to his former persecuting the church of God, which is one of the greatest crimes in the world;

[k] Ἐπιούσιος, ab ἐπιοῦσα, quod *diem posterum* significat. Nazarenorum Evangelium (referente S. Hieronymo) legit *panem crastinum*; S. Lucas *panem diurnum*, sive indies necessarium, τὸ καθ' ἡμέραν· πλοῦτός ἐστι κτῆσις σύμμετρος πρὸς εὐδαιμονίαν.

Vivitur parvo bene, cui paternum
Splendet in mensa tenui salinum,
Nec leves somnos timor aut cupido
Sordidus aufert. HORAT. lib. ii. Od. 16.
Fructibus Agrippæ Siculis, quos colligis, Icci,
Si rectè frueris, non est ut copia major
Ab Jove donari possit tibi; tolle querelas:
Pauper enim non est cui rerum suppetit usus.

Si ventri bene, si lateri est pedibusque tuis, nil
Divitiæ poterunt regales addere majus.
HORAT. ad Iccium, lib. ii. Ep. 12.

Μὴ μόνον τοῦ ζῆν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῦ ἀποθνήσκειν, τὴν τροφὴν εἶναι ἐφόδιον.—PLUTARCH.

[1] Lætus in præsens animus quod ultrà est
Oderit curare; et amara læto
Temperet risu. HORAT. lib. ii. Od. 16.
——— quid æternis minorem
Consiliis animum fatigas? HORAT. lib. ii. Od. 11.
Vitæ summa brevis spem nos vetat inchoare longam:
Jam te premet nox, fabulæque manes,
Et domus exilis Plutonia. HORAT. lib. i. Od. 4.

Ἀναγκιότατον ἐφόδιον.—Conc. Nicen.

and for ever he asked pardon for it; and so must we, knowing that they may return; if we shake off the yoke of Christ, and break his cords from us, the bands of the covenant evangelical, the sins will return so as to undo us. And this we pray, with a tacit obligation to forgive; for so only, and upon that condition, we beg pardon to be given or continued respectively; that is, as we from our hearts forgive them that did us injury in any kind, never entertaining so much as a thought of revenge, but, contrariwise, loving them that did us wrong; for so we beg that God should do to us: and, therefore, it is but a lesser revenge to say, I will forgive, but I will never have to do with him. For if he become an object of charity, we must have to do with him, to relieve him; because he needs prayers, we must have to do with him, and pray for him: and to refuse his society, when it is reasonably and innocently offered, is to deny that to him, which christians have been taught to deny only to persons excommunicate, to persons under punishment, i. e. to persons not yet forgiven: and we shall have but an evil portion, if God should forgive our sins, and should not also love us,[m] and do us grace, and bestow benefits upon us. So we must forgive others; so God forgives us.

9. "And lead us not into temptation." St. Cyprian, out of an old Latin copy, reads it, "Suffer us not to be led into temptation;"[n] that is, suffer us not to be overcome by temptation. And, therefore, we are bound to prevent our access to such temptation, whose very approximation is dangerous, and the contact is irregular and evil; such as are temptations of the flesh: yet, in other temptations, the assault sometimes makes confident, and hardens a resolution. For some spirits, who are softened by fair usages, are steeled and imboldened by a persecution. But of what nature soever the temptations be, whether they be such whose approach a christian is bound to fear, or such which are the certain lot of christians, (such are troubles and persecutions, into which, "when we enter," we must "count it joy,") yet we are to pray, that we enter not into the possession of the temptation, that we be not overcome by it.

10. "But deliver us from evil." From the assaults or violence of evil, from "the wicked one," who not only presents us with objects, but heightens our concupiscence, and makes us imaginative, fantastical, and passionate; setting on the temptation, making the lust active, and the man full of appetite, and the appetite full of energy and power: therefore deliver us from the evil one, who is interested, as an enemy, in every hostility, and in every danger. Let not Satan have any power or advantage over us; and let not evil men prevail upon us in our danger, much less to our ruin. Make us "safe under the covering of thy wings," against all fraud and every violence; that no temptation destroy our hopes, or break our strength, or alter our state, or overthrow our glories. In these last petitions, which concern ourselves, the soul hath affections proper to her own needs; as in the former proportion, to God's glory. In the first of these, the affection of a poor, indigent, and necessitous beggar; in the second, of a delinquent and penitent servant; in the last, of a person in affliction or danger. And, after all this, the reason of our confidence is derived from God.

11. "For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever." That is, these things which we beg, are for the honour of thy kingdom, for the manifestation of thy power, and the glory of thy name and mercies: and it is an express doxology or adoration, which is apt and fit to conclude all our prayers and addresses to God.

12. These are the generals and great treasures of matter, to which all our present or sudden needs are reducible; and when we make our prayers more minute and particular, if the instance be in matter of duty, and merely spiritual, there is no danger: but when our needs are temporal, or we are transported with secular desires, all descending to particulars is a confining the Divine Providence, a judging for ourselves, a begging a temptation oftentimes, sometimes a mischief:[o] and to beg beyond the necessities of our life, is a mutiny against that Providence, which assigns to christians no more but "food and raiment" for their own use: all other excrescencies of possessions being intrusted to the rich man's dispensation, only as to a steward; and he shall be accountable for the coat that lies by him, as the portion of moths, and for the shoes which are the spoils of mouldiness, and the contumely of plenty. "Grant me, O Lord, not what I desire, but what is profitable for me."[p] For sometimes we desire that, which in the succeeding event of things will undo us. This rule is in all things that concern ourselves. There is some little difference in the affairs and necessities of other men: for, provided we submit to the Divine Providence, and pray for good things for others, only with a tacit condition, so far as they are good and profitable, in order to the best ends; though we be particular, there is no covetousness in it; there may be indiscretion in the particular; but in the general no fault, because it is a prayer, and a design of charity. "For kings, and all that are in authority," we may yet enlarge, and pray for a peaceable reign, true lieges, strong armies, victories and fair success in their just wars, health, long life, and riches; because they have a capacity which private persons have not:[q] and whatsoever is good for single persons, and whatsoever is apt for their

[m] Parùm est nobis non puniri, nisi mereamur et diligi.—Hugo de S. Victor. Allegat. in Matt. lib. iii.

[n] Τί γὰρ; Θεὸς εἰσάγει ἄνθρωπον εἰς πειρασμόν; μὴ γένοιτο· οὐ γὰρ αἴτιος τῶν κακῶν ὁ Θεὸς· ἀλλὰ παρακαλέσομεν αὐτὸν, ἵνα τοῖς πολλοῖς αὐτοῦ οἰκτιρμοῖς μὴ ἐάσῃ ἡμᾶς πειρασθῆναι.—S. German. Patr. C. P. περὶ τῶν Ἱερουρ.

[o] ——— Pro jucundis aptissima quæque dabunt dii
Carior est illis homo quàm sibi. Nos, animorum
Impulsu et cæcâ magnâque cupidine ducti,
Conjugium petimus, partumque uxoris: at illis
Notum qui pueri, qualisque futura sit uxor.
Juven. Sat. x. 349.

[p] Μὴ μοι γένοιθ' ἃ βούλομ', ἀλλ' ἃ συμφέρει.

[q] ——— Rege incolumi, mens omnibus una;
Amisso, rupêre fidem. Virg. Georg. iv 212.

uses as public persons, all that we may and we must pray for; either particularly, for so we may, or in general significations, for so we must at least: "that we may lead a godly, peaceable, and quiet life, in all godliness and honesty;" that is St. Paul's rule, and the prescribed measure and purpose of such prayers. And in this instance of kings, we may pray for defeating all the king's enemies, such as are truly such; and we have no other restraint upon us in this, but that we keep our desires confined within the limits of the end we are commanded; that is, so far to confound the king's enemies, that he may do his duty, and we do ours, and receive the blessing; ever, as much as we can, to distinguish the malice from the person. But if the enemies themselves will not also separate what our intentions distinguish, that is, if they will not return to their duty; then, let the prayers operate as God pleases, we must be zealous for the end of the king's authority and peaceable government. By enemies, I mean rebels or invaders, tyrants and usurpers; for in other wars there are many other considerations, not proper for this place.

13. The next consideration will be concerning the manner; I mean both the manner of our persons, and the manner of our prayers; that is, with what conditions we ought to approach to God, and with what circumstances the prayers may or ought to be performed. The conditions to make our prayers holy and certain to prevail, are: 1. That we live good lives, endeavouring to conform, by holy obedience, to all the Divine commandments. This condition is expressly recorded by St. John: "Beloved, if our hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God, and whatsoever we ask of him we shall obtain:"[r] and St. James affirms, that "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much:"[s] and our blessed Saviour, limiting the confidence of our prayers for forgiveness to our charity and forgiving others, plainly tells us, that the uncharitable and unrighteous person shall not be heard. And the blind man in the gospel understood well what he said, "Now we know that God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshipper, and doeth his will, him he heareth."[t] And it was so decreed and resolved a point in the doctrine of their religion, that it was a proverbial saying. And although this discourse of the blind man was of a restrained occasion, and signified, if Christ had been a false prophet, God would not have attested his sermons with the power of miracles; yet in general also he had been taught by David, "If I regard iniquity in my heart[u] the Lord will not hear my prayer." And, therefore, when men "pray in every place," (for so they are commanded,) "let them lift up pure hands, without anger and contention."[x] And indeed, although every sin entertained with a free choice and a full understanding is an obstruction to our prayers; yet the special sin of uncharitableness makes the biggest cloud,[y] and is, in the proper matter of it, an indisposition for us to receive mercy: for he who is softened with apprehension of his own needs of mercy, will be tender-hearted towards his brother; and, therefore, he that hath no bowels here, can have no aptness there to receive, or heartily to hope for mercy. But this rule is to be understood of persons who persevere in the habit and remanent affections of sin; so long as they entertain sin with love, complacency, and joy, they are in a state of enmity with God, and therefore in no fit disposition to receive pardon and the entertainment of friends: but penitent sinners and returning souls, laden and grieved with their heavy pressures, are, next to holy innocents, the aptest persons in the world to be heard in their prayers for pardon; but they are in no further disposition to large favours, and more eminent charities. A sinner, in the beginning of his penance, will be heard for himself, and yet also he needs the prayers of holy persons more signally than others; for he hath but some very few degrees of dispositions to reconciliation: but in prayers of intercession or mediation for others, only holy and very pious persons are fit to be interested. All men, as matter of duty, must pray for all men:[z] but in the great necessities of a prince, of a church or kingdom, or of a family, or in a great danger and calamity to a single person, only a Noah, a David, a Daniel, a Jeremiah, an Enoch, or Job, are fit and proportioned advocates. God so requires holiness in us, that our prayers may be accepted, that he entertains them in several degrees, according to the degrees of our sanctity; to fewer or more purposes, according as we are little or great in the kingdom of heaven. As for those irregular donations of good things which wicked persons ask for and have, they are either no mercies, but instruments of cursing and crime, or else they are designs of grace, intended to convince them of their unworthiness; and so, if they become not instruments of their conversion, they are aggravations of their ruin.

14. Secondly: The second condition I have already explained in the description of the matter of our prayers.[a] For although we may lawfully ask for whatsoever we need, and this leave is consigned to us in those words of our blessed Saviour, "Your heavenly Father knoweth what you have need of;" yet, because God's providence walks in the great deep, that is, his footsteps are in the water, and leave no impression; no former act of grace becomes a precedent that he will give us that in kind which then he saw convenient, and therefore gave us, and now he sees to be inconvenient, and therefore does deny. Therefore, in all things, but what are matter of necessary and mingled duty, we must send up our prayers; but humility, mortification, and conformity to the Divine will, must attend for an answer, and bring back, not what the public embassy pretends, but what they have in private instructions to desire; accounting that for the best satisfaction

[r] 1 John iii. 21, 22. [s] James v. 16. [t] John ix. 31.
[u] Psalm lxvi. 18. [x] 1 Tim. ii. 8.
[y] Posuisti ut nubem peccatum, ne transeat oratio.—Lam. 5.
[z] Cùm nam is qui displicet ad intercedendum mittitur, irati animus ad deteriora provocatur.—Gregor. Pastor.

Immunis aram si tetigit manus,
Non sumptuosa blandior hostia
Mollivit aversos penates
Farre pio et saliente micâ.—Hor. lib. iii. Od. 23.

[a] Εὐχῆς δικαίας οὐκ ἀνήκοος θεός.

which God pleases, not what I have either unnecessarily, or vainly, or sinfully desired.

15. Thirdly: When our persons are disposed by sanctity, and the matter of prayers is hallowed by prudence and religious intendments, then we are bound to entertain a full persuasion and confident hope that God will hear us. "What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall obtain them,"[b] said our blessed Saviour: and St. James taught from that oracle, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask it of God: but let him ask in faith, nothing wavering; for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind, and tossed to and fro:"[c] meaning, that when there is no fault in the matter of our prayers, but that we ask things pleasing to God, and there is no indisposition and hostility in our persons and manners between God and us, then to doubt were to distrust God; for all being right on our parts, if we doubt the issue, the defailance must be on that part, which to suspect were infinite impiety. But after we have done all we can, if, out of humility, and fear that we are not truly disposed, we doubt of the issue, it is a modesty which will not at all discommend our persons, nor impede the event; provided we at no hand suspect either God's power or veracity. Putting trust in God[d] is an excellent advantage to our prayers; "I will deliver him," saith God, "because he hath put his trust in me." And yet distrusting ourselves, and suspecting our own dispositions, as it pulls us back in our actual confidence of the event, so because it abates nothing of our confidence in God, it prepares us to receive the reward of humility, and not to lose the praise of a holy trusting in the Almighty.

16. These conditions are essential: some other there are which are incidents and accessories, but at no hand to be neglected. And the first is, actual or habitual attention to our prayers, which we are to procure with moral and severe endeavours, that we desire not God to hear us when we do not hear ourselves. To which purpose we must avoid, as much as our duty will permit us, multiplicity of cares and exterior employments; for a river cut into many rivulets divides also its strength, and grows contemptible, and apt to be forded by a lamb, and drunk up by a summer sun; so is the spirit of man busied in variety, and divided in itself;[e] it abates its fervour, cools into indifferency, and becomes trifling by its dispersion and inadvertency. Aquinas was once asked, with what compendium a man might best become learned? he answered, By reading of one book: meaning, that an understanding entertained with several objects is intent upon neither, and profits not. And so it is when we pray to God; if the cares of the world intervene, they choke our desires into an indifferency, and suppress the flame into a smoke, and strangle the spirit. But this, being an habitual carelessness and intemperance of spirit, is an enemy to an habitual attention, and therefore is highly criminal, and makes our prayers to be but the labour of the lips, because our desires are lessened by the remanent affections of the world. But besides an habitual attention in our prayers, that is, a desire in general of all that our prayers pretend to in particular, there is also for the accommodation, and to facilitate the access of our prayers, required, that we attend actually to the words or sense of every collect or petition. To this we must contend with prayer, with actual dereliction and seposition of all our other affairs, though innocent and good in other kinds, by a present spirit. And the use of it is, that such attention is an actual conversing with God; it occasions the exercise of many acts of virtue, it increases zeal and fervency, and, by reflection, enkindles love and holy desires. And although there is no rule to determine the degree of our actual attention, and it is ordinarily impossible never to wander with a thought, or to be interrupted with a sudden immission into our spirit in the midst of prayers; yet our duty is, by mortification of our secular desires, by suppression of all our irregular passions, by reducing them to indifferency, by severity of spirit, by enkindling our holy appetites and desires of holy things, by silence, and meditation, and repose, to get as forward in this excellency as we can: to which also we may be very much helped by ejaculatory prayers and short breathings; in which, as, by reason of their short abode upon the spirit, there is less fear of diversion, so also they may so often be renewed, that nothing of the devotion may be unspent, or expire for want of oil to feed and entertain the flame. But the determination of the case of conscience is this: habitual attention is absolutely necessary in our prayers; that is, it is altogether our duty to desire of God all that we pray for, though our mind be not actually attending to the form of words; and, therefore, all worldly desires, that are inordinate, must be rescinded, that we more earnestly attend on God than on the world. He that prays to God to give him the gift of chastity, and yet secretly wishes rather for an opportunity of lust, and desires God would not hear him, (as St. Austin confesses of himself in his youth,) that man sins for want of holy and habitual desires; he prays only with his lips, what he in no sense attests in his heart. 2. Actual attention to our prayers is also necessary, not ever to avoid a sin, but that the present prayer become effectual. He that means

[b] Mark xi. 24. [c] James i. 5, 6.

[d] Chrysantio Deus in aurem hunc versiculum occinuit, "Ος κε θεοῖς ἐπιπείθηται, μάλα τ' ἔκλυον αὐτοῦ.—Eunapius in Vita Maximi.

Signum futuræ impetrationis est, quando Spiritus Sanctus movet ad petendum cum fiduciâ, et quasi securitate impetrandi. —Cassian. Collat. ix. c. 32.

Ecclus. xxxv. 17. Psalm cii. 17.

[e] Non in pluribus sint actus tui. —Ecclus. xi. 10.

Impar quisque invenitur ad singula, dum confusâ mente dividitur ad multa.—S. Greg. Past. p. i. c. 4.

Magnam rem puta, hominem unum agere: præter sapientem nemo unum agit; cæteri multiformes sumus.—Seneca.

Mentem tantæ rei intentam vacare omnibus aliis etiam culpâ carentibus vitiis oportet.—Quintil.

Inveni Dilectum meum in lectulo, i. e. in quiete; quia quæ cura implicat, quies explicat.—S. Bernard. Serm. 1. in Cant.

Quis locus ingenio, nisi cùm se carmine solo
Vexant ———
Pectora nostra duas non admittentia curas?
Magnæ mentis opus, nec de lodice paranda
Attonitæ ——— Juvenal. Sat. 7.

to feast, and to get thanks of God, must invite the poor; and yet he that invites the rich, in that he sins not, though he hath no reward of God for that. So that prayer perishes to which the man gives no degree of actual attention, for the prayer is as if it were not; it is no more than a dream, or an act of custom and order, nothing of devotion; and so accidentally becomes a sin, (I mean there, where, and in what degrees it is avoidable,) by taking God's name in vain. 3. It is not necessary to the prevalency of the prayer, that the spirit actually accompany every clause or word; if it says a hearty Amen, or in any part of it attests the whole, it is such an attention which the present condition of most men will sometimes permit. 4. A wandering of the spirit, through carelessness, or any vice, or inordinate passion, is in that degree criminal as is the cause, and it is heightened by the greatness of the interruption. 5. It is only excused by our endeavours to cure it, and by our after-acts, either of sorrow, or repetition of the prayer, and reinforcing the intention. And certainly, if we repeat our prayer, in which we have observed our spirits too much to wander, and resolve still to repeat it, (as our opportunities permit,) it may in a good degree defeat the purpose of the enemy, when his own arts shall return upon his head, and the wandering of our spirits be made the occasion of a prayer, and the parent of a new devotion. 6. Lastly, according to the degrees of our actual attention, so our prayers are more or less perfect: a present spirit being a great instrument and testimony of wisdom, and apt to many great purposes; and our continual abode with God being a great endearment of our persons, by increasing the affections.

17. Secondly: The second accessory is "intention of spirit," or fervency; such as was that of our blessed Saviour, who prayed to his Father with strong cries and loud petitions, not clamorous in language, but strong in spirit. St. Paul also, when he was pressed with a strong temptation, prayed thrice, that is, earnestly; and St. James affirms this to be of great value and efficacy to the obtaining blessings,[f] "The effectual fervent prayer of a just person avails much;" and Elias, though "a man of like passions," yet by earnest prayer he obtained rain, or drought, according as he desired. Now this is properly produced by the greatness of our desire of heavenly things, our true value and estimate of religion, our sense of present pressures, our fears; and it hath some accidental increases by the disposition of our body, the strength of fancy, and the tenderness of spirit, and assiduity of the dropping of religious discourses; and in all men is necessary to be so great, as that we prefer heaven and religion before the world, and desire them rather, with the choice of our wills and understanding: though there cannot always be that degree of sensual, pungent, or delectable affections towards religion, as towards the desires of nature and sense; yet ever we must prefer celestial objects, restraining the appetites of the world, lest they be immoderate, and heightening the desires of grace and glory, lest they become indifferent, and the fire upon the altar of incense be extinct. But the greater zeal and fervour of desire we have in our prayers, the sooner and the greater will the return of the prayer be, if the prayer be for spiritual objects. For other things our desires must be according to our needs, not by a value derived from the nature of the thing, but the usefulness it is of to us, in order to our greater and better purposes.

18. Thirdly: Of the same consideration it is, that we "persevere and be importunate"[g] in our prayers, by repetition of our desires, and not remitting either our affections or our offices, till God, overcome by our importunity, give a gracious answer. Jacob wrestled with the angel all night, and would not dismiss him till he had given him a blessing: "Let me alone," saith God, as if he felt a pressure and burden lying upon him by our prayers, or could not quit himself, nor depart, unless we give him leave. And since God is detained by our prayers, and we may keep him as long as we please, and that he will not go away till we leave speaking to him; he that will dismiss him till he hath his blessing, knows not the value of his benediction, or understands not the energy and power of a persevering prayer. And to this purpose Christ "spake a parable, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint."[h] "Praying without ceasing," St. Paul calls it; that is, with continual addresses, frequent interpellations, never ceasing renewing the request till I obtain my desire. For it is not enough to recommend our desires to God with one hearty prayer, and then forget to ask him any more; but so long as our needs continue, so long, in all times, and upon all occasions, to renew and repeat our desires: and this is "praying continually." Just as the widow did to the unjust judge; she never left going to him, she troubled him every day with her clamorous suit; so must we "pray always," that is, every day, and many times every day, according to our occasions and necessities, or our devotion and zeal, or as we are determined by the customs and laws of a church; never giving over through weariness or distrust, often renewing our desires by a continual succession of devotions, returning at certain and determinate periods. For God's blessings, though they come infallibly, yet not always speedily; saving only that it is a blessing to be delayed, that we may increase our desire, and renew our prayers, and do acts of confidence and patience, and ascertain and increase the blessing when it comes. For we do not more desire to be blessed than God does to hear us importunate for blessing; and he weighs every sigh, and bottles up every tear, and records every prayer, and looks through the cloud, with delight to see us upon our knees, and, when he sees his time, his light breaks through it, and shines upon us. Only

[f] ——Τὸ δὲ ζητούμενον ἁλωτὸν ἐκφεύγει τ' ἀμελούμενον. —SOPHOCL. Œdip.

[g] Τῇ προσευχῇ προσκαρτεροῦντες, Rom. xii. 12. Quod olim erat Levitarum et sacerdotum proprium.

[h] Luke xviii. 1.
Χρῆ ἀδιαλείπτως ἔυχεσθαι τῆς περὶ τὸ θεῖον θρησκείας.—PROCLUS ad Timæum.

we must not make our accounts for God according to the course of the sun, but the measures of eternity. He measures us by our needs, and we must not measure him by our impatience. "God is not slack, as some men count slackness," saith the apostle; and we find it so, when we have waited long. All the elapsed time is no part of the tediousness; the trouble of it is past with itself: and for the future, we know not how little it may be; for aught we know, we are already entered into the cloud that brings the blessing. However, pray till it comes: for we shall never miss to receive our desire, if it be holy, or innocent, and safe; or else we are sure of a great reward of our prayers.

19. And in this, so determined, there is no danger of blasphemy, or vain repetitions: for those repetitions are vain which repeat the words, not the devotion, which renew the expression, and not the desire; and he that may pray the same prayer tomorrow which he said to-day, may pray the same at night which he said in the morning, and the same at noon which he said at night, and so in all the hours of prayer, and in all the opportunities of devotion. Christ, in his agony, "went thrice, and said the same words," but he had intervals for repetition; and his need and his devotion pressed him forward: and whenever our needs do so, it is all one if we say the same words or others, so we express our desire, and tell our needs, and beg the remedy. In the same office, and the same hour of prayer, to repeat the same things often hath but few excuses to make it reasonable, and fewer to make it pious: but to think that the prayer is better for such repetition, is the fault which the holy Jesus condemned in the gentiles, who in their hymns would say a name over a hundred times. But in this we have no rule to determine us in numbers and proportion, but right reason.[i] God loves not any words the more for being said often; and those repetitions which are unreasonable in prudent estimation, cannot in any account be esteemed pious. But where a reasonable cause allows the repetition, the same cause that makes it reasonable makes it also proper for devotion. He that speaks his needs, and expresses nothing but his fervour and greatness of desire, cannot be vain or long in his prayers; he that speaks impertinently, that is, unreasonably and without desires, is long, though he speak but two syllables: he that thinks for speaking much to be heard the sooner, thinks God is delighted in the labour of the lips; but when reason is the guide, and piety is the rule, and necessity is the measure, and desire gives the proportion, let the prayer be very long; he that shall blame it for its length, must proclaim his disrelish both of reason and religion, his despite of necessity, and contempt of zeal.

20. As a part and instance of our importunity in prayer, it is usually reckoned and advised, that in cases of great, sudden, and violent need, we corroborate our prayers with a vow of doing something holy and religious in an uncommanded instance, something to which God had not formerly bound our duty, though fairly invited our will;[k] or else, if we choose a duty in which we were obliged, then to vow the doing of it in a more excellent manner, with a greater inclination of the will, with a more fervent repetition of the act, with some more noble circumstance, with a fuller assent of the understanding, or else adding a new promise to our old duty, to make it become more necessary to us, and to secure our duty. In this case, as it requires great prudence and caution in the susception, lest what we piously intend obtain a present blessing and lay a lasting snare; so if it be prudent in the manner, holy in the matter, useful in the consequence, and safe in all the circumstances of the person, it is an endearing us and our prayer to God by the increase of duty and charity, and therefore a more probable way of making our prayers gracious and acceptable. And the religion of vows was not only hallowed by the example of Jacob at Bethel, of Hannah praying for a child, and God hearing her, of David vowing a temple to God, and made regular and safe by the rules and cautions in Moses's law; but left by our blessed Saviour in the same constitution he found it, he having innovated nothing in the matter of vows: and it was practised accordingly in the instance of St. Paul at Cenchrea; of Ananias and Sapphira,[l] who vowed their possessions to the use of the church; and of the widows in the apostolical age, who therefore vowed to remain in the state of widowhood, because concerning them who married after the entry into religion, St. Paul says, "They have broken their first faith:" and such were they of whom our blessed Saviour affirms, "that some make themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven," that is, such who promise to God a life of chastity. And concerning the success of prayer, so seconded with a

[i] Ohe jam desine deos, uxor, gratulando obtundere
Tuam esse inventam gnatam: nisi illos tuo ex ingenio judicas,
Ut nil credas intelligere nisi idem dictum est centies.
Ter. Heaut.

Λαλεῖν ἄριστος, ἀδυνατώτατος λέγειν.
Τεκμήριον δὲ τοῦδε τὸν Ὅμηρον λάβε·
Οὗτος γὰρ ἡμῖν μυρίαδας ἐπῶν γράφει
Ἀλλ' οὐδε εἷς Ὅμηρον εἴρηκεν μακρόν.—Philem.
Χωρὶς τὸ, τ' εἰπεῖν πολλὰ, καὶ τὰ καίρια.
Sophocl. Œdip. 2.

[k] In re trepidà Tullus Hostilius duodecim vovit salios fanaque Pallori et Pavori.—Livius.

Ego me majore religione quàm quisque fuit ullius voti obstrictum puto.—Cicer. ad Atticum.

Solebant autem et vota fieri gratitudinis indicia.
Voveram dulces epulas et album
Libero caprum propè funeratus
Arboris ictu.—Horat. lib. iii. Od. 8.

Non est meum———ad miseras preces
Decurrere, et votis pacisci,
Ne Cypriæ Tyriæque merces
Addant avaro divitias mari.—Id. lib. iii. Od. 29.

Et læta quidem in præsens omnia: sed benignitati deorum gratiam referendam, ne ritus sacrorum inter ambigua culti per prospera obliterarentur.—Tacit. Ann. lib. xi.

[l] Ananias et Sapphira ideo condemnati, quia post votum abstulerunt quasi sua.—S. Hieron. Ep. 8. ad Demet.

Quid enim est, fidem primam irritam fecerunt? voverunt, et non reddiderunt.—S. August.

In vita nam æterna est quædam egregia gloria, non omnibus in æternum victuris, sed quibusdam ibi tribuenda; cui consequendæ parùm est liberatum esse à peccatis, nisi aliquid liberatori voveatur, quod non sit criminis non vovisse, sed vovisse ac reddidisse sit laudis.—Idem, de S. Virgin. c. 14.

prudent and religious vow, besides the instances of Scripture,[m] we have the perpetual experience and witness of all christendom; and, in particular, our Saxon kings have been remarked for this part of importunity in their own chronicles. Oswy[n] got a great victory with unlikely forces against Penda the Dane after his earnest prayer, and an appendant vow; and Ceadwalla obtained of God power to recover the Isle of Wight from the hands of infidels, after he had prayed and promised to return the fourth part of it to be employed in the proper service of God and of religion. This can have no objection or suspicion in it among wise and disabused persons; for it can be nothing but an increasing and a renewed act of duty, or devotion, or zeal, or charity, and the importunity of prayer, acted in a more vital and real expression.

21. All else that is to be considered concerning prayer, is extrinsical and accidental to it. First: Prayer is public, or private; in the communion or society of saints, or in our closets: these prayers have less temptation to vanity; the other have more advantages of charity, example, fervour, and energy. In public offices we avoid singularity, in the private we avoid hypocrisy: those are of more edification, these of greater retiredness and silence of spirit; those serve the needs of all the world in the first intention, and our own by consequence, these serve our own needs first, and the public only by a secondary intention; these have more pleasure, they more duty: these are the best instruments of repentance, where our confessions may be more particular, and our shame less scandalous, the other are better for eucharist and instruction, for edification of the church, and glorification of God.

22. Secondly: The posture of our bodies in prayer had as great variety as the ceremonies and civilities of several nations came to. The Jews most commonly prayed standing: so did the Pharisee and the publican in the temple.[o] So did the primitive christians, in all their greater festivals and intervals of jubilee; in their penances they kneeled. The monks in Cassian sat when they sung the psalter.[p] And in every country, whatsoever, by the custom of the nation, was a symbol of reverence and humility, of silence and attention, of gravity and modesty, that posture they translated to their prayers. But, in all nations, bowing the head, that is, a laying down our glory at the feet of God, was the manner of worshippers: and this was always the more humble and the lower, as their devotion was higher; and was very often expressed by prostration, or lying flat upon the ground; and this all nations did, and all religions. Our deportment ought to be grave, decent, humble, apt for adoration, apt to edify; and when we address ourselves to prayer, not instantly to leap into the office, as the judges of the Areopage into their sentence, "without preface or preparatory affections;" but, considering in what presence we speak, and to what purposes, let us balance our fervour with reverential fear: and, when we have done, not rise from the ground as if we vaulted, or were glad we had done; but, as we begin with desires of assistance, so end with desires of pardon and acceptance, concluding our longer offices with a shorter mental prayer, of more private reflection and reverence, designing to mend what we have done amiss, or to give thanks and proceed if we did well, and according to our powers.

23. Thirdly: In private prayers it is permitted to every man to speak his prayers, or only to think them, which is a speaking to God. Vocal or mental prayer is all one to God, but in order to us they have their several advantages. The sacrifice of the heart, and the calves of the lips, make up a holocaust to God: but words are the arrest of the desires, and keep the spirit fixed, and in less permissions to wander from fancy to fancy; and mental prayer is apt to make the greater fervour, if it wander not: our office is more determined by words; but we then actually think of God, when our spirits only speak. Mental prayer, when our spirits wander, is like a watch standing still, because the spring is down; wind it up again, and it goes on regularly: but in vocal prayer, if the words run on, and the spirit wanders, the clock strikes false, the hand points not to the right hour, because something is in disorder, and the striking is nothing but noise. In mental prayer, we confess God's omniscience; in vocal prayer we call the angels to witness. In the first, our spirits rejoice in God; in the second, the angels rejoice in us. Mental prayer is the best remedy against lightness, and indifferency of affections; but vocal prayer is the aptest instrument of communion. That is more angelical, but yet fittest for the state of separation and glory; this is but human, but it is apter for our present constitution. They have their distinct proprieties, and may be used according to several accidents, occasions, or dispositions.

THE PRAYER.

I.

O holy and eternal God, who hast commanded us to pray unto thee in all our necessities, and to give thanks unto thee for all our instances of joy and blessing, and to adore thee in all thy attributes and communications, thy own glories and thy eternal mercies; give unto me, thy servant, the spirit of prayer and supplication, that I may understand what is good for me, that I may desire

[m] Eccles. v. 4, 5. Psalm cxxxii. 1, 2. Deut. xxiii. 21. Acts xviii. 18.

[n] Oswy vovit filiam in servitutem religionis et vitam cœlibem, simulque duodecim possessiones ad construendas ædes sacras.

——Reddere victimas
Ædemque votivam memento;
Nos humilem feriemus agnum.—Hor. lib. ii. Od. 17.

[o] Nehem. ix. 5. Mark xi. 25. Luke xviii. 11.

[p] Adoraturi sedeant, dixit Numa Pompilius, apud Plutarch. id est, sint sedato animo. Et καθῆσθαι προσκυνήσοντας dictum proverbialiter ad eundem sensum. Vide S. Aug. lib. iii. c. 5. de Cura pro Mortuis.

Depositisque suis ornamentis pretiosis,
Simplicis et tenuis fruitur velamine vestis,
Inter sacratos noctis venerabilis hymnos
Intrans nudatis templi sacra limina plantis;
Et prono sacram vultu prostratus ad aram,
Corpus frigoreæ sociavit nobile terræ.
S. Rosweid de Hen. Imper. et de Othon.

regularly, and choose the best things, that I may conform to thy will, und submit to thy disposing, relinquishing my own affections and imperfect choice. Sanctify my heart and spirit, that I may sanctify thy name, and that I may be gracious and accepted in thine eyes. Give me the humility and obedience of a servant, that I may also have the hope and confidence of a son, making humble and confident addresses to the throne of grace; that, in all my necessities, I may come to thee for aids, and may trust in thee for a gracious answer, and may receive satisfaction and supply.

II.

Give me a sober, diligent, and recollected spirit in my prayers, neither choked with cares, nor scattered by levity, nor discomposed by passion, nor estranged from thee by inadvertency, but fixed fast to thee by the indissoluble bands of a great love and a pregnant devotion: and let the beams of thy Holy Spirit, descending from above, enlighten and enkindle it with great fervours, and holy importunity, and unwearied industry; that I may serve thee, and obtain thy blessing by the assiduity and zeal of perpetual religious offices. Let my prayers come before thy presence, and the lifting up of my hands be a daily sacrifice, and let the fires of zeal not go out by night or day; but unite my prayers to the intercession of thy holy Jesus, and to a communion of those offices, which angels and beatified souls do pay before the throne of the Lamb, and at the celestial altar; that, my prayers being hallowed by the merits of Christ, and being presented in the phial of the saints, may ascend thither where thy glory dwells, and from whence mercy and eternal benediction descends upon the church.

III.

Lord, change my sins into penitential sorrow, my sorrow to petition, my petition to eucharist; that my prayers may be consummate in the adorations of eternity, and the glorious participation of the end of our hopes and prayers, the fulness of never-failing charity, and fruition of thee, O holy and eternal God, blessed Trinity, and mysterious Unity, to whom all honour, and worship, and thanks, and confession, and glory, be ascribed for ever and ever. Amen.

DISCOURSE XIII.

Of the third additional Precept of Christ; namely, of the Manner of Fasting.

1. FASTING, being directed in order to other ends, as for mortifying the body, taking away that fuel which ministers to the flame of lust, or else relating to what is past, when it becomes an instrument of repentance, and a part of that revenge which St. Paul affirms to be the effect of "godly sorrow," is to take its estimate for value, and its rules for practice, by analogy and proportion to those ends to which it does co-operate.[a] Fasting before the holy sacrament is a custom of the christian church, and derived to us from great antiquity; and the use of it is, that we might express honour to the mystery, by suffering nothing to enter into our mouths before the symbols. Fasting to this purpose is not an act of mortification, but of reverence and venerable esteem of the instruments of religion, and so is to be understood. And thus also, not to eat or drink before we have said our morning devotions, is esteemed to be a religious decency; and preference of prayer and God's honour before our temporal satisfaction, a symbolical attestation that we esteem the words of God's mouth more than our necessary food. It is like the zeal of Abraham's servant, who would not eat or drink till he had done his errand. And, in pursuance of this act of religion, by the tradition of their fathers, it grew to be a custom of the Jewish nation, that they should not eat bread upon their solemn festivals before the sixth hour; that they might first celebrate the rites of their religious solemnities, before they gave satisfaction to the lesser desires of nature. And, therefore, it was a reasonable satisfaction of the objection made by the assembly against the inspired apostles in Pentecost, "These are not drunk, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day:" [b] meaning, that the day being festival, they knew it was not lawful for any of the nation to break their fast before the sixth hour; for else they might easily have been drunk by the third hour, if they had taken their morning's drink in a freer proportion. And true it is, that religion snatches even at little things; and as it teaches us to observe all the great commandments and significations of duty, so it is not willing to pretermit any thing, which, although by its greatness it cannot, of itself, be considerable, yet, by its smallness, it may become a testimony of the greatness of the affection, which would not omit the least minutes of love and duty. And, therefore, when the Jews were scandalized at the disciples of our Lord, for rubbing the ears of corn on the sabbath day, as they walked through the fields early in the morning, they intended their reproof not for breaking the rest of the day, but the solemnity, for eating before the public devotions were finished. Christ excused it by the necessity and charity of the act; they were hungry, and therefore, having so great need, they might lawfully do it: meaning, that such particles and circumstances of religion are not to be neglected, unless where greater cause of charity or necessity does supervene.

2. But when fasting is in order to greater and more concerning purposes, it puts on more religion,

[a] Per universum orbem mos iste observatur, ut, in honorem tanti sacramenti, in os Christiani priùs Dominicum corpus intraret quàm cæteri cibi.—S. AUG. Ep. 18.

[b] Plebs autem non assentiebatur horum orationibus; et proculdubio exorta fuisset seditio, nisi concionem solvisset sexta hora superveniens, quæ nostris ad prandium vocare solet sabbatis.—JOSEPH. in Vitâ suâ.

and becomes a duty, according as it is necessary or highly conducing to such ends, to the promoting of which we are bound to contribute all our skill and faculties. Fasting is principally operative to mortification of carnal appetites, to which feasting, and full tables, do minister aptness, and power, and inclinations. "When I fed them to the full, then they committed adultery, and assembled by troops in the harlots' houses."[c] And if we observe all our own vanities, we shall find that, upon every sudden joy, or a prosperous accident, or an opulent fortune, or a pampered body, and highly spirited and inflamed, we are apt to rashness, levities, inconsiderate expressions, scorn and pride, idleness, wantonness, curiosity, niceness, and impatience. But fasting is one of those afflictions which reduces our body to want, our spirits to soberness, our condition to sufferance, our desires to abstinence and customs of denial;[d] and so, by taking off the inundations of sensuality, leaves the enemies within in a condition of being easier subdued. Fasting directly advances towards chastity; and, by consequence and indirect powers, to patience, and humility, and indifference. But then it is not the fast of a day that can do this; it is not an act, but a state of fasting, that operates to mortification. A perpetual temperance and frequent abstinence may abate such proportions of strength and nutriment, as to procure a body mortified and lessened in desires. And thus St. Paul "kept his body under," using severities to it for the taming its rebellions and distemperatures. And St. Jerome reports of St. Hilarion, that when he had fasted much, and used coarse diet, and found his lust too strong for such austerities, he resolved to increase it to the degree of mastery, lessening his diet, and increasing his hardship, till he should rather think of food than wantonness.[e] And many times the fastings of some men are ineffectual, because they promise themselves cure too soon, or make too gentle applications, or put less proportions into their antidotes. I have read of a maiden, that, seeing a young man much transported with her love, and that he ceased not to importune her with all the violent pursuits that passion could suggest, told him, she had made a vow to fast forty days with bread and water, of which she must discharge herself before she could think of corresponding to any other desire; and desired of him, as a testimony of his love, that he also would be a party in the same vow. The young man undertook it, that he might give probation of his love: but, because he had been used to a delicate and nice kind of life, in twenty days he was so weakened, that he thought more of death than love; and so got a cure for his intemperance, and was wittily cozened into remedy. But St. Jerome's counsel in this question is most reasonable, not allowing violent and long fasts, and then returns to an ordinary course; for these are too great changes of diet to consist with health, and too sudden and transient to obtain a permanent and natural effect: but "a belly always hungry," a table never full, a meal little and necessary, no extravagance, no freer repast, this is a state of fasting, which will be found to be of best avail to suppress pungent lusts and rebellious desires.[f] And it were well to help this exercise with the assistances of such austerities which teach patience, and ingenerate a passive fortitude, and accustom us to a despite of pleasures, and which are consistent with our health. For if fasting be left to do the work alone, it may chance either to spoil the body, or not to spoil the lust. Hard lodging, uneasy garments, laborious postures of prayer, journeys on foot, sufferance of cold, paring away the use of ordinary solaces, denying every pleasant appetite, rejecting the most pleasant morsels; these are in the rank of "bodily exercises," which though, as St. Paul says, of themselves, "they profit little," yet they accustom us to acts of self-denial in exterior instances, and are not useless to the designs of mortifying carnal and sensual lusts. They have "a proportion of wisdom"[g] with these cautions, viz. "in will-worship," that is, in voluntary susception, when they are not imposed as necessary religion;[h] "in humility," that is, without contempt of others that use them not; "in neglecting of the body," that is, when they are done for discipline and mortification, that the flesh, by such handlings and rough usages, become less satisfied, and more despised.

3. As fasting hath respect to the future, so also to the present; and so it operates in giving assistance to prayer. There is a "kind of devil that is not to be ejected but by prayer and fasting," that is, prayer elevated and made intense by a defecate and pure spirit, not laden with the burden of meat and vapours. St. Basil affirms, that there are certain angels deputed by God to minister, and to describe all such in every church who mortify themselves by fasting;[i] as if paleness and a meagre visage were that "mark in the forehead," which the angel observed when he signed the saints in Jerusalem to escape the judgment. Prayer is the wings of the soul,[k] and fasting is the wings of prayer. Tertullian calls it "the nourishment of prayer."[l] But this is a discourse of christian philosophy; and he that chooses to do any act of spirit, or understanding, or attention, after a full meal, will then per-

[c] Jer. v. 7.

[d] Ἐν τῇ κενῇ γαστρὶ τῶν παλῶν ἔρως οὐκ ἔστι· πεινῶσιν ἡ κύπρις πικρά.—Achæus apud Athenæum.

Extraordinarios motus in cippo claudit jejunium.—S. Cyp.

Jejunia enim nos contra peccata faciunt fortiores, concupiscentias vincunt, tentationes repellunt, superbiam inclinant, iram mitigant, et omnes bonæ voluntatis affectus ad maturitatem totius virtutis enutriunt.—S. Leo, Serm. 4. de Jejun.

Saginantur pugiles qui xerophagiis invalescunt.—Tertul. de Jejun.

[e] S. Hieron. in Vita. S. Hilarion.

[f] Parcus cibus et venter semper esuriens triduana jejunia superant.—S. Hieron. Ep. 8. ad Demetriad.

[g] Coloss. ii. 23. Λόγον σοφίας.

[h] Εἰ τις ἐπίσκοπος, &c. γάμου, καὶ κρεῶν καὶ ὄινου, οὐ δι' ἄσκησιν, ἀλλὰ διὰ βδελυρίαν ἀπέχεται, ἢ καθαιρείσθω.—Can. Apost. 50.

[i] Serm. 5. de Jejun.

[k] Jejunium animæ nostræ alimentum, leves ei pennas producens.—S. Bern. Serm. in Vigil. S. Andreæ.

Ἀκρίδας ἐσθίοντα Ἰωάννην, καὶ πτεροφυήσαντα τὴν ψυχὴν, dixit S. Chrysost.

[l] Jejuniis preces alere, lacrymari, et mugire noctes diesque ad Dominum.—Tertul.

ceive that abstinence had been the better disposition to any intellectual and spiritual action. And, therefore, the church of God ever joined fasting to their more solemn offices of prayer. The apostles "fasted and prayed when they laid their hands," invocated the Holy Ghost upon Saul and Barnabas.[m] And these also, "when they had prayed with fasting," ordained elders in the churches of Lystra and Iconium.[n] And the vigils of every holy day tell us, that the devotion of the festival is promoted by the fast of the vigils.

4. But when fasting relates to what is past, it becomes an instrument of repentance,[o] it is a punitive and afflictive action, an effect of godly sorrow, a testimony of contrition, "a judging of ourselves, and chastening our bodies, that we be not judged of the Lord." The fast of the Ninevites, and the fast the prophet Joel calls for,[p] and the discipline of the Jews in the rights of expiation, proclaim this usefulness of fasting in order to repentance. And, indeed, it were a strange repentance that had no sorrow in it, and a stranger sorrow that had no affliction; but it were the strangest scene of affliction in the world, when the sad and afflicted person shall eat freely, and delight himself, and to the banquets of a full table serve up the chalice of tears and sorrow, and no bread of affliction.[q] Certainly he that makes much of himself, hath no great indignation against the sinner, when himself is the man. And it is but a gentle revenge and an easy judgment, when the sad sinner shall do penance in good meals, and expiate his sin with sensual satisfaction. So that fasting relates to religion, in all variety and difference of time: it is an antidote against the poison of sensual temptations, an advantage to prayer, and an instrument of extinguishing the guilt and the affections of sin, by judging ourselves, and representing, in a judicatory of our own, even ourselves being judges, that sin deserves condemnation, and the sinner merits a high calamity. Which excellencies I repeat in the words of Baruch the scribe, he that was amanuensis to the prophet Jeremy: "The soul that is greatly vexed, which goeth stooping and feeble, and the eyes that fail, and the hungry soul, will give thee praise and righteousness, O Lord."[r]

5. But now, as fasting hath divers ends, so also it hath divers laws. If fasting be intended as an instrument of prayer, it is sufficient that it be of that quality and degree that the spirit be clear and the head undisturbed,[s] an ordinary act of fast, an abstinence from a meal, or a deferring it, or a lessening it when it comes, and the same abstinence repeated, according to the solemnity and intendment of the offices. And this is evident in reason, and the former instances, and the practice of the church, dissolving some of her fasts, which were in order only to prayer by noon, and as soon as the great and first solemnity of the day is over. But if fasting be intended as a punitive act, and an instrument of repentance, it must be greater. St. Paul, at his conversion, continued three days without eating or drinking. It must have in it so much affliction as to express the indignation, and to condemn the sin, and to judge the person. And although the measure of this cannot be exactly determined, yet the general proportion is certain; for a greater sin there must be a greater sorrow, and a greater sorrow must be attested with a greater penalty. And Ezra declares his purpose thus: "I proclaimed a fast that we might afflict ourselves before God."[t] Now this is no further required, nor is it in this sense further useful, but that it be a trouble to the body, an act of judging and severity; and this is to be judged by proportion to the sorrow and indignation, as the sorrow is to the crime. But this affliction needs not to leave any remanent effect upon the body; but such transient sorrow, which is consequent to the abstinence of certain times designed for the solemnity, is sufficient as to this purpose. Only it is to be renewed often, as our repentance must be habitual and lasting; but it may be commuted with other actions of severity and discipline, according to the customs of a church, or the capacity of the persons, or the opportunity of circumstances. But if the fasting be intended for mortification, then it is fit to be more severe and medicinal, by continuance, and quantity, and quality. To repentance, total abstinences without interruption, that is, during the solemnity, short and sharp, are most apt: but towards the mortifying a lust, those sharp and short fasts are not reasonable; but a diet of fasting, an habitual subtraction of nutriment from the body, a long and lasting austerity, increasing in degrees, but not violent in any. And in this sort of fasting we must be highly careful we do not violate a duty by fondness of an instrument; and because we intend fasting as a help to mortify the lust, let it not destroy the body, or retard the spirit, or violate our health, or impede us in any part of our necessary duty. As we must be careful that our fast be reasonable, serious, and apt to the end of our designs; so we must be curious, that by helping one duty uncertainly, it do not certainly destroy another. Let us do it like honest persons and just, without artifices and hypocrisy; but let us also do it like wise persons, that it be neither in itself unreasonable, nor, by accident, become criminal.

6. In the pursuance of this discipline of fasting, the doctors of the church and guides of souls have not unusefully prescribed other annexes and circumstances; as that all the other acts of deport-

[m] Acts xiii. 3. [n] Acts xiv. 23.

[o] Μετάνοια χωρὶς νηστείας ἀργή.—S. Basil.

[p] Joel ii. 15. Levit. xxiii. 27, &c. Isa. xxii. 12.

[q] Οὐ σιτίον, οὐ πότον ἔξεστι προσενέγκεσθαι.—Philo.

Pœnitentia de ipso quoque habitu ac victu mandat, sacco et cineri incubare, corpus sordibus obscurare, animum mœroribus dejicere, atque illa quæ peccavit tristi tractatione mutare. —Tertul. de Pœnit. c. 9.

[r] Baruch ii. 18.

Lautè edere et meraciùs bibere rusticitatis erat apud veteres. Unde ἐπισκυθίζειν, et θρηϊκίη ἄμυστις, apud Callimachum: et in proverbium abiit, ἡ πλησμονὴ τῶν βαρβάρων· et apud Theophrastum, δεινῶς φαγεῖν, και ζωρότερον πιεῖν, rusticorum esse notatur, Περὶ ἀγροικίας.

[s] Παχεῖα γαστὴρ λεπτὸν οὐ τίκτει νόον.

[t] Ezra viii. 21. Dan. x. 12. Psalm xxxv. 13. Levit. xvi. 29-31. Isa. lviii. 3.

ment be symbolical to our fasting. If we fast for mortification, let us entertain nothing of temptation, or semblance to invite a lust; no sensual delight, no freer entertainments of our body, to countenance or corroborate a passion. If we fast that we may pray the better, let us remove all secular thoughts for that time; for it is vain to alleviate our spirits of the burden of meat and drink, and to depress them with the loads of care. If for repentance we fast, let us be most curious that we do nothing contrary to the design of repentance, knowing that a sin is more contrary to repentance than fasting is to sin; and it is the greatest stupidity in the world to do that thing which I am now mourning for, and for which I do judgment upon myself. And let all our actions also pursue the same design, helping one instrument with another, and being so zealous for the grace, that we take in all the aids we can to secure the duty. For to fast from flesh, and to eat delicate fish; not to eat meat, but to drink rich wines freely; to be sensual in the objects of our other appetites, and restrained only in one; to have no dinner, and that day to run on hunting, or to play at cards; are not handsome instances of sorrow, or devotion, or self-denial. It is best to accompany our fasting with the retirements of religion, and the enlargements of charity, giving to others what we deny to ourselves. These are proper actions: and although not in every instance necessary to be done at the same time, (for a man may give his alms in other circumstances, and not amiss,) yet, as they are very convenient and proper to be joined in that society, so to do any thing contrary to religion or to charity, to justice or to piety, to the design of the person or the design of the solemnity, is to make that become a sin which, of itself, was no virtue, but was capable of being hallowed by the end and the manner of its execution.

7. This discourse hath hitherto related to private fasts, or else to fasts indefinitely. For, what rules soever every man is bound to observe in private, for fasting piously, the same rules the governors of a church are to intend, in their public prescription. And when once authority hath intervened, and proclaimed a fast, there is no new duty incumbent upon the private, but that we obey the circumstances, letting them to choose the time and the end for us: and though we must prevaricate neither, yet we may improve both; we must not go less, but we may enlarge; and when fasting is commanded only for repentance, we may also use it to prayers, and to mortification. And we must be curious that we do not obey the letter of the prescription, and violate the intention, but observe all that care in public fasts which we do in private; knowing that our private ends are included in the public, as our persons are in the communion of saints, and our hopes in the common inheritance of sons: and see that we do not fast in order to a purpose, and yet use it so as that it shall be to no purpose. Whosoever so fasts as that it be not effectual in some degree towards the end, or so fasts that it be accounted, of itself, a duty and an act of religion, without order to its proper end, makes his act vain because it is unreasonable, or vain because it is superstitious.

[a] Nec monstravit tantùm, sed etiam præcessit, ne quis difficultatis gratiâ iter virtutis horreret.—LACTANT.

Ἅπαντές ἐσμεν εἰς τὸ νουθετεῖν σοφοί,
Αὐτοὶ δ' ἁμαρτάνοντες οὐ γινώσκομεν.—MENAND.

Ennodius in vitâ Epiphanii: Pingebat actibus suis paginam quam legisset; et quod liber docuerat, vita signabat.

THE PRAYER.

O holy and eternal Jesu, who didst, for our sake, fast forty days and forty nights, and hast left to us thy example, and thy prediction, that, in the days of thy absence from us, we, thy servants, and children of thy bride-chamber, should fast; teach us to do this act of discipline so, that it may become an act of religion. Let us never be like Esau, valuing a dish of meat above a blessing; but let us deny our appetites of meat and drink, and accustom ourselves to the yoke, and subtract the fuel of our lusts, and the incentives of all our unworthy desires: that, our bodies being free from the intemperances of nutriment, and our spirits from the load and pressure of appetite, we may have no desires but of thee; that our outward man, daily decaying by the violence of time, and mortified by the abatements of its too free and unnecessary support; it may, by degrees, resign to the entire dominion of the soul, and may pass from vanity to piety, from weakness to ghostly strength, from darkness and mixtures of impurity to great transparences and clarity, in the society of a beatified soul, reigning with thee, in the glories of eternity, O holy and eternal Jesu. Amen.

DISCOURSE XIV.

Of the Miracles which Jesu wrought, for Confirmation of his Doctrine, during the whole Time of his Preaching.

1. WHEN Jesus had ended his sermon on the mount, he descended into the valleys, to consign his doctrine, by the power of miracles, and the excellency of a rare example; that he might not lay a yoke upon us which himself also would not bear. But as he became "the author," so also "the finisher of our faith;" what he designed in proposition, he represented in his own practice;[a] and by these acts made a new sermon, teaching all prelates and spiritual persons to descend from their eminence of contemplation, and the authority and business of their discourses, to apply themselves to do more material and corporal mercies to afflicted persons, and to preach by example, as well as by their homilies. For he that teaches others well, and practises contrary, is like a fair candlestick, bearing a goodly and bright taper, which sends forth light to all the house, but round about itself there is a shadow and circumstant darkness. The prelate should be "the

light," consuming and spending itself, to enlighten others; scattering his rays round about, from the angles of contemplation, and from the corners of practice; but himself always tending upwards, till at last he expires into the element of love and celestial fruition.

2. But the miracles which Jesus did, were next to infinite; and every circumstance of action that passed from him, as it was intended for mercy, so also for doctrine; and the impotent or diseased persons were not more cured than we instructed. But, because there was nothing in the actions, but what was a pursuance of the doctrines delivered in his sermons, in the sermon we must look after our duty, and look upon his practice as a verification of his doctrine, and instrumental also to other purposes. Therefore, in general, if we consider his miracles, we shall see that he did design them to be a compendium of faith and charity.[b] For he chose to instance his miracles in actions of mercy, that all his powers might especially determine upon bounty and charity; and yet his acts of charity were so miraculous, that they became an argument of the divinity of his person and doctrine. Once he turned water into wine, which was a mutation by a supernatural power, in a natural suscipient, where a person was not the subject, but an element; and yet this was done to rescue the poor bridegroom from affront and trouble, and to do honour to the holy rite of marriage. All the rest, (unless we except his walking upon the waters,) during his natural life, were actions of relief and mercy, according to the design of God, manifesting his power most chiefly in showing mercy.

3. The great design of miracles was to prove his mission from God, to convince the world of sin, to demonstrate his power of forgiving sins, to endear his precepts; and that his disciples "might believe in him, and that believing they might have life through his name."[c] For he, to whom God, by doing miracles gave testimony from heaven, must needs be sent from God; and he who had received power to restore nature, and to create new organs, and to extract from incapacities, and from privations to reduce habits, was Lord of nature, and, therefore, of all the world. And this could not but create great confidence in his disciples, that himself would verify those great promises, upon which he established his law. But that the argument of miracles might be infallible, and not apt to be reproved, we may observe its eminence by divers circumstances of probability, heightened up to the degree of moral demonstration.

4. First: The holy Jesus "did miracles which no man" (before him, or at that time) "ever did."[d] Moses smote the rock, and water gushed out; but he could not turn that water into wine. Moses cured no diseases, by the empire of his will, or the word of his mouth; but Jesus "healed all infirmities." Elisha raised a dead child to life; but Jesus raised one who had been dead four days, and buried, and corrupted. Elias, and Samuel, and all the prophets, and the succession of the high priests in both the temples, put all together, never did so many or so great miracles as Jesus did. He cured leprous persons by his touch; he restored sight to the blind, who were such not by any intervening accident, hindering the act of the organ, but by nature, who were "born blind," and whose eyes had not any natural possibility to receive sight; who could never see without creating of new eyes for them, or some integral part co-operating to vision; and, therefore, the miracle was wholly an effect of a Divine power, for nature did not at all co-operate; or, that I may use the elegant expression of Dante, it was such

> ——— à cui natura
> Non scaldò ferro mai, ne battè ancude,

for which nature never did heat the iron, nor beat the anvil. He made crooked limbs become straight, and the lame to walk; and habitual diseases and inveterate, of eighteen years' continuance, (and once of thirty-eight,) did disappear at his speaking, like darkness at the presence of the sun. He cast out devils, who, by the majesty of his person, were forced to confess and worship him; and yet, by his humility and restraints, were commanded silence, or to go whither he pleased; and without his leave, all the powers of hell were as infirm and impotent as a withered member, and were not able to stir. He raised three dead persons to life; he fed thousands of people, with two small fishes and five little barley cakes: and, as a consummation of all power and all miracles, he foretold, and verified it, that himself would rise from the dead after three days' sepulture. But when himself had told them, he did miracles "which no man else ever did," they were not able to reprove his saying with one single instance; but the poor blind man found him out one instance, to verify his assertion: "It was yet never heard, that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind."

5. Secondly: The scene of his preaching and miracles was Judea, which was the pale of the church, and God's enclosed portion, "of whom were the oracles and the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ was to come," and to whom he was promised. Now, since these miracles were for verification of his being the Christ, the promised Messias, they were then to be esteemed a convincing argument; when all things else concurring, as the predictions of the prophets, the synchronisms, and the capacity of his person, he brought miracles to attest himself to be the person so declared and signified. God would not suffer his people to be abused by miracles, nor from heaven would speak so loud, in testimony of any thing contrary to his own will and purposes. They to whom he gave the oracles, and the law, and the predictions of the Messias, and declared beforehand, that at the coming of the Messias "the blind should see, the lame should walk, and the deaf should hear, the lepers should be cleansed, and to the poor the gospel should be preached,"[e] could not expect a greater conviction for acceptation of a person, than, when

[b] Acts x. 38. [c] John xx. 31. x. 38. v. 36. [d] John xv. 24. [e] Isa. xxxv. 5, 6. Matt. xi. 5.

that happened, which God himself, by his prophets, had consigned as his future testimony; and if there could have been deception in this, it must needs have been inculpable in the deceived person, to whose error a Divine prophecy had been both nurse and parent. So that, taking the miracles Jesus did, in that conjunction of circumstances, done to that people to whom all their oracles were transmitted by miraculous verifications; miracles so many, so great, so accidentally, and yet so regularly, to all comers and necessitous persons that prayed for it, after such predictions and clearest prophecies, and these prophecies owned by himself, and sent, by way of symbol and mysterious answer, to John the Baptist, to whom he described his office, by recounting his miracles in the words of the prediction; there cannot be any fallibility or weakness pretended to this instrument of probation, applied, in such circumstances, to such a people, who, being dear to God, would be preserved from invincible deceptions; and, being commanded by him to expect the Messias in such an equipage of power and demonstration of miracles, were, therefore, not deceived, nor could they, because they were bound to accept it.

6. Thirdly: So that now we must not look upon these miracles as an argument primarily intended to convince the gentiles, but the Jews. It was a high probability to them also, and so it was designed also, in a secondary intention; but it could not be an argument to them so certain, because it was destitute of two great supporters. For they neither believed the prophets, foretelling the Messias to be such, nor yet saw the miracles done; so that they had no testimony of God beforehand, and were to rely upon human testimony for the matter of fact; which, because it was fallible, could not infer a necessary conclusion, alone and of itself, but it put on degrees of persuasion, as the testimony had degrees of certainty or universality; that they also "which see not, and yet have believed," might "be blessed." And, therefore, Christ sent his apostles to convert the gentiles, and supplied, in their case, what in his own could not be applicable, or so concerning them. For he sent them to do miracles in the sight of the nations, that they might not doubt the matter of fact; and prepared them also with a prophecy, foretelling that they should do the same, and greater miracles than he did. They had greater prejudices to contest against, and a more unequal distance from belief, and aptnesses to credit such things; therefore it was necessary that the apostles should do greater miracles, to remove the greater mountains of objection. And they did so; and by doing it in pursuance and testimony of the ends of Christ and christianity, verified the fame and celebrity of their Master's miracles, and represented to all the world his power, and his veracity, and his Divinity.

7. Fourthly: For when the holy Jesus appeared upon the stage of Palestine, all things were quiet, and at rest from prodigy and wonder; nay, John the Baptist, who, by his excellent sanctity and austerities, had got great reputation to his person and doctrines, yet "did no miracle;" and no man else did any, save some few exorcists among the Jews cured some demoniacs and distracted people. So that, in this silence, a prophet, appearing with signs and wonders, had nothing to lessen the arguments, no opposite of like power, or appearances of a contradictory design. And, therefore, it persuaded infinitely, and was certainly operative upon all persons, whose interest and love of the world did not destroy the piety of their wills, and put their understanding into fetters. And Nicodemus, a doctor of the law, being convinced, said, "We know that thou art a doctor sent from God; for no man can do those things which thou doest, unless God be with him."[f] But when the devil saw what great affections and confidences these miracles of Christ had produced in all persons, he too late strives to lessen the argument, by playing an after-game; and weakly endeavours to abuse vicious persons, (whose love to their sensual pleasures was of power to make them take any thing for argument to retain them,) by such low, few, inconsiderable, uncertain, and suspicious instances, that it grew to be the greatest confirmation and extrinsical argument in behalf of religion, that either friend or foe, upon his own industry, could have represented. Such as were the making an image speak, or fetching fire from the clouds; and that the images of Diana, Cyndias, and Vesta, among the Jasiæans, would admit no rain to wet them, or cloud to darken them; and that the bodies of them who entered into the temple of Jupiter, in Arcadia, would cast no shadow:[g] which things Polybius himself, one of their own superstition, laughs at, as impostures, and says they were no way to be excused, unless the pious purpose of the inventors did take off from the malice of the lie. But the miracles of Jesus were confessed, and wondered at, by Josephus; were published to all the world by his own disciples, who never were accused, much less convicted, of forgery; and they were acknowledged by Celsus[h] and Julian,[i] the greatest enemies of Christ.

8. But further yet, themselves gave it out, that one Caius was cured of his blindness by Æsculapius, and so was Valerius Aper; and at Alexandria, Vespasian cured a man of the gout by treading upon his toes, and a blind man with spittle. And when Adrian, the emperor, was sick of a fever, and would have killed himself, it is said, two blind persons were cured by touching him, whereof one of them told him that he also should recover.[k] But although Vespasian, by the help of Apollonius Tyaneus, who was his familiar, who also had the devil to be his, might do any thing within the power of nature, or by permission might do much more; yet, besides that this was of an uncertain and less credible report, if it

[f] John iii. 2.

[g] Lib. xvi. Hist.

[h] Ἐνομίσατε αὐτὸν εἶναι υἱὸν Θεοῦ, ἐπεὶ χωλοὺς καὶ τυφλοὺς ἐθεράπευσε; dixit Celsus apud Origen.

[i] Εἰ μὴ τις οἴεται τοὺς κυλλοὺς καὶ τυφλοὺς ἰασάσθαι, καὶ δαιμονιῶντας ἐξορκίζειν, τῶν μεγίστων ἔργων εἶναι, &c. — JULIAN. apud Cyril. lib. vi.

[k] Spartianus in Adriano; qui addit, Marium Maximum dixisse hæc facta fuisse per simulationem.

had been true, it was also infinitely short of what Christ did, and was a weak, silly imitation, and usurping of the argument, which had already prevailed upon the persuasions of men, beyond all possibility of confutation. And for that of Adrian to have reported it is enough to make it ridiculous; and it had been a strange power to have cured two blind persons, and yet be so unable to help himself, as to attempt to kill himself, by reason of anguish, impatience, and despair.

9. Fifthly: When the Jews and Pharisees believed not Christ for his miracles, and yet perpetually called for a sign, he refused to give them a sign, which might be less than their prejudice, or the persuasions of their interest; but gave them one, which alone is greater than all the miracles which ever were done, or said to be done, by any antichrist, or the enemies of the religion put all together: a miracle which could have no suspicion of imposture; a miracle without instance, or precedent, or imitation: and that is, Jesus's lying in the grave three days and three nights, and then rising again, and appearing to many, and conversing for forty days together; giving probation of his rising, of the verity of his body; making a glorious promise, which at Pentecost was verified, and speaking such things, which became precepts and parts of the law for ever after.

10. Sixthly: I add two things more to this consideration. First, that the apostles did such miracles, which were infinitely greater than the pretensions of any adversary, and inimitable by all the powers of man or darkness. They raised the dead, they cured all diseases by their very shadow passing by, and by the touch of garments; they converted nations, they foretold future events, they themselves spake with tongues, and they gave the Holy Ghost by imposition of hands, which enabled others to speak languages which immediately before they understood not, and to cure diseases, and to eject devils. Now, supposing miracles to be done by gentile philosophers and magicians after; yet when they fall short of these in power, and yet teach a contrary doctrine, it is a demonstration that it is a lesser power, and, therefore, the doctrine not of Divine authority and sanction. And it is remarkable, that, among all the gentiles, none ever reasonably pretended to a power of casting out devils. For the devils could not get so much by it, as things then stood: and besides, in whose name should they do it, who worshipped none but devils and false gods? which is too violent presumption, that the devil was the architect in all such buildings. And when the seven sons of Sceva,[l] who was a Jew, (amongst whom it was sometimes granted to cure demoniacs,) offered to exorcise a possessed person, the devil would by no means endure it, but beat them for their pains. And although it might have been for his purpose to have enervated the reputation of St. Paul, and, by a voluntary cession, equalled St. Paul's enemies to him, yet either the devil could not go out but at the command of a christian, or else to have gone out would have been a disservice and ruin to his kingdom; either of which declares, that the power of casting out devils is a testimony of God, and a probation of the divinity of a doctrine, and a proper argument of christianity.

11. Seventhly: But, besides this, I consider, that the holy Jesus, having first possessed, upon just title, all the reasonableness of human understanding by his demonstration of a miraculous power, in his infinite wisdom knew that the devil would attempt to gain a party by the same instrument, and therefore so ordered it, that the miracles which should be done, or pretended to, by the devil, or any of the enemies of the cross of Christ, should be a confirmation of christianity, not do it disservice: for he foretold that antichrist and other enemies "should come in prodigies, and lying wonders and signs." Concerning which, although it may be disputed whether they were truly miracles, or mere deceptions and magical pretences; yet, because they were such which the people could not discern from miracles really such, therefore it is all one, and in this consideration they are to be supposed such: but, certainly, he that could foretell such a future contingency, or such a secret of predestination, was able also to know from what principle it came; and we have the same reason to believe that antichrist shall do miracles to evil purposes, as that he shall do any at all; he that foretold us of the man, foretold us also of the imposture, and commanded us not to trust him. And it had been more likely for antichrist to prevail upon christians by doing no miracles, than by doing any: for if he had done none, he might have escaped without discovery; but by doing miracles, as he verified the wisdom and prescience of Jesus, so he declared to all the church that he was the enemy of their Lord, and therefore less likely to deceive: for which reason it is said, that "he shall deceive, if it were possible, the very elect;" that is therefore not possible, because that by which he insinuates himself to others, is by the elect, the church and chosen of God, understood to be his sign and mark of discovery, and a warning. And, therefore, as the prophecies of Jesus were an infinite verification of his miracles, so also this prophecy of Christ concerning antichrist disgraces the reputation and faith of the miracles he shall act. The old prophets foretold of the Messias, and of his miracles of power and mercy, to prepare for his reception and entertainment: Christ alone, and his apostles from him, foretold of antichrist, and that he should come in all miracles of deception and lying; that is, with true or false miracles to persuade a lie: and this was to prejudice his being accepted, according to the law of Moses.[m] So that, as all that spake of Christ, bade us believe him for the miracles; so all that foretold of antichrist, bade us disbelieve him the rather for his: and the reason of both is the same, because the mighty and "surer word of prophecy," as St. Peter calls it, being the greatest testimony in the world of a Divine principle, gives authority, or reprobates, with the same power. They who are the predestinate of God, and they that are the *præsciti*, the foreknown and marked people, must

[l] Acts xix.

[m] Deut. xiii. 1–3.

needs stand or fall to the Divine sentence; and such must this be acknowledged: for no enemy of the cross, not the devil himself, ever foretold such a contingency, or so rare, so personal, so voluntary, so unnatural an event, as this of the great antichrist.

12. And thus the holy Jesus, having showed forth the treasures of his Father's wisdom, in revelations and holy precepts, and, upon the stock of his Father's greatness, having dispensed and demonstrated great power in miracles, and these being instanced in acts of mercy, he mingled the glories of heaven to transmit them to earth, to raise us up to the participations of heaven: he was pleased, by healing the bodies of infirm persons, to invite their spirits to his discipline, and by his power to convey healing, and by that mercy, to lead us into the treasures of revelation; that both bodies and souls, our wills and understandings, by Divine instruments, might be brought to Divine perfections in the participations of a Divine nature. It was a miraculous mercy that God should look upon us in our blood, and a miraculous condescension that his Son should take our nature: and even this favour we could not believe without many miracles: and so contrary was our condition to all possibilities of happiness, that if salvation had not marched to us all the way in miracle, we had perished in the ruins of a sad eternity. And now it would be but reasonable, that, since God, for our sakes, hath rescinded so many laws of natural establishment, we also, for his, and for our own, would be content to do violence to those natural inclinations, which are also criminal when they derive into action. Every man living in the state of grace is a perpetual miracle, and his passions are made reasonable, as his reason is turned to faith, and his soul to spirit, and his body to a temple, and earth to heaven; and less than this will not dispose us to such glories, which, being the portion of saints and angels, and the nearest communications with God, are infinitely above what we see, or hear, or understand.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal Jesu, who didst receive great power, that by it thou mightest convey thy Father's mercies to us, impotent and wretched people; give me grace to believe that heavenly doctrine, which thou didst ratify with arguments from above, that I may fully assent to all those mysterious truths which integrate that doctrine and discipline, in which the obligations of my duty, and the hopes of my felicity, are deposited. And to all those glorious verifications of thy goodness and thy power add also this miracle, that I, who am stained with leprosy of sin, may be cleansed, and my eyes may be opened, that I may see the wondrous things of thy law; and raise thou me up from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, that I may for ever walk in the land of the living, abhorring the works of death and darkness; that as I am, by the miraculous mercy, partaker of the first, so also I may be accounted worthy of the second resurrection: and as by faith, hope, charity, and obedience, I receive the fruit of thy miracles in this life, so, in the other, I may partake of thy glories, which is a mercy above all miracles. Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. Lord, I believe; help mine unbelief: and grant that no indisposition or incapacity of mine may hinder the wonderful operations of thy grace; but let it be thy first miracle to turn my water into wine, my barrenness into fruitfulness, my aversations from thee into unions and intimate adhesions to thy infinity, which is the fountain of mercy and power. Grant this for thy mercy's sake, and for the honour of those glorious attributes, in which thou hast revealed thyself and thy Father's excellencies to the world, O holy and eternal Jesu. Amen.

Ἅγιος Ἰσχυρός.

THE

HISTORY

OF

THE LIFE AND DEATH

OF THE

HOLY JESUS.

PART III.

BEGINNING AT THE SECOND YEAR OF HIS PREACHING UNTIL HIS ASCENSION.

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE AND VIRTUOUS LADY,

THE

LADY FRANCES,

COUNTESS OF CARBERY.

MADAM,

SINCE the Divine Providence hath been pleased to bind up the great breaches of my little fortune, by your charity and nobleness of a religious tenderness, I account it an excellent circumstance and handsomeness of condition, that I have the fortune of St. Athanasius, to have my persecution relieved and comforted by an honourable and excellent lady; and I have nothing to return for this honour done to me, but to do as the poor paralytics and infirm people in the gospel did, when our blessed Saviour cured them; they went and told it to all the country, and made the vicinage full of the report, as themselves were of health and joy. And, although I know the modesty of your person and religion had rather do favours than own them, yet give me leave to draw aside the curtain and retirement of your charity; for I had rather your virtue should blush, than my unthankfulness make me ashamed. Madam, I intended by this address, not only to return you spirituals for your temporals, but to make your noble usages of me and mine to become, like your other charities, productive of advantages to the standers by. For, although the beams of the sun, reflected from a marble, return not home to the body and fountain of light; yet they that walk below, feel the benefit of a doubled heat: so whatever reflections or returns of your favours I can make, although they fall short of what your worth does most reasonably challenge, and can proceed but towards you with forward desires and distant approaches; yet I am desirous to believe, that those who walk between us, may receive assistances from this intercourse, and the following papers may be auxiliary to the enkindling of their piety, as to the confirming and establishing yours. For, although the great prudence of your most noble lord, and the modesties of your own temperate and sweeter dispositions, become the great endearments of virtue to you; yet, because it is necessary that you make religion the business of your life, I thought it not an impertinent application, to express my thankfulness to your Honour, by that which may best become my duty and my gratitude, because it may do you the greatest service. Madam, I must beg your pardon, that I have opened the sanctuary of your retired virtues; but I was obliged to publish the endearments and favours of your noble lord and yourself, towards me and my relatives: for as your hands are so clasped, that one ring is the ligature of them both; so I have found emanations from that conjuncture of hands, with a consent so forward and apt, that nothing can satisfy for my obligations, but by being in the greatest eminency of thankfulness and humility of person,

MADAM,

Your Honour's most obliged,

And most humble Servant,

JER. TAYLOR.

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE AND VIRTUOUS LADY,

THE

LADY ALICE,

COUNTESS OF CARBERY.

MADAM,

BY the Divine Providence, which disposes all things wisely and charitably, you are, in the affections of your noblest lord, successor to a very dear and most excellent person, and designed to fill up those offices of piety to her dear pledges, which the haste which God made to glorify and secure her would not permit her to finish. I have much ado to refrain from telling great stories of her wisdom, piety, judgment, sweetness, and religion; but that it would renew the wound, and make our sins bleed afresh, at the memory of that dear saint: and we hope that much of the storm of the Divine anger is over, because he hath repaired the breach by sending you, to go on upon her account, and to give countenance and establishment to all those graces, which were warranted and derived from her example. Madam, the nobleness of your family, your education, and your excellent principles, your fair dispositions, and affable comportment, have not only made all your servants confident of your worthiness and great virtues, but have disposed you so highly and necessarily towards an active and a zealous religion, that we expect it should grow to the height of a great example; that you may draw others after you, as the eye follows the light, in all the angles of its retirement, or open stages of its publication. In order to this I have chosen your Honour into a new relation, and have endeared you to this instrument of piety; that if you will please to do it countenance, and employ it in your counsels and pious offices, it may minister to your appetites of religion; which, as they are already fair and prosperous, so they may swell up to a vastness large enough to entertain all the secrets and pleasures of religion: that so you may add to the blessings and prosperities, which already dwell in that family where you are now fixed, new title to more, upon the stock of all those promises, which have secured and entailed felicities upon such persons who have no vanities, but very many virtues. Madam, I could not do you any service, but by doing myself this honour, to adorn my book with this fairest title and inscription of your name. You may observe, but cannot blame, my ambition; so long as it is instanced in a religious service, and means nothing but this, that I may signify how much I honour that person, who is designed to bring new blessings to that family, which is so honourable in itself, and, for so many reasons, dear to me. Madam, upon that account, besides the stock of your own worthiness, I am

Your Honour's most humble

And obedient Servant,

JER. TAYLOR.

PART III.

BEGINNING AT THE SECOND YEAR OF HIS PREACHING UNTIL HIS ASCENSION.

SECTION XIII.

Of the Second Year of the Preaching of Jesus.

1. WHEN the first year of Jesus, the year of peace, and undisturbed preaching, was expired, "there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem."[a] This feast was the second Passover he kept after he began to preach;[b] not the feast of Pentecost, or Tabernacles, both which were past before Jesus came last from Judea: whither when he was now come, he finds an "impotent person lying at the pool of Bethesda, waiting till the angel should move the waters, after which, whosoever first stepped in was cured of his infirmity." The poor man had waited thirty-eight years, and still was prevented, by some other of the hospital that needed a physician. But Jesus, seeing him, had pity on him, cured him, and bade him "take up his bed and walk." This cure happened to be wrought "upon the sabbath," for which the Jews were so moved with indignation, that they "thought to slay him:" and their anger was enraged by his calling himself "the Son of God," and "making himself equal with God."

[a] John v. 1, &c

[b] Iren. lib. ii. c. 10.

2. Upon occasion of this offence, which they snatched at before it was ministered, Jesus discourses[c] upon "his mission, and derivation of his authority from the Father; of the union between them, and the excellent communications of power, participation of dignity, delegation of judicature, reciprocations and reflections of honour from the Father to the Son, and back again to the Father. He preaches of life and salvation to them that believe in him; prophesies of the resurrection of the dead, by the efficacy of the voice of the Son of God; speaks of the day of judgment, the differing conditions after, of salvation and damnation respectively; confirms his words and mission by the testimony of John the Baptist, of Moses, and the other scriptures, and of God himself." And still the scandal rises higher: for "in the second sabbath[d] after the first," that is, in the first day of unleavened bread, which happened the next day after the weekly Sabbath, the disciples of Jesus pull ripe ears of corn, rub them in their hands, and eat them, to satisfy their hunger; for which he offered satisfaction to their scruples, convincing them, that works of necessity are to be permitted, even to the breach of a positive temporary constitution; and that works of mercy are the best serving of God, upon any day whatsoever, or any part of the day, that is vacant to other offices, and proper for a religious festival.

3. But when neither reason nor religion would give them satisfaction, but that they went about to kill him, he withdrew himself from Jerusalem, and returned to Galilee; whither the scribes and Pharisees followed him, observing his actions, and whether or not he would prosecute that which they called profanation of their sabbath, by doing acts of mercy upon that day. He still did so: for, entering into one of the synagogues of Galilee upon the sabbath, Jesus saw a man (whom St. Jerome reports to have been a mason) coming to Tyre, and complaining that his hand was withered,[e] and desiring help of him, that he might again be restored to the use of his hand, lest he should be compelled, with misery and shame, to beg his bread. Jesus restored his hand as whole as the other, in the midst of all those spies and enemies. Upon which act, being confirmed in their malice, the Pharisees went forth and joined with the Herodians, (a sect of people who said Herod was the Messias, because, by the decree of the Roman senate, when the sceptre departed from Judah, he was declared king,[f]) and both together took counsel how they might kill him.

4. Jesus therefore departed again to the seacoast, and his companies increased as his fame; for he was now followed by new "multitudes from Galilee, from Judea, from Jerusalem, from Idumea, from beyond Jordan, from about Tyre and Sidon;" who, hearing the report of his miraculous power, to cure all diseases by the word of his mouth, or the touch of his hand, or the handling his garment, came with their ambulatory hospital of their sick and possessed; and they pressed on him but to touch him, and were all immediately cured: the devils confessing publicly that he was "the Son of God," till they were upon all such occasions restrained, and compelled to silence.

5. But now Jesus, having commanded a ship to be in readiness against any inconvenience or troublesome pressures of the multitude, "went up into a mountain to pray, and continued in prayer all night," intending to make the first ordination of apostles; which the next day he did, choosing out of the number of his disciples these twelve to be apostles:[g] Simon Peter and Andrew; James and John, the sons of thunder; Philip and Bartholomew; Matthew and Thomas: James, the son of Alphæus, and Simon the Zelot; Judas, the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot. With these, descending from the mountain to the plain, he repeated the same sermon, or much of it, which he had before preached in the first beginning of his prophesyings; that he might publish his gospel to these new auditors, and also more particularly inform his apostles in "the doctrine of the kingdom:" for now, because he "saw Israel scattered like sheep having no shepherd," he did purpose to send these twelve abroad, to preach repentance and the approximation of the kingdom; and therefore first instructed them in the mysterious parts of his holy doctrine, and gave them also particular instructions together with their temporary commission for that journey.

6. "For Jesus 'sent them out by two and two, giving them power over unclean spirits,' and to heal all manner of sickness and diseases; telling them they were 'the light,' and 'the eyes,' and 'the salt of the world,' so intimating their duties of diligence, holiness, and incorruption; giving them in charge to preach the gospel, to dispense their power and miracles freely, as they had received it, to anoint sick persons with oil, not to enter into any Samaritan town, but to 'go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,' to provide no *viaticum* for their journeys, but to put themselves upon the religion and piety of their proselytes: he arms them against persecutions, gives them leave to fly the storm from city to city, promises them the assistances of his Spirit, encourages them by his own example of long-sufferance, and by instances of Divine Providence, expressed even to creatures of smallest value, and by promise of great rewards, to the confident confession of his name; and furnishes them with some propositions, which are like so many bills of exchange, upon the trust of which they might take up necessaries; promising great retributions, not only to them who quit any thing of value for the sake of Jesus, but to them that offer a cup of water to a thirsty disciple." And with these instructions they departed to preach in the cities.

[c] John v. 19, &c.

[d] Suidas. voc. σάββατον.

[e] Evangel. Naz. quod S. Hieron. ex. Hebr. in Græcum transtulit.

"Ημισύ μου τέθνηκε, τὸ δ' ἥμισυ λιμὸς ἐλέγχει.
Σῶσόν μου, βασιλεῦ, μουσικὸν ἡμίτομον.

[f] Sic Tertullianus, Epiphanius, Chrysostomus, et Theophylactus, et Hieron. Dialog. advers. Lucif. uno ore affirmant.

[g] Sic et apostolici semper duodenus honoris
Fulget apex, numero menses imitatus et horas,
Omnibus ut rebus semper tibi militet annus.—SEDUL.

7. And Jesus, returning to Capernaum, received the address of a faithful centurion of the legion called the Iron Legion,[h] (which usually quartered in Judea,) in behalf of his servant whom he loved, and who was grievously afflicted with the palsy; and healed him, as a reward and honour to his faith. And from thence going to the city Naim, he raised to life the only son of a widow, whom the mourners followed in the street, bearing the corpse sadly to his funeral. Upon the fame of these, and divers other miracles, John the Baptist, who was still in prison, (for he was not put to death till the latter end of this year,) sent two of his disciples to him by Divine providence, or else by John's designation, to minister occasions of his greater publication, inquiring if he was the Messias. To whom Jesus returned no answer, but a demonstration taken from the nature of the thing, and the glory of the miracles, saying, "Return to John, and tell him what you see; for the deaf hear, the blind see, the lame walk, the dead are raised, and the lepers are cleansed, and to the poor the gospel is preached;"[i] which were the characteristic notes of the Messias, according to the predictions of the holy prophets.

8. When John's disciples were gone with this answer, Jesus began to speak concerning John; "of the austerity and holiness of his person, the greatness of his function, the divinity of his commission, saying, that he was 'greater than a prophet, a burning and shining light, the Elias that was to come,' and the consummation or ending of the old prophets: adding withal, that the perverseness of that age was most notorious in the entertainment of himself and the Baptist; for neither could the Baptist, who 'came neither eating nor drinking,' (that, by his austerity and mortified deportment he might invade the judgment and affections of the people,) nor Jesus, who 'came both eating and drinking,' (that, by a moderate and an affable life, framed to the compliance and common use of men, he might sweetly insinuate into the affections of the multitude,) obtain belief amongst them. They could object against every thing, but nothing could please them. But wisdom and righteousness had a theatre in its own family, and 'is justified of all her children.' Then he proceeds to a more applied reprehension of Capernaum, and Chorazin, and Bethsaida, for being pertinacious in their sins and infidelity, in defiance and reproof of all the mighty works which had been wrought in them. But these things were not revealed to all dispositions; the wise and the mighty of the world were not subjects prepared for the simplicity and softer impresses of the gospel, and the downright severity of its sanctions. And therefore Jesus glorified God for the magnifying of his mercy, in that these things, which were 'hid from the great ones,' were 'revealed to babes;' and concludes this sermon with an invitation of all wearied and disconsolate persons loaded with sin and misery, to 'come to him,' promising 'ease to their burdens,' and 'refreshment to their weariness,' and to exchange their heavy pressures into an 'easy yoke,' and a 'light burden.'"

9. When Jesus had ended this sermon, one of the Pharisees,[k] named Simon, invited him to "eat with him;" into whose house when he was entered, a certain "woman that was a sinner," abiding there in the city, heard of it: her name was Mary; she had been married to a noble personage, a native of the town and castle of Magdal, from whence she had her name of Magdalen, though she herself was born in Bethany; a widow she was, and prompted by her wealth, liberty, and youth, to an intemperate life, and too free entertainments. She came to Jesus into the Pharisee's house; not (as did the staring multitude) to glut her eyes with the sight of a miraculous and glorious person; nor (as did the centurion, or the Syro-Phœnician, or the ruler of the synagogue) for cure of her sickness, or in behalf of her friend, or child, or servant; but (the only example of so coming) she came in remorse and regret for her sins, she came to Jesus to lay her burden at his feet, and to present him with a broken heart, and a weeping eye, and great affection, and a box of nard pistic, salutary and precious. For she came trembling, and fell down before him, weeping bitterly for her sins,[l] pouring out a flood great enough to "wash the feet" of the blessed Jesus, and "wiping them with the hairs of her head;" after which she "brake the box," and "anointed his feet with ointment." Which expression was so great an ecstacy of love, sorrow and adoration, that to anoint the feet even of the greatest monarch was long unknown, and in all the pomps and greatnesses of the Roman prodigality it was not used, till Otho taught it to Nero;[m] in whose instance it was by Pliny reckoned for a prodigy of unnecessary profusion, and in itself, without the circumstance of so free a dispensation, it was a present for a prince; and an alabaster box of nard pistic was sent as a present from Cambyses to the king of Ethiopia.

10. When Simon observed this sinner so busy in the expresses of her religion and veneration to Jesus, he thought with himself that this was "no prophet," that did "not know her to be a sinner;" or no just person, that would suffer her to touch him. For although the Jews' religion did permit harlots of their own nation to live, and enjoy the privileges of their nation, save that their oblations were refused: yet the Pharisees, who pretended to a greater degree of sanctity than others, would not admit them to civil usages, or the benefits of ordinary society; and thought religion itself, and the honour of a prophet, was concerned in the interests of the same superciliousness: and therefore Simon made an objection within himself. Which Jesus knowing, (for he understood his thoughts, as well

[h] Dio, Hist. Rom. lib. lv.

[i] Isa. xxxv. 5, 6.

[k] Luke vii.

[l] ——— purgata recessit
Per gemitum; propriique lavans in gurgite fletûs,
Munda suis lacrymis redit, et detersa capillis.
SEDUL. lib. iii.

[m] Plin. Natur. Hist. lib. xiii. c. 3. Vide Athen. Deipnosoph. lib. xii. c. 30. Herodotus in Thalia.

as his words,) made her apology and his own in a civil question, expressed in a parable of two debtors, to whom a greater and a less debt respectively was forgiven; both of them concluding, that they would love their merciful creditor in proportion to his mercy and donative: and this was the case of Mary Magdalen; to whom, because "much was forgiven, she loved much," and expressed it in characters so large, that the Pharisee might read his own incivilities and inhospitable entertainment of the Master, when it stood confronted with the magnificency of Mary Magdalen's penance and charity.

11. When Jesus had dined, he was presented with the sad sight of a poor demoniac, possessed with a blind and a dumb devil, in whose behalf his friends entreated Jesus, that he would cast the devil out; which he did immediately, and "the blind man saw, and the dumb spake," so much to the amazement of the people, that they ran in so prodigious companies after him, and so scandalized the Pharisees, who thought that, by means of this prophet, their reputation would be lessened and their schools empty, that first a rumour was scattered up and down, from an uncertain principle, but communicated with tumult and apparent noises, that Jesus was "beside himself:" upon which rumour his friends and kindred came together to see, and to make provisions accordingly; and the holy Virgin-mother came herself, but without any apprehensions of any such horrid accident. The words and things she had from the beginning laid up in her heart, would furnish her with principles exclusive of all apparitions of such fancies; but she came to see what that persecution was, which, under that colour, it was likely the Pharisees might commence.

12. When the mother of Jesus and his kindred came, they found him in a house, encircled with people full of wonder and admiration: and there the holy Virgin-mother might hear part of her own prophecy verified, that the generations of the earth should call her blessed; for a woman, worshipping Jesus, cried out, "Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps that gave thee suck." To this Jesus replied, not denying her to be highly blessed, who had received the honour of being the mother of the Messias, but advancing the dignities of spiritual excellencies far above this greatest temporal honour in the world: "Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the word of God, and do it." For, in respect of the issues of spiritual perfections, and their proportionable benedictions, all immunities and temporal honours are empty and hollow blessings: and all relations of kindred disband and empty themselves into the greater channels and floods of divinity.

13. For when, Jesus being in the house, they told him "his mother and his brethren staid for him without;" he told them, those relations were less than the ties of duty and religion: for those dear names of mother and brethren, which are hallowed by the laws of God and the endearments of nature, are made far more sacred when a spiritual cognation does supervene, when the relations are subjected in persons religious and holy: but if they be abstract and separate, the conjunction of persons in spiritual bands, in the same faith, and the same hope, and the union of them in the same mystical head, is an adunation nearer to identity than those distances between parents and children, which are only cemented by the actions of nature, as it is of distinct consideration from the spirit. For Jesus, pointing to his disciples, said, "Behold my mother and my brethren; for whosoever doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven, he is my brother, and sister, and mother."

14. But the Pharisees, upon the occasion of the miracles, renewed the old quarrel: "He casteth out devils by Beelzebub." Which senseless and illiterate objection Christ having confuted, charged them highly upon the guilt of an unpardonable crime, telling them, that the so charging those actions of his, done in virtue of the Divine Spirit, is a sin against the Holy Ghost: and however they might be bold with the Son of man, and prevarications against his words or injuries to his person might, upon repentance and baptism, find a pardon; yet it was a matter of greater consideration to sin against the Holy Ghost; that would find no pardon, here nor hereafter. But taking occasion upon this discourse, he, by an ingenious and mysterious parable, gives the world great caution of recidivation and backsliding after repentance. For if "the devil returns into a house once swept and garnished, he bringeth seven spirits more impure than himself; and the last estate of that man is worse than the first."

15. After this, Jesus went from the house of the Pharisee, and, coming to the sea of Tiberias or Gennesareth, (for it was called the sea of Tiberias from a town on the banks of the lake,) taught the people upon the shore, himself sitting in the ship; but he taught them by parables, under which were hid mysterious senses, which shone through their veil, like a bright sun through an eye closed with a thin eyelid; it being light enough to show their infidelity, but not to dispel those thick Egyptian darknesses, which they had contracted, by their habitual indispositions and pertinacious aversations. By the parable of "the sower scattering his seed by the way-side, and some on stony, some on thorny, some on good ground," he intimated the several capacities or indispositions of men's hearts, the carelessness of some, the frowardness and levity of others, the easiness and softness of a third; and how they are spoiled with worldliness and cares, and how many ways there are to miscarry, and that but one sort of men receive the word, and bring forth the fruits of a holy life. By the parable of "tares permitted to grow amongst the wheat," he intimated the toleration of dissenting opinions, not destructive of piety or civil societies. By the three parables of the "seed growing insensibly," of the "grain of mustard seed swelling up to a tree," of "a little leaven qualifying the whole lump," he signified the increment of the gospel, and the blessings upon the apostolical sermons.

16. Which parables when he had privately to his apostles rendered into their proper senses, he added

to them two parables, concerning the dignity of the gospel, comparing it to "treasure hid in a field," and "a jewel of great price, for the purchase" of which every good "merchant must quit all that he hath," rather than miss it: telling them withal, that however purity and spiritual perfections were intended by the gospel, yet it would not be acquired by every person; but the public professors of christianity should be a mixed multitude, "like a net, enclosing fishes good and bad." After which discourses, he retired from the sea-side, and went to his own city of Nazareth; where he preached so excellently, upon certain words of the prophet Isaiah,[n] that all the people wondered at the wisdom which he expressed in his divine discourses. But the men of Nazareth did not do honour to the prophet, that was their countryman, because they knew him in all the disadvantages of youth, and kindred, and trade, and poverty; still retaining in their minds the infirmities and humilities of his first years, and keeping the same apprehensions of him, a man, and a glorious prophet, which they had to him, a child, in the shop of a carpenter. But when Jesus, in his sermon, had reproved their infidelity, at which he wondered, and, therefore, did but few miracles there, in respect of what he had done at Capernaum, and intimated the prelation of that city before Nazareth, "they thrust him out of the city, and led him to the brow of the hill on which the city was built," intending to "throw him down headlong." But his work was not yet finished; therefore he, "passing through the midst of them, went his way."

17. Jesus therefore, departing from Nazareth, went up and down to all the towns and castles of Galilee, attended by his disciples, and certain women, out of whom he had cast unclean spirits; such as were Mary Magdalen, Johanna, wife to Chuza, Herod's steward, Susanna, and some others, who did for him offices of provision, and "ministered to him out of their own substance," and became part of that holy college, which, about this time, began to be full; because now the apostles were returned from their preaching, full of joy, that the devils were made subject to the word of their mouth, and the empire of their prayers, and invocation of the holy name of Jesus. But their Master gave them a lenitive, to assuage the tumour and excrescence, intimating that such privileges are not solid foundations of a holy joy, but so far as they co-operate toward the great end of God's glory, and their own salvation, to which when they are consigned, and "their names written in heaven," in the book of election, and registers of predestination, then their joy is reasonable, holy, true, and perpetual.[o]

18. But when Herod had heard these things of Jesus, presently his apprehensions were such as derived from his guilt; he thought it was John the Baptist who was "risen from the dead," and that these "mighty works" were demonstrations of his power, increased by the superadditions of immortality and diviner influences, made proportionable to the honour of a martyr, and the state of separation.[p] For, a little before this time, Herod had sent to the castle of Macheruns, where John was prisoner, and caused him to be beheaded. His head Herodias buried in her own palace, thinking to secure it against a re-union, lest it should again disturb her unlawful lusts, and disquiet Herod's conscience. But the body the disciples of John gathered up, and carried it with honour and sorrow, and buried it in Sebaste, in the confines of Samaria, making his grave between the bodies of Elizeus and Abdias, the prophets. And about this time was the passover of the Jews.

[n] Isaiah lxi. 1.

[o] Vide Discourse of Certainty of Salvation, Num. 3.

DISCOURSE XV.

Of the Excellency, Ease, Reasonableness, and Advantages of bearing Christ's Yoke, and living according to his Institution.

1. The holy Jesus came to break from off our necks two great yokes: the one of sin, by which we were fettered and imprisoned in the condition of slaves and miserable persons; the other, of Moses's law, by which we were kept in pupilage and minority, and a state of imperfection: and asserted us into "the glorious liberty of the sons of God." The first was a despotic empire, and the government of a tyrant: the second was of a school-master, severe, absolute, and imperious; but it was in order to a further good, yet nothing pleasant in the sufferance and load. And now Christ, having taken off these two, hath put on a third. He quits us of our burden, but not of our duty; and hath changed the former tyranny and the less perfect discipline into the sweetness of paternal regiment, and the excellency of such an institution, whose every precept carries part of its reward in hand, and assurances of after-glories. Moses's law was like sharp and unpleasant physic, certainly painful, but uncertainly healthful. For it was not then communicated to them, by promise and universal revelations, that the end of their obedience should be life eternal; but they were full of hopes it might be so, as we are of health when we have a learned and wise physician. But as yet the reward was in a cloud, and the hopes in fetters and confinement. But the law of Christ is like Christ's healing of diseases: he does it easily, and he does it infallibly. The event is certainly consequent; and the manner of cure is by a touch of his hand, or a word of his mouth, or an approximation to the "hem of his garment," without pain and vexatious instruments. My meaning is, that christianity is, by the assistance of Christ's Spirit, which he promised us and gave us in the gospel, made very easy to us: and yet a reward so great is promised, as were enough to make a lame man to walk, and a broken arm endure the burden; a reward great enough to make us willing to do violence to all our inclinations, passions, and desires. A hundredweight to a giant is a light burden, because his strength is disproportionably great, and makes it as easy to him as an ounce is to a child. And yet, if

[p] Virtutem incolumem odimus,
Sublatam ex oculis quærimus invidi.—Hor. l. iii. Od. 24.

we had not the strength of giants, if the hundredweight were of gold or jewels, a weaker person would think it no trouble to bear that burden, if it were the reward of his portage, and the hire of his labours. The Spirit is given to us to enable us, and heaven is promised to encourage us; the first makes us able, and the second makes us willing: and when we have power and affections we cannot complain of pressure. And this is the meaning of our blessed Saviour's invitation; "Come unto me, for my burden is light, my yoke is easy:"[a] which St. John also observed: "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh, even our faith:"[b] that is, our belief of God's promises, the promise of the Spirit for present aid, and of heaven for the future reward, is strength enough to overcome all the world.

2. But besides that God hath made his yoke easy, by exterior supports, more than ever was in any other religion; christianity is of itself, according to human estimate, a religion more easy and desirable by our natural and reasonable appetites, than sin, in the midst of all its pleasures and imaginary felicities. Virtue hath more pleasure in it than sin, and hath all satisfactions to every desire of man, in order to human and prudent ends; which I shall represent in the consideration of these particulars. 1. To live according to the laws of Jesus is, in some things, most natural, and proportionable to the desires and first intentions of nature. 2. There is in it less trouble than in sin. 3. It conduces infinitely to the content of our lives, and natural and political satisfactions. 4. It is a means to preserve our temporal lives long and healthy. 5. It is most reasonable; and he only is prudent that does so, and he a fool that does not. And all this, besides the considerations of a glorious and happy eternity.

3. Concerning the first, I consider that we do very ill, when, instead of making our natural infirmity an instrument of humility, and of recourse to the grace of God, we pretend the sin of Adam to countenance our actual sins, natural infirmity to excuse our malice; either laying Adam in fault, for deriving the disability upon us, or God, for putting us into the necessity. But the evils that we feel in this, are from the rebellion of the inferior appetite against reason, or against any religion, that puts restraint upon our first desires. And, therefore, in carnal and sensual instances accidentally, we find the more natural averseness, because God's laws have put our irascible and concupiscible faculties in fetters and restraints: yet, in matters of duty, which are of immaterial and spiritual concernment, all our natural reason is a perfect enemy and contradiction to, and a law against, vice. It is natural for us to love our parents, and they who do not are unnatural; they do violence to those dispositions, which God gave us to the constitution of our nature, and for the designs of virtue: and all those tendernesses of affection, those bowels and relenting dispositions, which are the endearments of parents and children, are also the bonds of duty. Every degree of love makes duty delectable: and, therefore, either by nature we are inclined to hate our parents, which is against all reason and experience, or else we are, by nature, inclined to do them all that, which is the effect of love to such superiors, and principles of being and dependence: and every prevarication from the rule, effects, and expresses of love, is a contradiction to nature, and a mortification; to which we cannot be invited by any thing from within, but by something from without, that is violent and preternatural. There are also many other virtues, even in the matter of sensual appetite, which none can lose, but by altering, in some degree, the natural disposition. And I instance in the matter of carnality and uncleanness, to which possibly some natures may think themselves apt and disposed: but yet God hath put into our mouths a bridle, to curb the licentiousness of our speedy appetite, putting into our very natures a principle as strong to restrain it, as there is in us a disposition apt to invite us; and this is also in persons who are most apt to the vice, women and young persons, to whom God hath given a modesty and shame of nature, that the entertainments of lusts may become contradictions to our retreating and backward modesty, more than they are satisfactions to our too forward appetites. It is as great a mortification and violence to nature to blush, as to lose a desire; and we find it true, when persons are invited to confess their sins, or to ask forgiveness publicly, a secret smart is not so violent as a public shame: and, therefore, to do an action which brings shame all along, and opens the sanctuaries of nature, and makes all her retirements public, and dismantles her enclosure, as lust does, and the shame of carnality, hath in it more asperity and abuse to nature, than the short pleasure to which we are invited can repay. There are unnatural lusts, lusts which are such in their very condition and constitution, that a man must turn a woman, and a woman become a beast, in acting them; and all lusts, that are not unnatural in their own complexion, are unnatural by a consequent and accidental violence. And if lust hath in it dissonancies to nature, there are but few apologies left to excuse our sins upon nature's stock: and all that system of principles and reasonable inducements to virtue, which we call "the law of nature," is nothing else but that firm ligature and incorporation of virtue to our natural principles and dispositions, which whoso prevaricates, does more against nature than he that restrains his appetite. And, besides these particulars, there is not, in our natural discourse, any inclination, directly and by intention of itself, contrary to the love of God, because by God we understand that Fountain of being which is infinitely perfect in itself, and of great good to us; and whatsoever is so apprehended, it is as natural for us to love, as to love any thing in the world; for we can love nothing but what we believe to be good in itself, or good to us.[c] And be-

[a] Matt. xi. 28, 30.
[b] 1 John v. 3, 4.

[c] Ἐγὼ γὰρ οὐκ ἂν οὐδὲ ἄλλο περὶ θεοῦ ὅ, τι ἂν εἴποιμι, ἢ ὅτι ἀγαθός τε παντάπασιν εἴη, καὶ ξύμπαντα ἐν τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ

yond this, there are, in nature, many principles and reasons to make an aptness to acknowledge and confess God; and, by the consent of nations, which they also have learned from the dictates of their nature, all men, in some manner or other, worship God. And, therefore, when this, our nature, is determined in its own indefinite principle, to the manner of worship, all acts against the love, the obedience, and the worship of God, are also against nature, and offer it some rudeness and violence. And I shall observe this, and refer it to every man's reason and experience, that the great difficulties of virtue, commonly apprehended, commence not so much upon the stock of nature, as of education and evil habits.[d] Our virtues are difficult, because we at first get ill habits; and these habits must be unrooted before we do well; and that is our trouble. But if, by the strictness of discipline and wholesome education, we begin at first in our duty, and the practice of virtuous principles, we shall find virtue made as natural to us, while it is customary and habitual, as we pretend infirmity to be, and propensity to vicious practices. And this we are taught by that excellent Hebrew who said, "Wisdom is easily seen of them that love her, and found of such as seek her: she preventeth them that desire her, in making herself first known unto them. Whoso seeketh her early shall have no great travel; for he shall find her sitting at his doors."[e]

4. Secondly: In the strict observances of the law of christianity there is less trouble than in the habitual courses of sin. For if we consider the general design of christianity, it propounds to us in this world nothing that is of difficult purchase,[f] nothing beyond what God allots us, by the ordinary and common providence, such things which we are to receive without care and solicitous vexation: so that the ends are not big, and the way is easy; and this walked over with much simplicity and sweetness, and those obtained without difficulty. He that propounds to himself to live low, pious, humble, and retired, his main employment is nothing but sitting quiet, and undisturbed with variety of impertinent affairs: but he that loves the world, and its acquisitions, entertains a thousand businesses, and every business hath a world of employment, and every employment is multiplied, and made intricate by circumstances, and every circumstance is to be disputed, and he that disputes ever hath two sides in enmity and opposition; and by this time there is a genealogy, a long descent, and cognation of troubles, branched into so many particulars, that it is troublesome to understand them, and much more to run through them. The ways of virtue are very much upon the defensive, and the work one, uniform, and little; they are like war within a strong castle, if they stand upon their guard they seldom need to strike a stroke. But a vice is like storming of a fort, full of noise, trouble, labour, danger, and disease. How easy a thing is it to restore the pledge! But if a man means to defeat him that trusted him, what a world of arts must he use to make pretences! To delay first, then to excuse, then to object, then to intricate the business, next to quarrel, then to forswear it, and all the way to palliate his crime, and represent himself honest. And if an oppressing and greedy person have a design to cozen a young heir, or to get his neighbour's land, the cares of every day, and the interruptions of every night's sleep, are more than the purchase is worth; whereas he might buy virtue at half that watching, and the less painful care of a fewer number of days. A plain story is soonest told, and best confutes an intricate lie; and when a person is examined in judgment, one false answer asks more wit for its support and maintenance than a history of truth.[g] And such persons are put to so many shameful retreats, false colours, fucuses, and daubings with untempered mortar, to avoid contradiction or discovery, that the labour of a false story seems, in the order of things, to be designed the beginning of its punishment. And if we consider how great a part of our religion consists in prayer, and how easy a thing God requires of us, when he commands us to pray for blessings, the duty of a christian cannot seem very troublesome.

5. And, indeed, I can hardly instance in any vice, but there is visibly more pain in the order of acting and observing it, than in the acquist or promotion of virtue.[h] I have seen drunken persons, in their seas of drink and talk, dread every cup as a blow, and they have used devices and private arts, to escape the punishment of a full draught; and the poor wretch, being condemned, by the laws of drinking, to his measure, was forced and haled to execution; and he suffered it, and thought himself engaged to that person, who, with much kindness and importunity, invited him to a fever. But, certainly, there was more pain in it, than in the strictness of holy and severe temperance. And he that shall compare the troubles and dangers of an ambitious war, with the gentleness and easiness of peace, will soon perceive, that every tyrant and usurping prince, that snatches at his neighbour's rights, hath two armies, one of men, and the other of cares. Peace sheds no blood, but of the pruned

τῇ αὐτοῦ ἔχει· λεγέτω δὲ ὥσπερ γινώσκειν ἕκαστος ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν ὅιεται, καὶ ἱερεὺς καὶ ἰδιώτης.—Procop. Gothic. l.

Τοιοῦτος μὲν οὖν ὁ τοῖς λογικοῖς γένεσιν ἐνουσιωμένος ὅρκος, ἔχεσθαι τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτῶν καὶ ποιητοῦ, καὶ μὴ παραβαίνειν μηδαμῇ τοὺς ὑπ' ἐκείνου διορισθέντας νόμους.—Hierocl.

[d] Siquidem Leonides, Alexandri pædagogus, quibusdam eum vitiis imbuit, quæ robustum quoque et jam maximum regem ab illa institutione puerili sunt prosecuta.—Quintil. lib. i. c. 1.

[e] Wisd. vi. 12, 13, 14.

[f] Multò difficilius est facere ista quæ facitis. Quid nam quiete otiosius est animi? Quid irâ laboriosius? Quid clementiâ remissius? Quid crudelitate negotiosius? Vacat pudicitia, libido occupatissima est. Omnium denique virtutum tutela facilior est; vitia magno coluntur.—Seneca.

In vitiis abit voluptas, manet turpitudo; cùm in rectè factis abeat labor, maneat honestas.—Muson.

[g] Nam statum cujusque ad securitatem melius innocentiâ tueor, quàm eloquentiâ.—Quintil. Dial. de Orat.

[h] Quid namque à nobis, exigit, (religio,) quid præstari sibi à nobis jubet, nisi solam tantummodo fidem, castitatem, humilitatem, sobrietatem, misericordiam, sanctitatem, quæ utique omnia non onerant nos, sed ornant.—Salvian.

Ἡ ἀρετὴ φαντασία μὲν ἐπὶ τὴν πρόχειρον ἔντευξιν ἀργαλέον εἶναι δοκεῖ, μελέτῃ δὲ ἥδιστον, καὶ ἐξ ἐπιλόγισμοῦ σύμφερον. Δυσκολώτερον ἡ κακία τῆς ἀρετῆς.—S. Chrysost. Ὁ πολλὰ πίνων κ' ἐξαμαρτάνει.

vine; and hath no business, but modest and quiet entertainments of the time, opportune for piety, and circled with reward. But God often punishes ambition and pride with lust; and he sent a "thorn in the flesh," as a corrective to the elevations and *grandezza* of St. Paul, growing up from the multitude of his revelations: and it is not likely the punishment should have less trouble than the crime, whose pleasures and obliquity this was designed to punish. And, indeed, every experience can verify, that an adulterer hath in him the impatience of desires, the burnings of lust, the fear of shame, the apprehensions of a jealous, abused, and an enraged husband.[i] He endures affronts, mistimings, tedious waitings, the dulness of delay, the regret of interruption, the confusion and amazements of discovery, the scorn of a reproached vice, the debasings of contempt upon it; unless the man grows impudent, and then he is more miserable upon another stock. But David was so put to it, to attempt, to obtain, to enjoy Bathsheba, and to prevent the shame of it, that the difficulty was greater than all his wit and power; and it drove him into base and unworthy arts, which discovered him the more, and multiplied his crime. But while he enjoyed the innocent pleasures of his lawful bed, he had no more trouble in it, than there was in inclining his head upon his pillow. The ways of sin are crooked, desert, rocky, and uneven:[k] they are broad, indeed; and there is variety of ruins, and allurements, to entice fools, and a large theatre to act the bloody tragedies of souls upon; but they are nothing smooth, or safe, or delicate. The ways of virtue are strait, but not crooked; narrow, but not unpleasant. There are two vices for one virtue; and, therefore, the way to hell must needs be of greater extent, latitude, and dissemination: but, because virtue is but one way, therefore it is easy, regular, and apt to walk in, without error or diversions. "Narrow is the gate, and strait is the way:" it is true, considering our evil customs and depraved natures, by which we have made it so to us. But God hath made it more passable, by his grace and present aids; and St. John the Baptist receiving his commission to preach repentance, it was expressed in these words: "Make plain the paths of the Lord." Indeed, repentance is a rough and a sharp virtue, and, like a mattock and spade, breaks away all the roughnesses of the passage, and hinderances of sin; but when we enter into the dispositions, which Christ hath designed to us, the way is more plain and easy than the ways of death and hell. Labour it hath in it, just as all things that are excellent; but no confusions, no distractions of thought, no amazements, no labyrinths, and intricacy of counsels: but it is like the labours of agriculture, full of health and simplicity, plain and profitable; requiring diligence, but such in which crafts and painful stratagems are useless and impertinent. But vice hath oftentimes so troublesome a retinue, and so many objections in the event of things, is so entangled in difficult and contradictory circumstances, hath in it parts so opposite to each other, and so inconsistent with the present condition of the man, or some secret design of his, that those little pleasures, which are its fucus and pretence, are less perceived and least enjoyed, while they begin in fantastic semblances, and rise up in smoke, vain and hurtful, and end in dissatisfaction.

6. But it is considerable, that God, and the sinner, and the devil, all join in increasing the difficulty and trouble of sin; upon contrary designs, indeed, but all co-operate to the verification of this discourse. For God, by his restraining grace, and the checks of a tender conscience, and the bands of public honesty, and the sense of honour and reputation, and the customs of nations, and the severities of laws, makes that, in most men, the choice of vice is imperfect, dubious, and troublesome, and the pleasures abated, and the apprehensions various, and in differing degrees: and men act their crimes while they are disputing against them, and the balance is cast by a few grains, and scruples vex and disquiet the possession; and the difference is perceived to be so little, that inconsideration and inadvertency is the greatest means to determine many men to the entertainment of a sin. And this God does with a design to lessen our choice, and to disabuse our persuasions from arguments and weak pretences of vice, and to invite us to the trials of virtue, when we see its enemy giving us so ill conditions. And yet the sinner himself makes the business of sin greater; for its nature is so loathsome, and its pleasure so little, and its promises so unperformed, that when it lies open, easy and apt to be discerned, there is no argument in it ready to invite us; and men hate a vice which is every day offered and prostitute; and when they seek for pleasure, unless difficulty presents it, as there is nothing in it really to persuade a choice, so there is nothing strong or witty enough to abuse a man. And to this purpose, (amongst some others, which are malicious and crafty,) the devil gives assistance, knowing that men despise what is cheap and common, and suspect a latent excellency to be in difficult and forbidden objects: and, therefore, the devil sometimes crosses an opportunity of sin, knowing that the desire is the iniquity, and does his work sufficiently: and yet the crossing the desire, by impeding the act, heightens the appetite, and makes it more violent and impatient. But by all these means, sin is made more troublesome than the pleasures of the temptation can account for: and it will be a strange imprudence to leave virtue, upon pretence of its difficulty, when, for that very reason, we the rather entertain the instances of sin, despising a cheap sin and a costly virtue; choosing to walk through the brambles of a desert, rather than to climb the fruit-trees of paradise.

7. Thirdly: Virtue conduces infinitely to the content of our lives, to secular felicities, and political satisfactions;[l] and vice does the quite contrary. For the blessings of this life are these, that make it happy; peace and quietness; content and satisfac-

[i] ——— et Cecropiæ domûs
Æternum opprobrium, quòd malè barbaras
Regum est ulta libidines. HOR. lib. iv. Od. 12.

[k] Διοδεύειν ἐρήμους ἀβάτους.—Wisd. v. 7.

[l] Ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ ἐστιν εὐσεβὲς καὶ συμφέρον.—ARRIAN.

tion of desires; riches; love of friends and neighbours; honour and reputation abroad; a healthful body, and a long life. This last is a distinct consideration, but the other are proper to this title. For the first, it is certain, peace was so designed by the holy Jesus, that he framed all his laws in compliance to that design. He that returns good for evil, a soft answer to the asperity of his enemy, kindness to injuries, lessens the contention always, and sometimes gets a friend; and when he does not, he shames his enemy. Every little accident in a family, to peevish and angry persons,[m] is the matter of a quarrel; and every quarrel discomposes the peace of the house, and sets it on fire; and no man can tell how far that may burn; it may be to a dissolution of the whole fabric. But whosoever obeys the laws of Jesus, bears with the infirmities of his relatives and society, seeks with sweetness to remedy what is ill, and to prevent what it may produce; and throws water upon a spark, and lives sweetly with his wife, affectionately with his children, providently and discreetly with his servants; and they all love the *major-domo*, and look upon him as their parent, their guardian, their friend, their patron, their *proveditore*. But look upon a person angry, peaceless, and disturbed; when he enters upon his threshold, it gives an alarm to his house, and puts them to flight, or upon their defence; and the wife reckons the joy of her day is done when he returns, and the children inquire into their father's age, and think his life tedious; and the servants curse privately, and do their service as slaves do, only when they dare not do otherwise; and they serve him as they serve a lion, they obey his strength, and fear his cruelty, and despise his manners, and hate his person. No man enjoys content in his family, but he that is peaceful and charitable, just and loving, forbearing and forgiving, careful and provident. He that is not so, his house may be his castle, but it is manned by enemies; his "house is built," not "upon the sand," but upon the waves, and upon a tempest: the foundation is uncertain, but his ruin is not so.

8. And if we extend the relations of the man beyond his own walls, he that does his duty to his neighbour, that is, all offices of kindness, gentleness, and humanity, nothing of injury and affront, is certain never to meet with a wrong so great, as is the inconvenience of a law-suit, or the contention of neighbours, and all the consequent dangers and inconvenience. Kindness will create and invite kindness; an injury provokes an injury. And since "the love of neighbours" is one of those beauties which Solomon did admire, and that this beauty is within the combination of precious things, which adorn and reward a peaceable, charitable disposition; he that is in love with spiritual excellencies, with intellectual rectitudes, with peace, and with blessings of society, knows they grow amongst the rose-bushes of virtue, and holy obedience to the laws of Jesus. And "for a good man some will even dare to die;" and a sweet and charitable disposition is received with fondness, and all the endearments of the neighbourhood. He that observes how many families are ruined by contention,[n] and how many spirits are broken by the care, and contumely, and fear, and spite, which are entertained, as advocates to promote a suit of law, will soon confess, that a great loss, and peaceable quitting of a considerable interest, is a purchase and a gain, in respect of a long suit and a vexatious quarrel. And still, if the proportion rises higher, the reason swells, and grows more necessary and determinate. For if we would live according to the discipline of christian religion, one of the great plagues which vex the world would be no more. That there should be no wars, was one of the designs of christianity; and the living according to that institution, which is able to prevent all wars, and to establish an universal and eternal peace, when it is obeyed, is the using an infallible instrument toward that part of our political happiness, which consists in peace. This world would be an image of heaven, if all men were charitable, peaceable, just, and loving. To this excellency all those precepts of Christ, which consist in forbearance and forgiveness, do co-operate.

9. But the next instance of the reward of holy obedience, and conformity to Christ's laws, is itself a duty, and needs no more but a mere repetition of it. We must be content[o] in every state; and because christianity teaches us this lesson, it teaches us to be happy: for nothing from without can make us miserable, unless we join our own consents to it, and apprehend it such, and entertain it in our sad and melancholic retirements. A prison is but a retirement, and opportunity of serious thoughts, to a person whose spirit is confined, and apt to sit still, and desires no enlargement beyond the cancels of the body, till the state of separation calls it forth into a fair liberty. But every retirement is a prison to a loose and wandering fancy, for whose wildness no precepts are restraint, no band of duty is confinement; who when he hath broken the first hedge of duty, can never after endure any enclosure so much as in a symbol. But this precept is so necessary, that it is not more a duty than a rule of prudence, and in many accidents of our lives it is the only cure of sadness: for it is certain, that no providence less than Divine can prevent evil and cross accidents; but that is an excellent remedy to the evil, that receives the accident within its power, and takes out the sting, paring the nails, and draw-

[m] Malignum hunc esse hominem forsan credas.
Ego esse miserum credo, cui placet nemo.—MART. Ep.

[n] "Οπου γὰρ ζῆλος καὶ ἐρίθεια, ἐκεῖ ἀκαταστασία, καὶ πᾶν φαῦλον πρᾶγμα.—JAC. iii. 16.

[o] Αὐτάρκεια τοῦ βίου φιλοσοφία αὐτοδίδακτος.—POL.
Vitio vertunt quia multa egeo; at ego illis, quia nequeunt egere.—M. CATO apud Aul. Gell. lib. xiii. c. 22.
Neque mala vel bona, quæ vulgus putat: multos qui conflictari adversis videantur, beatos, ac plerosque, quamquam magnas per opes, miserrimos; si illi gravem fortunam constanter tolerent, hi prosperâ inconsultè utantur.—TACIT. An. lib. vi.
——Si celeres (fortuna) quatit
Pennas, resigno quæ dedit, et meâ
Virtute me involvo; probamque
Pauperiem sine dote quæro.—HOR. lib. iii. Od. 29.
Κάλλιστον ἐστι τοὔνδικον πεφυκέναι·
Λῶστον δὲ τὸ ζῆν ἄνοσον· ἡδιστον δ' ὅτῳ
Πάρεστι λῆψις ὧν ἐρᾷ καθ' ἡμέραν.—SOPHOCL. Creüsâ.

ing the teeth of the wild beast, that it may be tame, or harmless and medicinal. For all content consists in the proportion of the object to the appetite: and because external accidents are not in our own power, and it were nothing excellent that things happened to us according to our first desires, God hath, by his grace, put it into our own power to make the happiness, by making our desires descend to the event, and comply with the chance, and combine with all the issues of Divine providence. And then we are noble persons, when we borrow not our content from things below us, but make our satisfactions from within.[p] And it may be considered, that every little care may disquiet us, and may increase itself by reflection upon its own acts; and every discontent may discompose our spirits, and put an edge, and make afflictions poignant, but cannot take off one from us, but makes every one to be two. But content removes not the accident, but complies with it; it takes away the sharpness and displeasure of it, and, by stooping down, makes the lowest equal, proportionable, and commensurate. Impatience makes an ague to be a fever, and every fever to be a calenture, and that calenture may expire in madness: but a quiet spirit is a great disposition to health, and, for the present, does alleviate the sickness. And this also is notorious in the instance of covetousness. "The love of money is the root of all evil, which while some have coveted after, they have pierced themselves with many sorrows."[q] Vice makes poor, and does ill endure it.

10. For he that, in the school of Christ, hath learned to determine his desires, when his needs are served, and to judge of his needs by the proportions of nature, hath nothing wanting towards riches. Virtue makes poverty become rich; and no riches can satisfy a covetous mind, or rescue him from the affliction of the worst kind of poverty.[r] He only wants, that is not satisfied. And there is a great infelicity in a family, where poverty dwells with discontent: there the husband and wife quarrel for want of a full table and a rich wardrobe; and their love, that was built upon false arches, sinks when such temporary supporters are removed; they are like two millstones, which set the mill on fire when they want corn: and then their combinations and society were unions of lust, or not supported with religious love. But we may easily suppose St. Joseph and the holy Virgin-mother in Egypt poor as hunger, forsaken as banishment, disconsolate as strangers; and yet their present lot gave them no affliction, because the angel fed them with a necessary hospitality, and their desires were no larger than their tables, and their eyes looked only upwards, and they were careless of the future, and careful of their duty, and so made their life pleasant by the measures and discourses of Divine philosophy. When Elisha stretched himself upon the body of the child, and laid hands to hands, and applied mouth to mouth, and so shrunk himself in the posture of commensuration with the child, he brought life into the dead trunk: and so may we, by applying our spirits to the proportions of a narrow fortune, bring life and vivacity into our dead and lost condition, and make it live till it grows bigger, or else returns to health and salutary uses.

11. And besides this philosophical extraction of gold from stones, and riches from the dungeon of poverty, a holy life does most probably procure such a proportion of riches, which can be useful to us, or consistent with our felicity. For besides that the holy Jesus hath promised all things, which "our heavenly Father knows we need," (provided we do our duty,) and that we find great securities and rest from care, when we have once cast our cares upon God, and placed our hopes in his bosom; besides all this, the temperance, sobriety, and prudence of a christian is a great income, and by not despising it, a small revenue combines its parts, till it grows to a heap big enough for the emissions of charity, and all the offices of justice, and the supplies of all necessities: whilst vice is unwary, prodigal, and indiscreet, throwing away great revenues, as tributes to intemperance and vanity, and suffering dissolution and forfeiture of estates, as a punishment and curse. Some sins are direct improvidence and ill husbandry. I reckon in this number intemperance, lust, litigiousness, ambition, bribery, prodigality, gaming, pride, sacrilege, which is the greatest spender of them all, and makes a fair estate evaporate like camphire, turning it into nothing, no man knows which way.[s] But what the Roman gave as an estimate of a rich man, saying, "He that can maintain an army, is rich," was but a short account; for he that can maintain an army, may be beggared by one vice, and it is a vast revenue that will pay the debt-books of intemperance or lust.

12. To these if we add that virtue is honourable,[t]

[p] Non enim gazæ, neque consularis
Summovet lictor miseros tumultus
Mentis, et curas laqueata circum
Tecta volantes. Horat. lib. ii. Od. 16.
Quemcunque fortem videris, miserum neges.
Senec. Trag.
Τίκτουσι γὰρ τοι καὶ νόσους δυσθυμίαι.—Soph. Tereus.
Μὴ σύ γε ἄυξανε τὴν εἱμαρμένην.—Zoroast.

[q] 1 Tim. vi. 10.

[r] Cùm perjura patris fides
Consortem socium fallat et hospitem,
Indignoque pecuniam
Hæredi properet. Scilicet improbæ
Crescunt divitiæ; tamen
Curtæ nescio quid semper abest rei.
Horat. lib. iii. Od. 24.
——— Vel dic, quid referat intra
Naturæ fines viventi, jugera centum an
Mille aret ———
Ut, tibi si sit opus liquidi non ampliùs urnâ,
Vel cyatho, et dicas; Magno de flumine mallem,
Quàm ex hoc fonticulo tantundem sumere. Eo fit,
Plenior ut si quos delectet copia justo,
Cum ripæ simul avulsos ferat Aufidus acer:
At qui tantulo eget quanto est opus, is neque limo
Turbatam haurit aquam, neque vitam amittit in undis.
Horat. Serm. lib. i. Sat. 1.
——— Προνοίας οὐδεν ἀνθρώποις ἐφυ
Κέρδος λαβεῖν ἄμεινον, οὐδὲ νοῦ σοφοῦ.—Soph. Elect.

[s] Aleam exercent tantâ lucrandi perdendive temeritate, ut cùm omnia defecerunt, novissimo jactu de libertate et de corpore contendant.—Tacit. de Mor. Germ.

[t] Virtus, repulsæ nescia sordidæ,
Intaminatis fulget honoribus;
Nec sumit aut ponit secures
Arbitrio popularis auræ.—Horat. lib. iii. Od. 2.

and a great advantage to a fair reputation, that it is praised[u] by them that love it not, that it is honoured by the followers and family of vice, that it forces glory out of shame, honour from contempt, that it reconciles men to the fountain of honour, the Almighty God, who will "honour them that honour him;" there are but a few more excellencies in the world to make up the rosary of temporal felicity. And it is so certain that religion serves even our temporal ends, that no great end of state can well be served without it; not ambition, not desires of wealth, not any great design, but religion must be made its usher or support.[x] If a new opinion be commenced, and the author would make a sect, and draw disciples after him, at least he must be thought to be religious; which is a demonstration how great an instrument of reputation piety and religion is: and if the pretence will do us good offices amongst men, the reality will do the same, besides the advantages which we shall receive from the Divine benediction. The "power of godliness" will certainly do more than the "form" alone. And it is most notorious in the affairs of the clergy, whose lot it hath been to fall from great riches to poverty, when their wealth made them less curious of their duty; but when humility, and chastity, and exemplary sanctity, have been the enamel of their holy order; the people, like the Galatians, would pull out their own eyes to do them benefit. And indeed God hath singularly blessed[y] such instruments, to the being the only remedies to repair the breaches made by sacrilege and irreligion. But certain it is, no man was ever honoured for that which was esteemed vicious. Vice hath got money and a curse many times, and vice hath adhered to the instruments and purchases of honour: but, among all nations whatsoever, those called honourable put on the face and pretence of virtue. But I choose to instance in the proper cognizance of a christian, humility, which seems contradictory to the purposes and reception of honour; and yet, in the world, nothing is a more certain means to purchase it. Do not all the world hate a proud man? And, therefore, what is contrary to humility, is also contradictory to honour and reputation. And when the apostle had given command, that "in giving honour, we should one go before another," he laid the foundation of praises, and panegyrics, and triumphs. And as humility is secure against affronts and tempests of despite, because it is below them; so when, by employment, or any other issue of Divine providence, it is drawn from its sheath and secrecy, it shines clear and bright as the purest and most polished metals. Humility is like a tree, whose root, when it sets deepest in the earth, rises higher, and spreads fairer, and stands surer, and lasts longer; every step of its descent is like a rib of iron, combining its parts in unions indissoluble, and placing it in the chambers of security. No wise man ever lost any thing by cession; but he receives the hostility of violent persons into his embraces; like a stone into a lap of wool, it rests and sits down soft and innocently; but a stone falling upon a stone makes a collision, and extracts fire, and finds no rest: and just so are two proud persons, despised by each other, contemned by all, living in perpetual dissonancies, always fighting against affronts, jealous of every person, disturbed by every accident, a perpetual storm within, and daily hissings from without.

13. Fourthly: Holiness and obedience is an excellent preservative of life, and makes it long and healthful. In order to which discourse, because it is new, material, and argumentative, apt to persuade men, who prefer life before all their other interests, I consider many things. First: In the Old Testament, a long and a prosperous life were the great promises of the covenant; their hopes were built upon it, and that was made the support of all their duty. "If thou wilt diligently hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, I will put none of the diseases upon thee which I brought upon the Egyptians; for I am the Lord that healeth thee."[z] And more particularly yet, that we may not think piety to be security only against the plagues of Egypt, God makes his promise more indefinite and unconfined: "Ye shall serve the Lord your God, and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee, and will fulfil the number of thy days;"[a] that is, the period of nature shall be the period of thy person; thou shalt live long, and die in a seasonable and ripe age. And this promise was so verified by a long experience, that, by David's time, it grew up to a rule: "What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips, that they speak no guile."[b] And the same argument was pressed by Solomon, who was an excellent philosopher, and well skilled in the natural and accidental means of preservation of our lives: "Fear the Lord, and depart from evil; and it shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones."[c] "Length of days is in the right hand of wisdom:" for "she is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her."[d] Meaning, that the tree of life and immortality, which God had planted in paradise, and which, if man had stood, he should have tasted, and have lived for ever, the fruit of that tree is offered upon the same conditions; if we will keep the commandments of God, our obedience, like the tree of life, shall consign us to immortality hereafter, by a long and a healthful life here. And therefore, although in Moses's time the days of man had been shortened, till they came to "threescore years and ten, or fourscore years, and then their strength is but labour and sorrow;"[e] (for Moses was author of that psalm;) yet to show the great privilege of those persons whose piety was great, Moses himself attained to one hundred and twenty years, which was

[u] ——— virtus laudatur, et alget.—JUVEN.

[x] Præcipuam imperatoriæ majestatis curam esse prospicimus, religionis indaginem; cujus si cultum retinere potuerimus, iter prosperitatis humanis aperitur inceptis.—THEOD. et VALENT. in Cod. Theod.

[y] Dedit enim providentia hominibus munus, ut honesta magis juvarent.—QUINTIL. lib. i. c. 12.

[z] Exod. xv. 26.

[a] Exod. xxiii. 25, 26.

[b] Psalm xxxiv. 12, 13.

[c] Prov. iii. 7, 8.

[d] Ver. 16, 18.

[e] Psalm xc. 10.

almost double to the ordinary and determined period. But Enoch and Elias never died, and became great examples to us, that a spotless and holy life might possibly have been immortal.

14. I shall add no more examples, but one great conjugation of precedent observed by the Jewish writers; who tell us, that in the second temple there were three hundred high priests, (I suppose they set down a certain number for an uncertain, and by three hundred they mean very many,) and yet that temple lasted but four hundred and twenty years; the reason of this so rapid and violent abscission of their priests being their great and scandalous impieties: and yet, in the first temple, whose abode was, within ten years, as long as the second, there was a succession but of eighteen high priests: for they being generally very pious, and the preservers of their rites and religion, against the schism of Jeroboam, and the defection of Israel, and the idolatry and irreligion of many of the kings of Judah, God took delight to reward it with a long and honourable old age. And Balaam knew well enough what he said, when, in his ecstasy and prophetic rapture, he made his prayer to God: "Let my soul die the death of the righteous."[f] It was not a prayer that his soul might be saved, or that he might repent at last; for repentance and immortality were revelations of a later date: but he, in his prophetic ecstasy, seeing what God had purposed to the Moabites, and what blessings he had reserved for Israel, prays that he might not die, as the Moabites were like to die, with an untimely death, by the sword of their enemies, dispossessed of their country, spoiled of their goods, in the period and last hour of their nation: but let my soul die the death of the just, the death designed for the faithful Israelites; such a death which God promised to Abraham, that he should return to his fathers in peace, and in a good old age. For the death[g] of the righteous is like the descending of ripe and wholesome fruits from a pleasant and florid tree; our senses entire, our limbs unbroken, without horrid tortures, after provision made for our children, with a blessing entailed upon posterity, in the presence of our friends, our dearest relative closing up our eyes, and binding our feet, leaving a good name behind us. O let my soul die such a death! for this, in whole or in part, according as God sees it good, is the manner that the righteous die. And this was Balaam's prayer. And this was the state and condition in the Old Testament.

15. In the gospel the case is nothing altered. For, besides that those austerities, rigours, and mortifications, which are in the gospel advised or commanded respectively, are more salutary, or of less corporal inconvenience, than a vicious life of intemperance, or lust, or carefulness, or tyrant covetousness; there is no accident or change, to the sufferance of which the gospel hath engaged us, but in the very thing our life is carefully provided for, either in kind, or by a gainful exchange: "He that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it, and he that will save his life, shall lose it."[h] And although God, who promised long life to them that obey, did not promise that himself would never call for our life, borrowing it of us, and repaying it in a glorious and advantageous exchange; yet this very promise of giving us a better life in exchange for this, when we exposed it in martyrdom, does confirm our title to this, this being the instrument of permutation with the other: for God, obliging himself to give us another in exchange for this, when, in cases extraordinary, he calls for this, says plainly, that this is our present right by grace, and the title of the Divine promises. But the promises are clear. For St. Paul calls children to the observation of the fifth commandment, by the same argument which God used in the first promulgation of it. "Honour thy father and thy mother, (which is the first commandment with promise,) that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest live long upon the earth."[i] For although the gospel be built upon better promises than the law, yet it hath the same too, not as its foundation, but as appendances and adjuncts of grace, and supplies of need. "Godliness[k] hath the promise of this life, as well as of the life that is to come."[l] That is plain. And although Christ revealed his Father's mercies to us, in new expresses and great abundance: yet he took nothing from the world which ever did, in any sense, invite piety, or endear obedience, or cooperate towards felicity. And, therefore, the promises which were made of old, are also presupposed in the new, and mentioned by intimation and implication within the greater. When our blessed Saviour, in seven of the eight beatitudes, had instanced in new promises and rewards, as "heaven, seeing of God, life eternal;"[m] in one of them, to which heaven is as certainly consequent as to any of the rest, he did choose to instance in a temporal blessing, and in the very words of the Old Testament;[n] to show, that that part of the old covenant, which concerns morality, and the rewards of obedience, remains firm, and included within the conditions of the gospel.

16. To this purpose is that saying of our blessed Saviour: "Man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God;"[o] meaning, that besides natural means, ordained for the preservation of our lives, there are means supernatural and divine. God's blessing does as much as bread: nay it is "every word proceeding out of the mouth of God;" that is, every precept and commandment of God is so for our good, that it is intended as food and physic to us, a means to make us live long. And therefore God hath done in this as in other graces and issues

[f] Num. xxiii. 10.

[g] Μηδέ μοι ἄκλαυστος θάνατος μόλοι, ἀλλὰ φίλοισι
Καλλείποιμι θανὼν ἄλγεα καὶ στοναχάς.—Solon.
Cicero, in Tuscul. 1. sic reddit:
Mors mea non careat lacrymis: linquamus amicis
Mœrorem, ut celebrent funera cum gemitu.

[h] Matt. x. 39.

[i] Ephes. vi. 2, 3.

[k] —— οὐ γὰρ εὐσήβεια συνθνήσκει βροτοῖς·
Κἂν ζῶσι, κἂν θάνωσιν, οὐκ ἀπόλλυται.
Sophocl. Philoct.

[l] 1 Tim. iv. 8.

[m] Matt. v. 3, &c. Ver. 5.

[n] Psalm xxxvii. 11.

[o] Matt. iv. 4. Deut. viii. 3.

evangelical, which he purposed to continue in his church for ever: he first gave it in miraculous and extraordinary manner, and then gave it by way of perpetual ministry. The Holy Ghost appeared at first like a prodigy, and with miracle; he descended in visible representments, expressing himself in revelations and powers extraordinary: but it being a promise intended to descend upon all ages of the church, there was appointed a perpetual ministry for its conveyance; and still, though without a sign or miraculous representment, it is ministered in confirmation by imposition of the bishop's hands. And thus, also, health and long life, which, by way of ordinary benediction, is consequent to piety, faith, and obedience evangelical, was at first given in a miraculous manner, that so the ordinary effects, being at first confirmed by miraculous and extraordinary instances and manners of operation, might, for ever after, be confidently expected, without any dubitation, since it was in the same manner consigned, by which all the whole religion was, by a voice from heaven, and a verification of miracles, and extraordinary supernatural effects. That the gift of healing, and preservation and restitution of life, was at first miraculous, needs no particular probation. All the story of the gospel is one entire argument to prove it: and amongst the fruits of the Spirit, St. Paul reckons "gifts of healing, and government, and helps," or exterior assistances and advantages; to represent, that it was intended the life of christian people should be happy and healthful for ever. Now, that this grace also descended afterwards in an ordinary ministry, is recorded by St. James: "Is any man sick amongst you? let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:" [p] that was then the ceremony, and the blessing and effect is still; for "the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up." For it is observable, that the blessing of healing and recovery is not appendant to the annealing, but to the prayer, of the church; to manifest, that the ceremony went with the first miraculous and extraordinary manner: yet that there was an ordinary ministry appointed for the daily conveyance of the blessing; the faithful prayers and offices of holy priests shall obtain life and health to such persons who are receptive of it, and in spiritual and apt dispositions. And when we see, by a continual flux of extraordinary benediction, that even some christian princes are instruments of the Spirit, not only in the government, but in the gifts of healing too, as a reward for their promoting the just interests of christianity; we may acknowledge ourselves convinced, that a holy life, in the faith and obedience of Jesus Christ, may be of great advantage for our health and life, by that instance to entertain our present desires, and to establish our hopes of life eternal. [q]

17. For I consider, that the fear of God is therefore the best antidote in the world against sickness and death, 1. Because it is the direct enemy to sin, which brought in sickness and death; and besides this, that God, by spiritual means, should produce alterations natural, is not hard to be understood by a christian philosopher, take him in either of the two capacities. 2. For there is a rule of proportion, and analogy of effects, that, if sin destroys not only the soul, but the body also, then may piety preserve both, and that much rather: for "if sin," that is, the effects and consequents of sin, "hath abounded, then shall grace superabound;" [r] that is, Christ hath done us more benefit than the fall of Adam hath done us injury; and, therefore, the effects of sin are not greater upon the body, than either are to be restored or prevented by a pious life. 3. There is so near a conjunction between soul and body, that it is no wonder, if God, meaning to glorify both by the means of a spiritual life, suffers spirit and matter to communicate in effects and mutual impresses. Thus the waters of baptism purify the soul; and the holy eucharist, not the symbolical, but the mysterious and spiritual part of it, makes the body also partaker of the death of Christ and a holy union. The flames of hell, whatsoever they are, torment accursed souls; and the stings of conscience vex and disquiet the body. 4. And if we consider, that, in the glories of heaven, when we shall live a life purely spiritual, our bodies also are so clarified and made spiritual, that they also become immortal; that state of glory being nothing else but a perfection of the state of grace, it is not unimaginable, but that the soul may have some proportion of the same operation upon the body, as to conduce to its prolongation, as to an antepast of immortality. 5. For since the body hath all its life from its conjunction with the soul, why not also the perfection of life, according to its present capacity, that is, health and duration, from the perfection of the soul, I mean, from the ornaments of grace? And as the blessedness of the soul (saith the philosopher) consists in the speculation of honest and just things; so the perfection of the body, and of the whole man, consists in the practice, the exercise, and operations of virtue.

18. But this problem in christian philosophy is yet more intelligible, and will be reduced to certain experience, if we consider good life in union and concretion with particular, material, and circumstantiate actions of piety: for these have great powers and instances, even in nature, to restore health and preserve our lives. Witness the sweet sleeps of temperate persons, and their constant appetite; which Timotheus, the son of Conon, observed, when he dieted in Plato's academy with severe and moderated diet: "They that sup with Plato, are well the next day." [s] Witness the symmetry of passions in meek men, their freedom from the violence of enraged and passionate indisposi-

[p] Jam. v. 14, 15.

[q] Futuræ nobis resurrectionis virorem in te Dominus ostendit, ut peccati sciamus esse, quòd cæteri adhuc viventes præmoriuntur in carne; justitiæ, quòd tu adolescentiam in aliena ætate mentiris.—S. HIERON. Paulo Concordiensi Vegeto et Pio Seni, lib. i. c. 8.

[r] Rom. v. 20.

[s] "Οτι ὁι παρὰ Πλάτωνι δειπνήσαντες καὶ τῇ ὑστεραίᾳ καλῶς γίνονται· Μήτε ἑορτὴν ἄλλο τι ἡγοῦνται, ἢ τὸ τὰ δέοντα πράττειν.—De Atheniensibus dictum apud Thucyd.

tions, the admirable harmony and sweetness of content, which dwells in the retirements of a holy conscience; to which if we add those joys, which they only understand truly who feel them inwardly, the joys of the Holy Ghost, the content and joys which are attending upon the lives of holy persons, are most likely to make them long and healthful. "For now we live," saith St. Paul, "if ye stand fast in the Lord."[t] It would prolong St. Paul's life to see his ghostly children persevere in holiness; and if we understood the joys of it, it would do much greater advantage to ourselves. But if we consider a spiritual life abstractedly, and in itself, piety produces our life, not by a natural efficiency, but by Divine benediction. God gives a healthy and a long life, as a reward and blessing to crown our piety, even before the sons of men: "For such as be blessed of him, shall inherit the earth; but they that be cursed of him, shall be cut off."[u] So that this whole matter is principally to be referred to the act of God, either by ways of nature, or by instruments of special providence, rewarding piety with a long life. And we shall more fully apprehend this, if, upon the grounds of Scripture, reason, and experience, we weigh the contrary. "Wickedness" is the way to "shorten our days."[x]

19. Sin brought death in first; and yet man lived almost a thousand years. But he sinned more, and then death came nearer to him: for when all the world was first drowned in wickedness and then in water, God cut him shorter by one half, and five hundred years was his ordinary period. And man sinned still, and had strange imaginations, and built towers in the air; and then, about Peleg's time, God cut him shorter by one half yet, two hundred and odd years was his determination. And yet the generations of the world returned not unanimously to God; and God cut him off another half yet, and reduced him to one hundred and twenty years. And, by Moses's time, one half of the final remanent portion was pared away, reducing him to threescore years and ten; so that, unless it be by special dispensation, men live not beyond that term, or thereabout. But if God had gone on still in the same method, and shortened our days as we multiplied our sins, we should have been but as an ephemeron, man should have lived the life of a fly or a gourd; the morning should have seen his birth, his life have been the term of a day, and the evening must have provided him of a shroud. But God, seeing "man's thoughts were only evil continually," he was resolved no longer so to strive with him, nor destroy the kind, but punish individuals only, and single persons; and if they sinned, or if they did obey, regularly, their life should be proportionable. This God set down for his rule: "Evil shall slay the wicked person:"[y] and, "He that keepeth the commandments keepeth his own soul; but he that despiseth his own ways shall die."[z]

20. But that we may speak more exactly in this problem, we must observe, that, in Scripture, three general causes of natural death are assigned, nature, providence, and chance. By these three I only mean the several manners of Divine influence and operation. For God only predetermines; and what is changed in the following events by Divine permission, to this God and man, in their several manners, do co-operate. The saying of David concerning Saul, with admirable philosophy describes the three ways of ending man's life. "David said furthermore, As the Lord liveth, the Lord shall smite him, or his day shall come to die, or he shall descend into battle, and perish."[a] The first is special providence. The second means the term of nature. The third is that which, in our want of words, we call chance or accident, but is, in effect, nothing else but another manner of the Divine providence. That, in all these, sin does interrupt and retrench our lives, is the undertaking of the following periods.

21. First: In nature, sin is a cause of dyscrasies and distempers, making our bodies healthless, and our days few.[b] For although God hath prefixed a period to nature, by an universal and antecedent determination, and that naturally every man that lives temperately, and by no supervening accident is interrupted, shall arrive thither; yet, because the greatest part of our lives is governed by will and understanding, and there are temptations to intemperance and to violations of our health, the period of nature is so distinct a thing from the period of our person, that few men attain to that, which God had fixed by his first law and preceding purpose, but end their days with folly, and in a period which God appointed them with anger, and a determination secondary, consequent, and accidental. And therefore, says David, "Health is far from the ungodly, for they regard not thy statutes." And to this purpose is that saying of Abenezra:[c] "He that is united to God, the fountain of life, his soul, being improved by grace, communicates to the body an establishment of its radical moisture and natural heat, to make it more healthful, that so it may be more instrumental to the spiritual operations and productions of the soul, and itself be preserved in perfect constitution." Now, how this blessing is contradicted by the impious life of a wicked person, is easy to be understood, if we consider, that from drunken surfeits[d] come dissolution of members,

[t] 1 Thess. iii. 8.
[x] Prov. x. 27.
[z] Prov. xix. 16.
[u] Psalm xxxvii. 22.
[y] Psalm xxxiv. 21.
[a] 1 Sam. xxvi. 10.

[b] Audax omnia perpeti
Gens humana ruit per vetitum nefas.
Post ignem æthereâ domo
Subductum, macies et nova febrium
Terris incubuit cohors;
Semotique priùs tarda necessitas
Lethi corripuit gradum.—HORAT. lib. i. Carm. Od. 3.

[c] In Exod. xxiii. Quicunque unitur Deo, ipsi corroboratur calidum et humidum per vim animæ, et tunc vivit homo ultra limitatum tempus.

[d] Eubulus apud Athenæum, lib. vii. c. 1. introducit Bacchum loquentem in hunc modum:

Tres tantùm sanis ego crateras misceo:
Unum valetudinis, et hunc primum Œdipum;
Secundum amoris, et soporis tertium:
Quo, qui sapere solent, eunt hausto domum.
Nam quartus est haud ampliùs crater meus,
Sed contumeliæ; velut huic proximus
Clamoris, &c.

Nam plurimum vini inditum in vas parvulum
Sternit sine omni, quem replet, negotio.

headachs, apoplexies, dangerous falls, fracture of bones, drenchings and dilution of the brain, inflammation of the liver, crudities of the stomach, and thousands more, which Solomon sums up in general terms: "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath redness of eyes? they that tarry long at the wine."[e] I shall not need to instance, in the sad and uncleanly consequents of lust, the wounds and accidental deaths which are occasioned by jealousies, by vanity, by peevishness, vain reputation, and animosities, by melancholy, and the despair of evil consciences; and yet these are abundant argument, that when God so permits a man to run his course of nature, that himself does not intervene by an extraordinary influence, or any special acts of providence, but only gives his ordinary assistance to natural causes, a very great part of men make their natural period shorter, and by sin make their days miserable and few.

22. Secondly: Oftentimes Providence intervenes, and makes the way shorter; God, for the iniquity of man, not suffering nature to take her course, but stopping her in the midst of her journey. Against this David prayed: "O my God, cut me not off in the midst of my days."[f] But in this there is some variety. For God does it sometimes in mercy, sometimes in judgment. "The righteous die, and no man regardeth; not considering, that they are taken away from the evil to come."[g] God takes the righteous man hastily to his crown, lest temptation snatch it from him by interrupting his hopes and sanctity. And this was the case of the old world. For, from Adam to the flood, by the patriarchs, were eleven generations; but by Cain's line there were but eight, so that Cain's posterity were longer lived; because God intending to bring the flood upon the world, took delight to rescue his elect from the dangers of the present impurity, and the future deluge. Abraham lived five years less than his son Isaac, it being (say the doctors of the Jews) intended for mercy to him, that he might not see the iniquity of his grandchild Esau. And this the church, for many ages, hath believed, in the case of baptized infants dying before the use of reason. For, besides other causes in the order of Divine providence, one kind of mercy is done to them too; for although their condition be of a lower form, yet it is secured by that timely (shall I call it?) or untimely death. But these are cases extra-regular: ordinarily, and by rule, God hath revealed his purposes of interruption of the lives of sinners to be in anger and judgment; for when men commit any signal and grand impiety, God suffers not nature to take her course, but strikes a stroke with his own hand. To which purpose I think it a remarkable instance, which is reported by Epiphanius,[h] that, for 3332 years, even to the twentieth age, there was not one example of a son that died before his father, but the course of nature was kept, that he who was first born in the descending line, did die first; (I speak of natural death, and therefore Abel cannot be opposed to this observation;) till that Terah, the father of Abraham, taught the people to make images of clay, and worship them; and concerning him it was first remarked, that "Haran died before his father Terah, in the land of his nativity:"[i] God, by an unheard-of judgment, and a rare accident, punishing his newly invented crime. And whenever such intercision of a life happens to a vicious person, let all the world acknowledge it for a judgment; and when any man is guilty of evil habits, or unrepented sins, he may therefore expect it, because it is threatened and designed for the lot and curse of such persons. This is threatened to covetousness, injustice, and oppression. "As a partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool."[k] The same is threatened to voluptuous persons in the highest caresses of delight; and Christ told a parable with the same design. The rich man said, "Soul, take thy ease; but God answered, O fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee." Zimri and Cozbi were slain in the trophies of their lust; and it was a sad story which was told by Thomas Cantipratanus: Two religious persons, tempted by each other, in the vigour of their youth, in their very first pleasures and opportunities of sin, were both struck dead in their embraces and posture of entertainment. God smote Jeroboam for his usurpation and tyranny, and he died.[l] Saul died for disobedience against God, and asking counsel of a Pythoness.[m] God smote Uzziah with a leprosy for his profaneness;[n] and distressed Ahaz sorely for his sacrilege;[o] and sent a horrid disease upon Jehoram for his idolatry.[p] These instances represent voluptuousness and covetousness, rapine and injustice, idolatry and lust, profaneness and sacrilege, as remarked by the signature of exemplary judgments, to be the means of shortening the days of man; God himself proving the executioner of his own fierce wrath. I instance no more, but in the singular case of Hananiah, the false prophet: "Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will cut thee from off the face of the earth; this year thou shalt die, because thou hast taught rebellion against the Lord."[q] That is the curse and portion of a false prophet, a short life, and a sudden death, of God's own particular and more immediate infliction.

23. And thus also the sentence of the Divine anger went forth upon criminal persons in the New Testament: witness the disease of Herod, Judas's hanging himself, the blindness of Elymas, the sudden death of Ananias and Sapphira, the buffetings with which Satan afflicted the bodies of persons excommunicate. Yea, the blessed sacrament of Christ's body and blood, which is intended for our spiritual life, if it be unworthily received, proves the cause of a natural death: "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many are fallen asleep,"[r] saith St. Paul to the Corinthian church.

[e] Prov. xxiii. 29, 30. [f] Psal. cii. 24. [g] Isa. lvii. 1.
[h] Lib. i. tom. i. Panar. sect. 6. [i] Gen. xi. 28.
[k] Jer. xvii. 11. [l] 2 Chron. xiii. 20.
[m] 1 Chron. x. 13. [n] 2 Chron. xxvi. 19.
[o] 2 Kings xvi. [p] 2 Chron. xxi. 18.
[q] Jer. xxviii. 16. [r] 1 Cor. xi. 30.

24. Thirdly: But there is yet another manner of ending man's life, by way of chance or contingency; meaning thereby the manner of God's providence, and event of things, which is not produced by the disposition of natural causes, nor yet by any particular and special act of God; but the event which depends upon accidental causes, not so certain and regular as nature, not so conclusive and determined as the acts of decretory providence, but comes, by disposition of causes irregular, to events rare and accidental. This David expresses by "entering into battle:" and in this, as in the other, we must separate cases extraordinary and rare from the ordinary and common. Extra-regularly, and upon extraordinary reasons and permissions, we find that holy persons have miscarried in battle. So the Israelites fell before Benjamin, and Jonathan, and Uriah, and many of the Lord's champions, fighting against the Philistines: but in these deaths, as God served other ends of providence, so he kept to the good men that fell all the mercies of the promise, by giving them a greater blessing of event and compensation. In the more ordinary course of Divine dispensation, they that prevaricate the laws of God are put out of protection; God withdraws his special providence, or their tutelar angel, and leaves them exposed to the influences of heaven, to the power of a constellation, to the accidents of humanity, to the chances of a battle, which are so many and various, that it is ten thousand to one a man in that case never escapes; and, in such variety of contingencies, there is no probable way to assure our safety, but by a holy life, to endear the providence of God to be our guardian. It was a remarkable saying of Deborah: "The stars fought in their courses," or "in their orbs, against Sisera."[s] Sisera fought when there was an evil aspect, or malignant influence of heaven, upon him. For even the smallest thing that is in opposition to us, is enough to turn the chance of a battle; that although it be necessary, for defence of the godly, that a special providence should intervene, yet, to confound the impious, no special act is requisite. If God exposes them to the ill aspect of a planet, or any other casualty, their days are interrupted, and they die. And that is the meaning of the prophet Jeremiah:[t] "Be not ye dismayed at the signs of heaven, for the heathen are dismayed at them;"[u] meaning, that God will overrule all inferior causes for the safety of his servants; but the wicked shall be exposed to chance and human accidents; and the signs of heaven, which of themselves do but signify, or, at most, but dispose and incline towards events, shall be enough to actuate and consummate their ruin. And this is the meaning of that proverb of the Jews, "Israel hath no planet:"[x] which they expounded to mean, if they observe the law, the planets shall not hurt them, God will overrule all their influences; but, if they prevaricate and rebel, the least star in the firmament of heaven shall bid them battle, and overthrow them. A stone shall lie in a wicked man's way, and God shall so expose him to it, leaving him so unguarded and defenceless, that he shall stumble at it, and fall, and break a bone, and that shall produce a fever, and the fever shall end his days. For not only every creature, when it is set on by God, can prove a ruin; but if we be not, by the providence of God, defended against it, we cannot behold the least atom in the sun, without danger of losing an eye, nor eat a grape without fear of choking, nor sneeze without breaking of a vein. And Arius, going to the ground, purged his entrails forth, and fell down unto the earth, and died. Such, and so miserable, is the great insecurity of a sinner. And of this Job had an excellent meditation: "How oft is the candle of the wicked put out! and how oft cometh their destruction upon them! God distributeth sorrows in his anger. For what pleasure hath he in his house after him, when the number of his months is cut off in the midst?" This is he that "dieth in his full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet."[y]

25. I sum up this discourse with an observation, that is made concerning the family of Eli, upon which, for the remissness of discipline on the father's part, and for the impiety and profaneness of his sons, God sent this curse: "All the increase of their house shall die in the flower of their age."[z] According to that sad malediction, it happened for many generations; the heir of the family died as soon as he begat a son to succeed him: till the family, being wearied by so long a curse, by the counsel of Rabbi Johanan Ben Zachary, betook themselves universally to a sedulous and most devout meditation of the law, that is, to an exemplary devotion and strict religion: but then the curse was turned into a blessing, and the line masculine lived to an honourable old age. For the doctors of the Jews said, that God often changes his purposes concerning the death of man, when the sick person is "liberal in alms," or "fervent in prayer," or "changes his name," that is, gives up his name to God, by the serious purposes and religious vows of holy obedience. "He that followeth after righteousness" (alms it is in the vulgar Latin) "and mercy, findeth life;"[a] that verifies the first: and the fervent prayer of Hezekiah is a great instance of the second: and all the precedent discourse was intended for probation of the third, and proves that no disease is so deadly as a deadly sin; and the ways of righteousness are, therefore, advantages of health, and preservatives of life, (when health and

[s] Judges v. 20. [t] Jer. x. 2.

[u] Gentes signa dierum et numerum mensis aut hebdomadæ cum metu superstitioso observârunt. Quarta luna infausta reputabatur, unde proverbium ἐν τετράδι γεγεννῆσθαι. Hujusmodi dies Græci ἀποφράδας vocant; Latini, *nefastos*. Hesiodus quintas omnino suspectas habet:

Πέμπτας δ' ἐξαλέασθαι, ἐπεὶ χαλεπαί τε καὶ αἰναί·
Ἐν πέμπτῃ γὰρ φασιν Ἐριννύας ἀμφιπολεύειν.

[x] Non est planeta Israeli.

Μία φυλακὴ ἡ εὐσέβεια· εὐσεβοῦς γὰρ ἀνθρώπου οὐ δαίμων κακὸς, οὔτε εἱμαρμένη κρατεῖ. Θεὸς γὰρ ῥύεται τὸν εὐσεβῆ ἐκ παντὸς κακοῦ. τὸ γὰρ ἓν, καὶ μόνον ἓν, ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἀγαθόν, ἐστιν εὐσέβεια.—Lactant.

Δύναται ὁ ἐπιστήμων πολλὰς ἀποστρέψαι ἐνεργείας τῶν ἀστέρων.—Ptolem.

Id est, —— sapiens dominabitur astris.

[y] Job xxi. 17, 21, 23.

[z] 1 Sam. ii. 33. [a] Prov. xxi. 21.

life are good for us,) because they are certain title to all God's promises and blessings.

26. Upon supposition of these premises, I consider, there is no cause to wonder, that tender persons and the softest women endure the violences of art and physic, sharp pains of caustics and cupping-glasses, the abscission of the most sensible part, for preservation of a mutilous and imperfect body: but it is a wonder that, when God hath appointed a remedy in grace apt to preserve nature, and that a dying unto sin should prolong our natural life, yet few men are willing to try the experiment; they will buy their life upon any conditions in the world but those, which are the best and easiest, any thing but religion and sanctity; although, for so doing, they are promised that immortality shall be added to the end of a long life, to make the life of a mortal partake of the eternal duration of an angel, or of God himself.

27. Fifthly: The last testimony of the excellency and gentleness of Christ's yoke, the fair load of christianity, is the reasonableness of it, and the unreasonableness of its contrary.[b] For whatsoever the wisest men in the world, in all nations and religions, did agree upon, as most excellent in itself, and of greatest power to make political or future and immaterial felicities, all that, and much more, the holy Jesus adopted into his law: for they, receiving sparks or single irradiations from the regions of light, or else having fair tapers shining indeed excellently in representations and expresses of morality, were all involved and swallowed up into the body of light, the sun of righteousness. Christ's discipline was the breviary of all the wisdom of the best men, and a fair copy and transcript of his Father's wisdom; and there is nothing in the laws of our religion, but what is perfective of our spirits, excellent rules of religion, and rare expedients of obeying God by the nearest ways of imitation, and such duties which are the proper ways of doing benefits to all capacities and orders of men. But I remember my design now is not to represent christianity to be a better religion than any other; for I speak to christians, amongst whom we presuppose that: but I design to invite all christians in name to be such as they are called, upon the interest of such arguments, which represent the advantages of obedience to our religion, as it is commanded us by God. And this I shall do yet further, by considering, as touching those christian names who apprehend religion as the fashion of their country, and know no other use of a church but customary, or secular and profane, that, supposing christian religion to have come from God, as we all profess to believe, there are no greater fools in the world, than such whose life conforms not to the pretence of their baptism and institution. They have all the signs and characters of fools, and indiscreet, unwary persons.

28. First: Wicked persons, like children and fools, choose the present, whatsoever it is, and neglect the infinite treasures of the future. They that have no faith nor foresight, have an excuse for snatching at what is now represented, because it is that *all* which can move them: but then such persons are infinitely distant from wisdom, whose understanding neither reason nor revelation hath carried further than the present adherences; not only because they are narrow souls, who cannot look forward, and have nothing to distinguish them from beasts, who enjoy the present, being careless of what is to come; but also because whatsoever is present, is not fit satisfaction to the spirit, nothing but gluttings of the sense and sottish appetites.[c] Moses was a wise person; and so esteemed and reported by the Spirit of God, because "he despised the pleasures of Pharaoh's court, having an eye to the recompence of reward;" that is, because he despised all the present arguments of delight, and preferred those excellencies which he knew should be infinitely greater, as well as he knew they should be at all. He that would have rather chosen to stay in the theatre, and see the sports out, than quit the present spectacle, upon assurance to be adopted into Cæsar's family, had an offer made him too great for a fool; and yet his misfortune was not big enough for pity, because he understood nothing of his felicity, and rejected what he understood not. But he that prefers moments before eternity, and despises the infinite successions of eternal ages, that he may enjoy the present, not daring to trust God for what he sees not, and having no objects of his affections, but those which are the objects of his eyes, hath the impatience of a child, and the indiscretion of a fool, and the faithlessness of an unbeliever. The faith and hope of a christian are the graces and portions of spiritual wisdom, which Christ designed as an antidote against this folly.

29. Secondly: Children and fools choose to please their senses rather than their reason, because they still dwell within the regions of sense, and have but little residence amongst intellectual essences. And because the needs of nature first employ our sensual appetites, these, being first in possession, would also fain retain it, and therefore, for ever continue their title, and perpetually fight for it: but because the inferior faculty, fighting against the superior, is no better than a rebel, and that it takes reason for its enemy, it shows such actions which please the sense, and do not please the reason, to be unnatural, monstrous, and unreasonable. And it is a great disreputation to the understanding of a man, to be so cozened and deceived, as to choose money before a moral virtue; to please that which is common to him and beasts, rather than that part which is a communication of the Divine nature; to see him run after a bubble which himself hath made, and the sun hath particoloured, and to despise a treasure, which is offered to him, to call him off from pursuing that emptiness and nothing. But so does every vicious person; he feeds upon husks, and loathes manna; worships cats and onions, the beggarly and basest of Egyptian deities,

[b] Religio sapientiam adauget, et sapientia religionem.—Lactant.

Σοφῷ γὰρ αἰσχρὸν ἐξαμαρτάνειν.—Æschy. Prometh.

[c] Ἐι μὲν γὰρ πράττεις τι μεθ' ἡδονῆς αἰσχρὸν, ἡ μὲν ἡδονὴ παρῆλθε, τὸ δὲ κακὸν μένει.—Hierocl.

and neglects to adore and honour the eternal God; he prefers the society of drunkards before the communion of saints; or the fellowship of harlots before a quire of pure, chaste, and immaterial angels; the sickness and filth of luxury before the health and purities of chastity and temperance; a dish of red lentil pottage before a benison; drink before immortality, money before mercy, wantonness before the severe precepts of christian philosophy, earth before heaven, and folly before the crowns, and sceptres, and glories of a kingdom. Against this folly christian religion opposes contempt of things below, and setting our affections on things above.

30. Thirdly: Children and fools propound to themselves ends silly, low, and cheap; the getting of a nut-shell, or a bag of cherry-stones, a gaud to entertain the fancy of a few minutes; and, in order to such ends, direct their counsels and designs. And indeed in this they are innocent. But persons not living according to the discipline of christianity are as foolish in the designation of their ends; choosing things as unprofitable and vain to themselves, and yet with many mixtures of malice and injuriousness, both to themselves and others. His end is to cozen his brother of a piece of land, or to disgrace him by telling of a lie, to supplant his fortune, to make him miserable; ends which wise men and good men look upon as miseries and persecutions, instruments of affliction and regret; because every man is a member of a society, and hath some common terms of union and conjuncture, which make all the body susceptive of all accidents to any part. And it is a great folly, for pleasing of the eye, to snatch a knife which cuts our fingers; to bring affliction upon my brother or relative, which either must affect me, or else I am a useless, a base, or dead person. The ends of vice are ignoble and dishonourable; to discompose the quiet of a family, or to create jealousies, or to raise wars, or to make a man less happy, or apparently miserable, or to fish for the devil, and gain souls to our enemy, or to please a passion that undoes us, or to get something that cannot satisfy us: this is the chain of counsels, and the great aims of unchristian livers; they are all of them extreme great miseries. And it is a great indecency for a man to propound an end less and more imperfect than our present condition; as if we went about to unravel our present composure, and to unite every degree of essence and capacity, and to retire back to our first matter and unshapen state, hoping to get to our journey's end by going backwards. Against this folly the holy Jesus opposed the fourth beatitude, or precept, of "hungering and thirsting after righteousness."

31. Fourthly: But children and fools, whatever their ends be, they pursue them with as much weakness and folly as they first chose them with indiscretion; running to broken cisterns, or to puddles, to quench their thirst. When they are hungry, they make fantastic banquets, or put coloquintida into their pottage, that they may be furnished with pot herbs: or are like the ass that desired to flatter his master, and, therefore, fawned upon him like a spaniel, and bruised his shoulders. Such indecencies of means and prosecutions of interests we find in unchristian courses. It may be, they propound to themselves riches for their end, and they use covetousness for their means, and that brings nought home; or else they steal to get it, and they are apprehended, and made to restore fourfold. Like moths gnawing a garment, they devour their own house, and, by greediness of desire, they destroy their content, making impatience the parent and instrument of all their felicity.[d] Or they are so greedy and imaginative, and have raised their expectation by an over-valuing esteem of temporary felicities, that when they come, they fall short of their promises, and are indeed less than they would have been, by being, before-hand, apprehended greater than they could be. If their design be to represent themselves innocent and guiltless of a suspicion or a fault, they deny the fact, and double it. When they would repair their losses, they fall to gaming; and, besides that they are infinitely full of fears, passions, wrath, and violent disturbances, in the various chances of their game, that which they use to restore their fortune ruins even the little remnant, and condemns them to beggary, or what is worse. Thus evil men seek for content out of things that cannot satisfy, and take care to get that content; that is, they raise war to enjoy present peace, and renounce all content to get it; they strive to depress their neighbours, that they may be their equals; to disgrace them, to get reputation to themselves; (which arts, being ignoble, do them the most disparagement;) and resolve never to enter into the felicities of God by content taken in the prosperities of man: which is making ourselves wretched by being wicked. Malice and envy is indeed a mighty curse; and the devil can show us nothing more foolish and unreasonable than envy, which is, in its very formality, a curse, an eating of coals and vipers, because my neighbour's table is full, and his cup is crowned with health and plenty. The christian religion, as it chooseth excellent ends, so it useth proportionate and apt means. The most contradictory accident in the world, when it becomes hallowed by a pious and christian design, becomes a certain means of felicity and content. To quit our lands for Christ's sake, will certainly make us rich; to depart from our friends, will increase our relations and beneficiaries: but the striving to secure our temporal interests, by any other means than obedient actions, or obedient sufferings, is declared, by the holy Jesus, to be the greatest improvidence and ill husbandry in the world. Even in this world, Christ will repay us an hundred-fold for all our losses, which we suffer for the interests of christianity. In the same proportion we find, that all graces do the work of human felicities, with a more certain power and infallible effect than their contraries. Gratitude endears benefits, and procures more friendships; confession gets a pardon; impudence and lying doubles the fault, and exasperates the offended per-

[d] Τὰ δεινὰ κέρδη πημονὰς ἐργάζεται. — Sophocl. Antig. Hos felicitas ingrata superfluit, ut semper pleni spei, vacui commodorum, præsentibus careant, dum futura prospectant. — Panegyr. ad Constant. Filium.

son; innocence is bold, and rocks a man asleep; but an evil conscience is a continual alarm. Against this folly, of using disproportionate means in order to their ends, the holy Jesus hath opposed the eight beatitudes, which, by contradictions of nature and improbable causes, according to human and erring estimate, bring our best and wisest ends to pass infallibly and divinely.

32. But this is too large a field to walk in: for it represents all the flatteries of sin to be a mere cozenage and deception of the understanding; and we find, by this scrutiny, that evil and unchristian persons are infinitely unwise, because they neglect the counsel of their superiors and their guides. They dote passionately upon trifles; they rely upon false foundations and deceiving principles; they are most confident when they are most abused; they are like shelled fish, singing loudest when their house is on fire about their ears, and being merriest when they are most miserable and perishing; when they have the option of two things, they ever choose the worst; they are not masters of their own actions, but break all purposes at the first temptation; they take more pains to do themselves a mischief than would secure heaven; that is, they are rude, ignorant, foolish, unwary, and undiscerning people, in all senses, and to all purposes; and are incurable, but by their obedience and conformity to the holy Jesus, the eternal Wisdom of the Father.

33. Upon the strength of these premises, the yoke of christianity must needs be apprehended light, though it had in it more pressure than it hath; because lightness or heaviness, being relative terms, are to be esteemed by comparison to others. Christianity is far easier than the yoke of Moses's law, not only because it consists of fewer rites, but also, because those perfecting and excellent graces, which integrate the body of our religion, are made easy by God's assisting, and the gifts of the Holy Ghost: and we may yet make it easier, by love and by fear, which are the proper products of the evangelical promises and threatenings. For I have seen persons in affrightment have carried burdens, and leaped ditches, and climbed walls, which their natural power could never have done. And if we understood the sadnesses of a cursed eternity, from which we are commanded to fly, and yet knew how near we are to it, and how likely to fall into it, it would create fears greater than a sudden fire, or a midnight alarm. And those unhappy souls who come to feel this truth, when their condition is without remedy, are made the more miserable by the apprehension of their stupid folly. For certainly the accursed spirits feel the smart of hell once doubled upon them, by considering by what vain, unsatisfying trifles they lost their happiness, with what pains they perished, and with how great ease they might have been beatified. And certain it is, christian religion hath so furnished us with assistances, both exterior and interior, both of persuasion and advantages, that whatsoever Christ hath doubled upon us in perfection, he hath alleviated in aids.

34. And then, if we compare the state of christianity with sin, all the preceding discourses were intended to represent how much easier it is to be a christian than a vile and wicked person. And he that remembers, that whatever fair allurements may be pretended as invitations to a sin, are such false and unsatisfying pretences, that they drive a man to repent him of his folly, and, like a great laughter, end in a sigh, and expire in weariness and indignation; must needs confess himself a fool, for doing that which he knows will make him repent that he ever did it. A sin makes a man afraid when it thunders; and, in all dangers, the sin detracts the visor, and affrights him, and visits him when he comes to die, upbraiding him with guilt, and threatening misery. So that christianity is the easiest law, and the easiest state; it is more perfect and less troublesome; it brings us to felicity by ways proportionable, landing us in rest by easy and unperplexed journeys. This discourse I, therefore, thought necessary, because it reconciles our religion with those passions and desires, which are commonly made the instruments and arguments of sin. For we rarely meet with such spirits which love virtue so metaphysically, as to abstract her from all sensible and delicious compositions, and love the purity of the idea. St. Louis, the king, sent Ivo, bishop of Chartres, on an embassy; and he told, that he met a grave matron on the way, with fire in one hand, and water in the other; and, observing her to have a melancholic, religious, and fantastic deportment and look, asked her what those symbols meant, and what she meant to do with her fire and water? She answered, "My purpose is, with the fire to burn paradise, and, with my water, to quench the flames of hell, that men may serve God without the incentives of hope and fear, and purely for the love of God." Whether the woman were only imaginative and sad, or also zealous, I know not. But God knows he would have few disciples, if the arguments of invitation were not of greater promise than the labours of virtue are of trouble. And, therefore, the Spirit of God, knowing to what we are inflexible, and by what we are made most ductile and malleable, hath propounded virtue clothed and dressed with such advantages, as may entertain even our sensitive part and first desires,[e] that those also may be invited to virtue, who understand not what is just and reasonable, but what is profitable; who are more moved with advantage than justice. And because emolument is more felt than innocence, and a man may be poor for all his gift of chastity; the holy Jesus, to endear the practices of religion, hath represented godliness to us under the notion of "gain," and "sin as unfruitful:" and yet, besides all the natural and reasonable advantages, every virtue hath a supernatural reward, a gracious pro-

[e] ——Quis enim virtutem amplectitur ipsam
Præmia si tollas? Juv.
Sublatis studiorum pretiis, etiam studia peritura, ut minùs decora.—Tacit.

Vide Ciceron. Tuscul. ii. Lact. lib. iii. c. 27. Instit.
Virtus per seipsam non beata est, quoniam in perferendis, ut dixi, malis tota vis ejus est.—Idem, c. 12. Aug. Ep. 12.

mise attending; and every vice is not only naturally deformed, but is made more ugly by a threatening, and horrid by an appendant curse. Henceforth, therefore, let no man complain, that the commandments of God are impossible; for they are not only possible, but easy; and they that say otherwise, and do accordingly, take more pains to carry the instruments of their own death, than would serve to ascertain them of life. And if we would do as much for Christ as we have done for sin, we should find the pains less, and the pleasure more. And, therefore, such complainers are without excuse; for certain it is, they that can go in foul ways, must not say they cannot walk in fair: they that march over rocks, in despite of so many impediments, can travel the even ways of religion and peace, when the holy Jesus is their guide, and the Spirit is their guardian, and infinite felicities are at their journey's end, and all the reason of the world, political, economical, and personal, do entertain and support them in the travel of the passage.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal Jesus, who gavest laws unto the world, that mankind, being united to thee by the bands of obedience, might partake of all thy glories and felicities; open our understanding, give us the spirit of discerning, and just apprehension of all the beauties with which thou hast enamelled virtue, to represent it beauteous and amiable in our eyes; that, by the allurements of exterior decencies and appendant blessings, our present desires may be entertained, our hopes promoted, our affections satisfied, and love, entering in by these doors, may dwell in the interior regions of the will. O make us to love thee for thyself, and religion for thee, and all the instruments of religion in order to thy glory and our own felicities. Pull off the visors of sin, and discover its deformities, by the lantern of thy word, and the light of the Spirit; that I may never be bewitched with sottish appetites. Be pleased to build up all the contents I expect in this world, upon the interests of a virtuous life, and the support of religion; that I may be rich in good works, content in the issues of thy providence, my health may be the result of temperance and severity, my mirth in spiritual emanations, my rest in hope, my peace in a good conscience, my satisfaction and acquiescence in thee; that from content I may pass to an eternal fulness, from health to immortality, from grace to glory; walking in the paths of righteousness, by the waters of comfort, to the land of everlasting rest; to feast in the glorious communications of eternity, eternally adoring, loving, and enjoying the infinity of the ever-blessed and mysterious Trinity; to whom be glory, and honour, and dominion, now and for ever. Amen.

DISCOURSE XVI.

Of Certainty of Salvation.

1. When the holy Jesus took an account of the first legation and voyage of his apostles, he found them rejoicing in privileges and exterior powers, in their authority over unclean spirits; but weighing it in his balance, he found the cause too light, and, therefore, diverted it upon the right object: "Rejoice that your names are written in heaven."[a] The revelation was confirmed, and more personally applied, in answer to St. Peter's question, "We have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have, therefore?" Their Lord answered, "Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Amongst these persons, to whom Christ spake, Judas was; he was one of the twelve, and he had a throne allotted for him; his name was described in the book of life, and a sceptre and a crown were deposited for him too. For we must not judge of Christ's meaning by the event, since he spake these words to produce in them faith, comfort, and joy, in the best objects: it was a sermon of duty, as well as a homily of comfort; and, therefore, was equally intended to all the college: and since the number of thrones is proportioned to the number of men, it is certain there was no exception of any man there included; and yet it is as certain Judas never came to sit upon the throne, and his name was blotted out of the book of life. Now, if we put these ends together, that in Scripture it was not revealed to any man concerning his final condition, but to the dying penitent thief, and to the twelve apostles, that twelve thrones were designed for them, and a promise made of their enthronization; and yet that no man's final estate is so clearly declared miserable and lost, as that of Judas, one of the twelve, to whom a throne was promised; the result will be, that the election of holy persons is a condition allied to duty, absolute and infallible in the general, and supposing all the dispositions and requisites concurring; but fallible in the particular, if we fall off from the mercies of the covenant, and prevaricate the conditions. But the thing which is most observable is, that if in persons so eminent and privileged, and to whom a revelation of their election was made as a particular grace, their condition had one weak leg, upon which because it did rely for one half of the interest, it could be no stronger than its supporters; the condition of lower persons, to whom no revelation is made, no privileges are indulged, no greatness of spiritual eminence is appendant, as they have no greater certainty in the thing, so they have less in person; and are, therefore, to "work out their salvation with" great "fears and tremblings" of spirit.

2. The purpose of this consideration is, that we

[a] Ad Num. 17.

[b] Quod dixit Jesus 72 discipulis, [Lucæ x. 20.] eorum nomina descripta esse in cœlo; prædestinationem licet aliquatenus denotet, non tamen ad gloriam, sed ad munus evangelicum et ministerium in regno. Alii autem verba illa non rem facti denotare, sed causam gaudii tantùm enarrare justam et legitimam; ex suppositione scil. et quando hoc contigerit, aut ad effectum perducetur. Utcunque autem verba significent, certum est doctores ecclesiæ non paucos tradidisse 72 discipulos Christum reliquisse, nec rediisse denuo.

do not judge of our final condition by any discourses of our own, relying upon God's secret counsels, and predestination of eternity. This is a mountain upon which whosoever climbs, like Moses, to behold the land of Canaan at great distances, may please his eyes, or satisfy his curiosity, but is certain never to enter that way. It is like inquiring into fortunes, concerning which Phavorinus, the philosopher, spake not unhandsomely;[b] "They that foretell events of destiny and secret providence, either foretell sad things or prosperous. If they promise prosperous, and deceive, you are made miserable by a vain speculation. If they threaten ill fortune, and say false, thou art made wretched by a false fear. But if they foretell adversity, and say true, thou art made miserable by thy own apprehension, before thou art so by destiny; and many times the fear is worse than the evil feared. But if they promise felicities, and promise truly what shall come to pass, then thou shalt be wearied by an impatience and a suspended hope, and thy hope shall ravish and deflower the joys of thy possession."[c] Much of it is hugely applicable to the present question; and our blessed Lord, when he was petitioned that he would grant to the two sons of Zebedee, that they might sit one on the right hand and the other on the left in his kingdom, rejected their desire, and only promised them what concerned their duty and their suffering; referring them to that, and leaving the final event of men to the disposition of his Father. This is the great secret of the kingdom, which God hath locked up and sealed with the counsels of eternity. "The sure foundation of God standeth, having this seal, The Lord knoweth who are his."[d] This seal shall never be broken up till the great day of Christ; in the mean time, the Divine knowledge is the only repository of the final sentences, and this "way of God is unsearchable, and past finding out." And, therefore, if we be solicitous and curious to know what God, in the counsels of eternity, hath decreed concerning us; he hath, in two fair tables, described all those sentences from whence we must take accounts, the revelations of Scripture, and the book of conscience. The first recites the law and the conditions; the other gives in evidence: the first is clear, evident, and conspicuous; the other, when it is written with large characters, may also be discerned; but there are many little accents, periods, distinctions, and little significations of actions, which either are there written in water, or sullied over with carelessness, or blotted with forgetfulness, or not legible by ignorance, or misconstrued by interest and partiality, that it will be extremely difficult to read the hand upon the wall, or to copy out one line of the eternal sentence. And, therefore, excellent was the counsel of the son of Sirach: "Seek not out the things that are too hard for thee, neither search the things that are above thy strength: but what is commanded thee, think thereupon with reverence; for it is not needful for thee to see with thine eyes the things that are in secret."[e] For whatsoever God hath revealed in general concerning election, it concerns all persons within the pale of christianity. He hath conveyed notice to all christian people, that they are the sons of God, that they are the heirs of eternity, "co-heirs with Christ, partakers of the Divine nature;" meaning, that such they are by the design of God, and the purposes of the manifestation of his Son. The election of God is disputed in Scripture, to be an act of God separating whole nations, and rejecting others; in each of which, many particular instances there were contrary to the general and universal purpose; and of the elect nations, many particulars perished, and many of the rejected people "sat down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven:" and to those persons to whom God was more particular, and was pleased to show the scrolls of his eternal counsels, and to reveal their particular elections, as he did to the twelve apostles, he showed them wrapped up and sealed; and, to take off their confidences or presumptions, he gave probation, in one instance, that those scrolls may be cancelled, that his purpose concerning particulars may be altered by us; and, therefore, that he did not discover the bottom of the abyss, but some purposes of special grace and indefinite design. But his peremptory, final, unalterable decree, he keeps in the cabinets of the eternal ages, never to be unlocked, till the angel of the covenant shall declare the unalterable, universal sentence.

3. But, as we take the measure of the course of the sun by the dimensions of the shadows made by our own bodies, or our own instruments; so must we take the measures of eternity by the span of a man's hand, and guess at what God decrees of us, by considering how our relations and endearments are to him. And it is observable, that all the confidences which the Spirit of God hath created in the elect, are built upon duty, and stand or fall according to the strength or weakness of such supporters. "We know we are translated from death to life, by our love unto the brethren:"[f] meaning that the performance of our duty is the best consignation to eternity, and the only testimony God gives us of our election. And, therefore, we are to make our judgments accordingly. And here I consider, that there is no state of a christian, in which, by virtue of the covenant of the gospel, it is effectively and fully declared, that his sins are actually pardoned, but only in baptism, at our first coming to Christ; when he "redeems us from our vain conversation;" when he makes us become "sons of God;" when he "justifies us freely by his grace," when we are purified by faith, when we make a covenant with Christ, to live for ever according to his laws. And this I shall suppose I have already proved and explicated, in the Discourse

[b] Ad scelus ab hujusmodi votis facillimè transitur.—TACIT.
——— Nos parvum ac debile vulgus
Scrutamur penitus Superos: hinc pallor et iræ,
Hinc scelus, insidiæque, et nulla modestia voti.—STATIUS.

[c] Futurum gaudii fructum spes tibi jam præfloraverit.—A. GELLIUS, lib. xiv.

[d] 2 Tim. ii. 19.

[e] Ecclus. iii. 21, 22.

[f] 1 John iii. 14.

of Repentance. So that whoever is certain he hath not offended God since that time, and in nothing transgresseth the laws of christianity, he is certain that he actually remains in the state of baptismal purity: but it is too certain, that this certainty remains not long; but we commonly throw some dirt into our waters of baptism, and stain our white robe which we then put on.

4. But then, because our restitution to this state is a thing that consists of so many parts, is so divisible, various, and uncertain whether it be arrived to the degree of innocence; (and our innocence consists in a mathematical point, and is not capable of degrees any more than unity, because one stain destroys our being innocent;) it is, therefore, a very difficult matter to say, that we have done all our duty towards our restitution to baptismal grace; and if we have not done all that we can do, it is harder to say that God hath accepted that, which is less than the conditions we entered into, when we received the great justification and pardon of sins. We all know we do less than our duty, and we hope that God makes abatements for human infirmities; but we have but a few rules to judge by, and they not infallible in themselves, and we yet more fallible in the application, whether we have not mingled some little minutes of malice in the body of infirmities, and how much will bear excuse; and in what time, and to what persons, and to what degrees, and upon what endeavours, we shall be pardoned. So that all the interval, between our losing baptismal grace and the day of our death, we walk in a cloud; having lost the certain knowledge of our present condition, by our prevarications. And, indeed, it is a very hard thing for a man to know his own heart: and he that shall observe, how often himself hath been abused by confidences and secret imperfections, and how the greatest part of christians, in name only, do think themselves in a very good condition, when God knows they are infinitely removed from it; (and yet, if they did not think themselves well and sure, it is unimaginable they should sleep so quietly, and walk securely, and consider negligently, and yet proceed confidently;) he that considers this, and upon what weak and false principles of divinity men have raised their strengths and persuasions, will easily consent to this; that it is very easy for men to be deceived, in taking estimate of their present condition, of their being in the state of grace.

5. But there is great variety of men, and difference of degrees; and every step of returning to God may reasonably add one degree of hope, till at last it comes to the certainty and top of hope. Many men believe themselves to be in the state of grace, and are not; many are in the state of grace, and are infinitely fearful they are out of it; and many that are in God's favour, do think they are so, and they are not deceived. And all this is certain. For some sin that sin of presumption, and flattery of themselves, and some good persons are vexed with violent fears and temptations to despair, and all are not: and when their hopes are right, yet some are strong, and some are weak; for they that are well persuaded of their present condition, have persuasions as different as are the degrees of their approach to innocence; and he that is at the highest, hath also such abatements, which are apt and proper for the conservation of humility and godly fear. "I am guilty of nothing," (saith St. Paul,) "but I am not hereby justified;"[g] meaning thus: Though I be innocent, for aught I know, yet God, who judges otherwise than we judge, may find something to reprove in me: "It is God that judges," that is, concerning my degrees of acceptance and hopes of glory. If the person be newly recovering from a state of sin, because his state is imperfect, and his sin not dead, and his lust active, and his habit not quite extinct, it is easy for a man to be too hasty in pronouncing well. He is wrapt up in a cloak of clouds, hidden and encumbered;[h] and his brightest day is but twilight, and his discernings dark, conjectural, and imperfect; and his heart is like a cold hand newly applied to the fire, full of pain, and whether the heat or the cold be strongest, is not easy to determine; or like middle colours, which no man can tell to which of the extremes they are to be accounted. But according as persons grow in grace, so they may grow in confidence of their present condition. It is not certain they will do so; for sometimes the beauty of their tabernacle is covered with goats' hair and skins of beasts, and holy people do infinitely deplore the want of such graces, which God observes in them with great complacency and acceptance. Both these cases say, that to be certainly persuaded of our present condition is not a duty: sometimes it is not possible, and sometimes it is better to be otherwise. But if we consider of this certainty, as a blessing and a reward, there is no question but, in a great and an eminent sanctity of life, there may also be a great confidence and fulness of persuasion, that our present being is well and gracious, and then it is certain that such persons are not deceived. For the thing itself being sure, if the persuasion answers to it, it is needless to dispute of the degree of certainty and the manner of it. Some persons are heartily persuaded of their being reconciled; and of these, some are deceived, and some are not deceived; and there is no sign to distinguish them, but by that which is the thing signified: a holy life, according to the strict rules of christian discipline, tells what persons are confident, and who are presumptuous. But the certainty is reasonable in none but in old christians, habitually holy persons; not in new converts, or in lately lapsed people: for, concerning them, we find the Spirit of God speaking with clauses of restraint and ambiguity; "a perhaps,"[i] and, "who knoweth," and, "peradventure, the thoughts of thy heart may

[g] 1 Cor. iv. 4.
Cùm multis in rebus offendamus Deum, majorem tamen offensarum partem ne intelligimus quidem; idcirco ait apostolus, Nihil conscius sum, &c. q. d. Multa delicta committo, quæ committere me non intelligo. Propter hanc causam propheta ait, Delicta quis intelligit?—S. Basil. c. 2. Monast. Constit.

[h] Eccles. ix. 1, 2.

[i] Beatus Daniel, præscius futurorum, de sententiâ Dei dubitat. Rem temerariam faciunt, qui audacter veniam pollicentur peccantibus.—S. Hieron. Dan. iv. 27. Joel ii. 14. Acts viii. 22.

be forgiven thee;" God may have mercy on thee. And that God hath done so, they only have reason to be confident, whom God hath blessed with a lasting, continuing piety, and who have wrought out the habits of their precontracted vices.

6. But we find, in Scripture, many precepts given to holy persons, being in the state of grace, to secure their standing, and perpetuate their present condition. For, "He that endureth unto the end, he" only "shall be saved,"[k] said our blessed Saviour: and, "He that standeth, let him take heed lest he fall:"[l] and, "Thou standest by faith; be not high-minded, but fear:"[m] and, "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling."[n] "Hold fast that thou hast, and let no man take thy crown from thee."[o] And it was excellent advice; for one church had "lost their first love,"[p] and was likely also to lose their crown. And St. Paul himself, who had once entered within the veil, and seen unutterable glories, yet was forced to endure hardship, and to fight against his own disobedient appetite, and to do violence to his inclinations; for fear that, "whilst he preached to others, himself should become a cast-away." And since we observe, in holy story, that Adam and Eve fell in paradise, and the angels fell in heaven itself, stumbling at the very jewels which pave the streets of the celestial Jerusalem; and in Christ's family, one man, for whom his Lord had prepared a throne, turned devil; and that, in the number of the deacons, it is said that one turned apostate, who yet had been a man full of the Holy Ghost: it will lessen our train, and discompose the gaieties of our present confidence, to think that our securities cannot be really distinguished from danger and uncertainties. For every man walks upon two legs: one is firm, invariable, constant, and eternal; but the other is his own. God's promises are the objects of our faith; but the events and final conditions of our souls, which are consequent to our duty, can, at the best, be but the objects of our hope. And either there must in this be a less certainty, or else faith and hope are not two distinct graces. God's gifts and vocations "are without repentance;"[q] meaning, on God's part: but the very people, concerning whom St. Paul used the expression, were reprobate and cut off, and in good time, shall be called again; in the mean time, many single persons perish. "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus."[r] God will look to that, and it will never fail; but then they must secure the following period, and "not walk after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Behold the goodness of God towards thee," saith St. Paul, "if thou continue in his good; otherwise thou also shalt be cut off."[s] And if this be true, concerning the whole church of the gentiles, to whom the apostle then made the address, and concerning whose election the decree was public and manifest, that they might be cut off, and their abode in God's favour was upon condition of their perseverance in the faith; much more is it true in single persons, whose election, in particular, is shut up in the abyss, and permitted to the condition of our faith and obedience, and the revelations of doomsday.

7. Certain it is, that God hath given to holy persons "the Spirit of adoption," enabling them to "cry, Abba, Father,"[t] and to account themselves for sons; and by this "Spirit we know we dwell in him:"[u] and, therefore, it is called in Scripture, "the earnest of the Spirit:"[x] though, at its first mission, and when the apostle wrote and used this appellative, the Holy Ghost was of greater signification, and a more visible earnest and endearment of their hopes, than it is to most of us since. For the visible sending of the Holy Ghost upon many believers, in gifts, signs, and prodigies, was an infinite argument to make them expect events, as great beyond that, as that was beyond the common gifts of men: just as miracles and prophecy, which are gifts of the Holy Ghost, were arguments of probation for the whole doctrine of christianity. And this being a mighty verification of the great promise, the promise of the Father, was an apt instrument to raise their hopes and confidences, concerning those other promises which Jesus made, the promises of immortality and eternal life, of which the present miraculous graces of the Holy Spirit were an earnest, and in the nature of a contracting penny: and still, also, the Holy Ghost, though in another manner, is "an earnest of the great price of the heavenly calling," the rewards of heaven; though not so visible and apparent as at first, yet as certain and demonstrative, where it is discerned, or where it is believed, as it is and ought to be in every person, who does any part of his duty; because, by the Spirit we do it, and without him we cannot. And since we either feel or believe the presence and gifts of the Holy Ghost to holy purposes, (for whom we receive voluntarily, we cannot easily receive without a knowledge of his reception,) we cannot but entertain him, as an argument of greater good hereafter, and an earnest-penny of the perfection of the present grace, that is, of the rewards of glory; glory and grace differing no otherwise, than as an earnest, in part of payment, does from the whole price, "the price of our high calling." So that the Spirit is an earnest, not because he always signifies to us, that we are actually in the state of grace, but by way of argument or reflection; we know we do belong to God, when we receive his Spirit; (and all christian people have received him, if they were rightly baptized and confirmed;) I say, we know, by that testimony, that we belong to God; that is, we are the people with whom God hath made a covenant, to whom he hath promised and intends greater blessings, to which the present gifts of the Spirit are in order. But all this is conditional, and is not an immediate testimony of the certainty and future event; but of the event, as it is possibly future, and may, (without our fault,) be reduced to act as certainly as it is promised, or as the earnest is given in hand. And this the Spirit of God oftentimes tells us, in

[k] Matt. xxiv. 13.
[l] 1 Cor. x. 12.
[m] Rom. xi. 20.
[n] Phil. ii. 12
[o] Rev. iii. 11.
[p] Chap. ii. 4.
[q] Rom. xi. 29.
[r] Rom. viii. 1.
[s] Rom. xi. 22.
[t] Rom. viii. 15.
[u] 1 John iv. 13.
[x] 2 Cor. i. 22. v. 5.

secret visitations and public testimonies: and this is that which St. Paul calls, "tasting of the heavenly gift, and partaking of the Holy Ghost," and "tasting of the good work of God, and the powers of the world to come."[y] But yet, some that have done so have fallen away, and have "quenched the Spirit," and have given back the earnest of the Spirit, and contracted new relations; and God hath been their Father no longer, for they have done the works of the devil. So that, if new converts be uncertain of their present state, old christians are not absolutely certain they shall persevere. They are as sure of it, as they can be of future acts of theirs, which God hath permitted to their own power. But this certainly cannot exclude all fear, till their charity be perfect: only according to the strength of their habits, so is the confidence of their abodes in grace.

8. Beyond this, some holy persons have degrees of persuasion, superadded as largesses and acts of grace; God loving to bless one degree of grace with another, till it comes to a confirmation in grace, which is a state of salvation directly opposite to obduration; and as this is irremediable and irrecoverable, so is the other inadmissible: as God never saves a person obdurate and obstinately impenitent, so he never loses a man, whom he hath confirmed in grace;[z] "whom he" so "loves, he loves unto the end;" and to others, indeed, he offers his persevering love, but they will not entertain it with a persevering duty, they will not be beloved unto the end. But I insert this caution, that every man, that is in this condition of a confirmed grace, does not always know it; but sometimes God draws aside the curtains of peace, and shows him his throne, and visits him with irradiations of glory, and sends him a little star to stand over his dwelling, and then again covers it with a cloud. It is certain, concerning some persons, that they shall never fall, and that God will not permit them to the danger or probability of it: to such it is morally impossible: but these are but few, and themselves know it not, as they know a demonstrative proposition, but as they see the sun, sometimes breaking from a cloud very brightly, but all day long giving necessary and sufficient light.

9. Concerning the multitude of believers, this discourse is not pertinent; for they only take their own accounts by the imperfections of their own duty, blended with the mercies of God: the cloud gives light on one side, and is dark upon the other; and sometimes a bright ray peeps through the fringes of a shower, and immediately hides itself: that we might be humble and diligent; striving forwards, and looking upwards; endeavouring our duty, and longing after heaven; "working out our salvation with fear and trembling;" and, in good time, "our calling and election" may be assured, when we first, according to the precept of the apostle, "use all diligence." St. Paul, when he writ his first epistle to the Corinthians, was more fearful of being reprobate;[a] and, therefore, he used exterior arts of mortification. But when he writ to the Romans, which was a good while after, we find him more confident of his final condition; "persuaded, that neither height, nor depth, angel, nor principality, nor power could separate him from the love of God, in Jesus Christ:"[b] and when he grew to his latter end, when he wrote to St. Timothy, he was more confident yet, and declared, that now a "crown of righteousness was," certainly, "laid up for him;" for now he had "fought the fight, and finished his course, the time of his departure was at hand."[c] Henceforth he knew no more fear; his love was perfect as this state would permit, and that "cast out all fear." According to this precedent, if we reckon our securities, we are not likely to be reproved by any words of Scripture, or by the condition of human infirmity. But when the confidence outruns our growth of grace, it is itself a sin; though, when the confidence is equal with the grace, it is of itself no regular and universal duty, but a blessing and a reward, indulged by special dispensation, and in order to personal necessities, or accidental purposes. For only so much hope is simply necessary, as excludes despair, and encourages our duty, and glorifies God, and entertains his mercy; but that the hope should be without fear, is not given, but to the highest faith, and the most excellent charity, and to habitual, ratified, and confirmed christians; and to them, also, with some variety. The sum is this: all that are in the state of beginners and imperfection, have a conditional certainty, changeable and fallible in respect of us, (for we meddle not with what it is in God's secret purposes,) changeable, I say, as their wills and resolutions. They that are grown towards perfection, have more reason to be confident, and many times are so; but still, although the strength of the habits of grace adds degrees of moral certainty to their expectation, yet it is but as their condition is, hopeful and promising, and of a moral determination. But to those few, to whom God hath given confirmation in grace, he hath also given a certainty of condition; and, therefore, if that be revealed to them, their persuasions are certain and infallible. If it be not revealed to them, their condition is in itself certain, but their persuasion is not so; but in the highest kind of hope, "an anchor of the soul, sure and stedfast."

THE PRAYER.

O eternal God, whose counsels are in the great deep, and thy ways past finding out; thou hast built our faith upon thy promises, our hopes upon thy goodness, and hast described our paths between the waters of comfort and the dry, barren land of our own duties and affections: we acknowledge that all our comforts derive from thee, and to ourselves we owe all our shame, and confusions, and degrees of desperation. Give us the assistances of the Holy Ghost, to help us in per-

[y] Heb. vi. 4, 5.
[z] ——— Hic felix, nullo turbante deorum;
Is, nullo parcente, miser ———

[a] 1 Cor. ix. 27.
[b] Rom. viii. 38, 39.
[c] 2 Tim. iv. 6—8.

forming our duty; and give us those comforts and visitations of the Holy Ghost, which thou, in thy infinite and eternal wisdom, knowest most apt and expedient, to encourage our duties, to entertain our hopes, to alleviate our sadnesses, to refresh our spirits, and to endure our abode and constant endeavours, in the strictnesses of religion and sanctity. Lead us, dearest God, from grace to grace, from imperfection to strength, from acts to habits, from habits to confirmation in grace, that we may also pass into the region of comfort, receiving the earnest of the Spirit, and the adoption of sons; till, by such a signature, we be consigned to glory, and enter into the possession of the inheritance, which we expect in the kingdom of thy Son, and in the fruition of the felicities of thee, O gracious Father, God eternal. Amen.

SECTION XIV.

Of the Third Year of the Preaching of Jesus.

1. But Jesus, knowing of the death of the Baptist, Herod's jealousy, and the envy of the Pharisees, retired into a desert place, beyond the lake, together with his apostles; for the people pressed so upon them, they had not leisure to eat. But neither there could he be hid; but great multitudes flocked thither also, to whom he preached many things. And afterwards, because there were no villages in the neighbourhood, lest they should faint in their return to their houses, he caused them "to sit down upon the grass," and, with "five loaves of barley, and two small fishes, he satisfied five thousand men, besides women and children," and caused the disciples to "gather up the fragments," which, being amassed together, "filled twelve baskets." Which miracles had so much proportion to the understanding, and met so happily with the affections of the people, that they were convinced that this was the "Messias, who was to come into the world," and had a purpose to have "taken him by force, and made him a king."

2. But he that left his Father's kingdom to take upon him the miseries and infelicities of the world, fled from the offers of a kingdom, and their tumultuary election, as from an enemy; and, therefore, sending his disciples to the ship to go before towards Bethsaida, he ran into the mountains, to hide himself, till the multitude should scatter to their several habitations; he, in the mean time, taking the opportunity of that retirement for the advantage of his prayers. But when the apostles were far engaged in the deep, a great tempest arose, with which they were pressed to the extremity of danger, and the last refuges, labouring in sadness and hopelessness, till "the fourth watch of the night," when, in the midst of their fears and labour, "Jesus comes, walking on the sea," and appeared to them, which turned their fears into affrightments; for "they supposed it had been a spirit:" but he appeased their fears with his presence, and manifestation who he was; which yet they desired to have proved to them by a sign. For "Simon Peter said unto him, Master, if it be thou, command me to come to thee on the waters." The Lord did so: and Peter, throwing himself upon the confidence of his Master's power and providence, came out of the ship, and his fear began to weigh him down, and "he cried, saying, Lord, save me. Jesus took him by the hand," reproved the timorousness of his faith, and "went with him into the ship:" where, when they had "worshipped him," and admired the divinity of his power and person, they presently "came into the land of Gennesareth," the ship arriving "at the port immediately;" and "all that were sick," or possessed with unclean spirits, "were brought to him, and as many as touched the border of his garment were made whole."

3. By this time, they whom Jesus had left on the other side of the lake, had come as far as Capernaum to seek him, wondering that he was there before them; but, upon the occasion of their so diligent inquisition, Jesus observes to them, "That it was not the divinity of the miracle that provoked their zeal, but the satisfaction they had in the loaves, a carnal complacency in their meal; and, upon that intimation, speaks of celestial bread, the divine nutriment of souls; and then discourses of the mysterious and symbolical manducation of Christ himself, affirming that he himself was 'the bread of life, that came down from heaven,' that he would give his disciples 'his flesh to eat, and his blood to drink,' and all this should be 'for the life of the world,' to nourish unto life eternal; so that, without it, a happy eternity could not be obtained." Upon this discourse, "divers of his disciples," (amongst whom St. Mark, the evangelist, is said to be one, though he was afterwards recalled by Simon Peter,) "forsook him,"[a] being scandalized by their literal and carnal understanding of those words of Jesus, which he intended in a spiritual sense. For "the words that he spake" were not profitable in the sense of flesh and blood, but "they are spirit, and they are life," himself being the expounder, who best knew his own meaning.

4. When Jesus saw this great defection of his disciples from him, he turned him to the twelve apostles, and asked, if they "also would go away? Simon Peter answered, Lord, whither shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life: and we believe, and are sure, thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." Although this public confession was made by Peter, in the name and confidence of the other apostles, yet Jesus told them, that even amongst the twelve there was "one devil;" meaning Judas Iscariot, "who afterwards betrayed him." This he told them prophetically, that they might perceive the sad accidents, which afterwards happened, did not invade and surprise him, in the disadvantages of ignorance or improvision, but came by his own knowledge and providence.

[a] Epiphan. Hæres. 15.

5. Then came to him the Pharisees, and some scribes, which came from Jerusalem and Galilee, (for "Jesus would not go to Judea, because the Jews laid wait to kill him,") and quarrelled with him about certain impertinent, unnecessary rites, derived to them, not by Divine sanction, but "ordinances of man:" such as were "washing their hands oft when they eat, baptizing cups and platters, and washing tables and beds;" which ceremonies the apostles of Jesus did not observe, but attended diligently to the simplicity and spiritual holiness of their Master's doctrine. But, in return to their vain demands, Jesus gave them a sharp reproof, for prosecuting these and many other traditions to the discountenance of Divine precepts: and, in particular, they taught men to give to the corban, and refused to supply the necessity of their parents, thinking it to be religion, though they neglected piety and charity. And again, he thunders out woes and sadnesses against their impieties, for being curious of minutes, and punctual in rites and ceremonials, but most negligent and incurious of judgment and the love of God; for their pride, for their hypocrisy, for their imposing burdens upon others, which themselves helped not to support; for taking away the key of knowledge from the people, obstructing the passages to heaven; for approving the acts of their fathers in persecuting the prophets. But, for the question itself concerning washings, Jesus taught the people, that no outward impurity did stain the soul, in the sight of God, but all pollution is from within, from the corruption of the heart, and impure thoughts, unchaste desires, and unholy purposes, and that charity is the best purifier in the world.

6. And thence "Jesus departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into a house," that he might "not be known." The diligence of a mother's love, and sorrow and necessity, found him out in his retirement; for a "Syrophœnician woman came, and besought him, that he would cast the devil out of her daughter." But Jesus discoursed to her by way of discomfort and rejection of her, for her nation's sake. But the seeming denial did but enkindle her desires, and made her importunity more bold and undeniable; she begged but "some crumbs that fell from the children's table," but one instance of favour to her daughter, which he poured forth, without measure, upon the sons and daughters of Israel. Jesus was pleased with her zeal and discretion, and pitied her daughter's infelicity, and dismissed her with saying, "The devil was gone out of her daughter."

7. But Jesus staid not long here, but returning "to the sea of Galilee, through the midst of Decapolis, they brought unto him a man deaf and dumb," whom Jesus cured by "touching his tongue, and putting his fingers in his ears:" which caused the people to give a large testimony in approbation of all his actions. And they followed him unto a mountain, bringing to him multitudes of diseased people, and he healed them all. But because the people had followed him "three days, and had nothing to eat," Jesus, in pity to their need, resolved to feast them once more at the charge of a miracle: therefore, taking "seven loaves and a few small fishes, he blessed them, and satisfied four thousand men, besides women and children." And there remained "seven baskets full of broken bread and fish." From whence Jesus departed, by ship, to the coasts of Mageddon and Dalmanutha, whither "the Pharisees and Sadducees came, seeking of him a sign." But Jesus rejected their impertinent and captious demand, knowing they did it to ill purposes, and with disaffection; reproving them, that they "discerned the face of the sky," and the prognostics of "fair or foul weather," but "not the signs of the times" of the Son of man. However, since they had neglected so great demonstrations of miracles, gracious discourses, holy laws and prophecies, they must expect "no other sign, but the sign of the prophet Jonas;" meaning, the resurrection of his body after three days' burial: and so he dismissed the impertinent inquisitors.

8. And passing again over the lake, as his disciples were solicitous, because "they had forgot to take bread," he gave them caution to "beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the leaven of Herod;" meaning, the hypocrisy and vanities of the one, and the heresy of the other. For Herod's leaven was the pretence that he was the Messias, which the sect of the Herodians did earnestly and spitefully promote. And, after this entertainment of themselves by the way, they came together to Bethsaida, where Jesus cured a blind man, with a collyrium of spittle, salutary as balsam, or the purest eye-bright, when his Divine benediction once had hallowed it. But Jesus staid not there, but, departing thence into the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi out of Herod's power, (for it was in Philip's jurisdiction,) after he had "prayed with his disciples," he inquired what opinion the world had of him, and "whom they reported him to be? They answered, Some say thou art John the Baptist, some that thou art Elias, or Jeremias, or one of the prophets:" for, in Galilee especially, the sect of the Pharisees was mightily disseminated, whose opinion it was, that the souls of dead men, according to their several merits, did transmigrate into other bodies of very perfect and excellent persons. And, therefore, in all this variety, none hit upon the right, or fancied him to be a distinct person from the ancients; but, although they differed in the assignation of his name, yet, generally, they agreed it was the soul of a departed prophet, which had passed into another body. But Jesus asked the apostles their opinion; and Peter, in the name of all the rest, made an open and confident confession, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God."

9. This confession Jesus not only confirmed as true, but as "revealed by God," and of fundamental necessity: for, after the blessing of Peter's person, upon allusion of Peter's name, Jesus said, that "upon this rock [the article of Peter's confession] he would build his church," promising to it assistances, even to perpetuity, insomuch that "the gates of hell," that is, persecution, and death, and the grave, "should never prevail against it:" adding, withal, a promise to Peter, in behalf of all the rest,

as he made a confession for them all, that he would "give unto him the keys of the kingdom of heaven, so that whatsoever he should bind on earth, should be bound in heaven; and whatsoever he should loose on earth, should be loosed in heaven:" a power which he never communicated before or since, but to their successors; greater than the large charter of nature, and the donative of creation, in which all the creatures under heaven were made subject to man's empire, but, till now, heaven itself was never subordinate to human ministration.

10. And now the days, from henceforward to the death of Jesus, we must reckon to be like the vigils, or eves, of his passion; for now he began, and often did ingeminate, those sad predictions of his unhandsome usage he should shortly find; that he should be "rejected of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and suffer many things at Jerusalem, and be killed, and be raised up the third day." But Peter, hearing that sad discourse, so contrary to his hopes, which he had blended with temporal expectances, (for he had learned the doctrine of Christ's advent, but not the mystery of the cross,) in great and mistaken civility, took Jesus aside, "and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee." But Jesus, full of zeal against so soft and human admonition, that savoured nothing of God, or of abstracted, immaterial considerations, chid Peter bitterly: "Get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an offence unto me." And, calling his disciples to him, he told them a second part of a sad doctrine, that not only himself, but all they also, must suffer. For when the head was to be crowned with thorns, if the members were wrapt in softnesses, it was an unhandsome indecency, and a disunion too near an antipathy; and, therefore, whoever will be the disciple of Jesus, must "take up his cross, deny himself," and his own fonder appetites, and trace his Master's footsteps, marked out with blood, that he shed for our redemption and restitution. And, that there be no escape from the participation of Christ's suffering, Jesus added this dilemma: "He that will save his life, shall lose it; and he that will lose it, shall save it" to eternity. Which part soever we choose, there is a life to be lost: but as the first are foolish to the extremest misery, that will lose their souls to gain the world; so they are most wise and fortunate, that will give their lives for him; because, when "the Son of man shall come, in his own glory, and his Father's, and of his angels, he shall reward every man according to his works." This discourse Jesus concluded with a prophecy, that "some, standing" in that presence, "should not die, till they saw the Son of man coming in his kingdom."

11. Of the greater glories of which, in due time to be revealed, "Jesus, after eight days," gave a bright and excellent probation. For, "taking with him Peter, and James, and John, he went up into the mountain Tabor, to pray; and while he prayed, he was transfigured before them, and his face did shine like the sun, and his garments were white and glistering. And there appeared talking with him Moses and Elias gloriously, speaking of the decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem, which glory these apostles, after they had awaked from sleep, did behold." And the interlocutors with Jesus, having finished their embassy of death, (which they delivered in forms of glory, representing the excellencies of the reward, together with the sharpness of the passage and interval,) departed, leaving the apostles "full of fear," and wonder, and ecstasy, insomuch that "Peter talked he knew not what;" but nothing amiss, something prophetical, saying, "Master, it is good to be here; let us build three tabernacles." And some devout persons, in memory of the mystery, did erect three churches in the same place, in after ages.[b] But, after the departure of those attendant saints, "a cloud encircled Jesus" and the disciples, "and a voice came from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, hear him." The cloud quickly disappeared, and freed the disciples from the fear it had put them in. So they attended Jesus, and "descended from the mountain," being "commanded silence," which they observed, "till the resurrection."

12. The next day came to Jesus a man praying in behalf of his son, "lunatic and sore troubled with a devil," who sought oft "to destroy him in fire and water,"[c] that Jesus would be pleased to deliver him. For his apostles tried, and "could not," by reason of the want of faith; for this grace, if it be true, though in a less degree, is of power to "remove mountains," to pluck up trees by the roots, and to give them solid foundation in the waters. "And Jesus rebuked the devil, and he departed out of him" from that very hour. Thence Jesus departed privately into Galilee, and in his journey repeated those sadnesses of his approaching passion; which so afflicted the spirits of the disciples, that they durst no more provoke him to discourse, lest he should take occasion to interweave something of that unpleasant argument with it. For sad and disconsolate persons use to create comforts to themselves by fiction of fancy, and use arts of avocation to remove displeasure from them, and stratagems to remove it from their presence, by removing it from their apprehensions, thinking the incommodity of it is then taken away, when they have lost the sense.

13. When Jesus was now come to Capernaum, the exactors of rates came to Simon Peter, asking him if his Master paid the accustomed imposition, viz. a sicle, or didrachm, the fourth part of an ounce of silver, which was the tribute[d] which the Lord imposed upon all the sons of Israel, from twenty years old and above, to pay for redemption and propitiation, and for the use of the tabernacle. "When Peter came into the house, Jesus," knowing the message that he was big with, "prevented him," by asking him, "Of whom do the kings of the nations take tribute? of their own children or of strangers? Peter answered, Of strangers." Then

[b] Beda de Locis Sanctis, c. 17.

[c] Sæpe fui sorbendus aquis, sæpe igne vorandus:
Sed timuere tuas ignis et unda manus.

[d] Exod. xxx.

"said Jesus, Then are the children free;" meaning, that since the gentile kings do not exact tribute of their sons, neither will God of his. And, therefore, this pension, to be paid for the use of the tabernacle, for the service of God, for the redemption of their souls, was not to be paid by him, who was the Son of God, but by strangers. "Yet to avoid offence," he sent Peter a-fishing, and provided a fish with two didrachms of silver in it, which he commanded Peter to pay for them two.

14. But when the disciples were together with "Jesus in the house, he asked them what they discoursed of upon the way;" for they had fallen upon an ambitious and mistaken quarrel, "which of them should be greatest in their Master's kingdom," which they still did dream should be an external and secular royalty, full of fancy and honour. But the Master was diligent to check their forwardness, establishing a rule for clerical deportment: "He that will be greatest among you, let him be your minister:" so supposing a greater and a lesser, a minister, and a person to be ministered unto, but dividing the grandeur of the person from the greatness of office (that the higher the employment is, the more humble should be the man); because, in spiritual prelation, it is not as in secular pomps, where the dominion is despotic, the coercion bloody, the dictates imperious, the laws externally compulsory, and the titles arrogant and vain; and all the advantages are so passed upon the person, that, making that first to be splendid, it passes from the person to the subjects, who, in abstracted essences, do not easily apprehend regalities in veneration, but as they are subjected in persons made excellent by such superstructures of majesty: but, in dignities ecclesiastical, the dominion is paternal, the regiment persuasive and argumentative, the coercion by censures immaterial, by cession and consent, by denial of benefits, by the interest of virtues, and the efficacy of hopes, and impresses upon the spirit; the laws are full of admonition and sermon; the titles of honour monitors of duty, and memorials of labour and offices; and all the advantages which from the office usually pass upon the person, are to be divested by the humility of the man; and, when they are of greatest veneration, they are abstracted excellencies and immaterial, not passing through the person to the people, and reflected to his lustre, but transmitted by his labour and ministry, and give him honour for his labour's sake, (which is his personal excellency,) not for his honour and title, which is either a derivative from Christ, or from the constitution of pious persons, estimating and valuing the relatives of religion.

15. Then "Jesus taketh a little child, and setteth him in the midst," propounding him, by way of emblem, a pattern of humility and simplicity, without the mixtures of ambition or caitive distempers; such infant candour, and lowliness of spirit, being the necessary port through which we must pass, if we will enter into the courts of heaven. But as a current of wholesome waters, breaking from its restraint, runs out in a succession of waters, and every preceding draught draws out the next; so were the discourses of Jesus excellent and opportune, creating occasions for others that the whole doctrine of the gospel, and the entire will of the Father, might be communicated upon design; even the chances of words and actions being made regular and orderly by Divine providence. For, from the instance of humility, in the symbol and hieroglyphic of the child, Jesus discourses of "the care God takes of little children, whether naturally or spiritually such; the danger of doing them scandal and offences; the care and power of their angels guardian; of the necessity in the event that scandals should arise, and of the great woe and infelicity of those persons, who were the active ministers of such offences."

16. But if, in the traverses of our life, discontents and injuries be done, Jesus teaches how the injured person should demean himself:[e] First, reprove the offending party privately; if he repent, forgive him for ever, with a mercy as unwearied and as multiplied as his repentance. For the servant, to whom his lord had forgiven ten thousand talents, because he refused to forgive his fellow-servant one hundred pence, was delivered to the tormentors,[f] till he should pay that debt which his lord once forgave, till the servant's impiety forced him to repent his donative and remission. But if he refuses the charity of private correction, let him be reproved before a few witnesses; and in case he be still incorrigible, let him be brought to the tribunal of the church; against whose advices if he shall kick, let him feel her power, and be cut off from the communion of saints, becoming a pagan or a publican. And to make that the church shall not have a dead and ineffectual hand in her animadversions, Jesus promises to all the apostles, what before he promised to Peter, a power of "binding and loosing on earth," and that it should be "ratified in heaven," what they shall so dispose on earth with an unerring key.

17. But John interrupted him, telling him of a stranger that "cast out devils in the name of Jesus," but because he was not of the family, he had "forbidden him." To this Jesus replied, that he should "in no wise have forbidden him," for, in all reason, he would do veneration to that person, whose name he saw to be energetical and triumphant over devils, and in whose name it is almost necessary that man should believe, who used it as an instrument of ejection of impure spirits. Then Jesus proceeded in his excellent sermon and union of discourses, adding holy precepts "concerning offences, which a

[e] Injuriam qui tulit, oblivisci potest; qui fecit, nunquam. —TACIT.

[f] De pœnis debitorum qui solvendo non sunt, vide Livium, Decad. i. lib. i. et vi.; et Dionys. Halicarn. Hist. Rom. lib. vi.; et A. Gellium, lib. xx. c. 1. qui ait, licuisse secare, si vellent, atque partiri corpus debitoris. Eo tamen consilio (sic barbariem excusat Gellius) tanta immanitas pœnæ denunciata est, ne ad eam unquam pervenirent: dissectum esse antiquitus neminem neque legi, neque audivi. Duravit tamen ad ævum Constantini Magni, ut plumbatis cæderentur debitores; qui tandem Christianam mansuetudinem in leges introduxit, et plumbatorum immanitatem sustulit.—Cod. Theod. lib. iv. et vii. de Exact.

man might do to himself; in which case he is to be severe, though most gentle to others. For, in his own case, he must show no mercy, but abscission: for it is better to 'cut off the offending hand or foot,' or 'extinguish the offending eye,' rather than, upon the support of a troublesome foot, and by the light of an offending eye, walk into ruin and a sad eternity, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.'" And so Jesus ended this chain of excellent discourses.

18. About this time was the Jews' feast of Tabernacles, whither Jesus went up, as it were, in secret; and, passing through Samaria, he found the inhabitants of a little village so inhospitable, as to refuse to give him entertainment; which so provoked the intemperate zeal of James and John, that they would fain have "called for fire to consume them, even as Elias did." But Jesus rebuked the furies of their anger, teaching them to distinguish the spirit of christianity from the ungentleness of the decretory zeal of Elias. For, since "the Son of man came" with a purpose "to seek and to save what was lost," it was but an indiscreet temerity, suddenly, upon the lightest umbrages of displeasure, to destroy a man, whose redemption cost the effusion of the dearest blood from the heart of Jesus. But, contrariwise, Jesus does a miracle upon the ten leprous persons, which came to him from the neighbourhood, crying out, with sad exclamations, for help. But Jesus sent them to the priest, to offer for their cleansing. Thither they went, and but one only returned to give thanks, and he a stranger, who, "with a loud voice, glorified God," and with humble adoration worshipped and gave thanks to Jesus.

19. When Jesus had finished his journey, and was now come to Jerusalem, for the first days he was undiscerned in public conventions, but heard of the various opinions of men concerning him: "some saying he was a good man, others, that he deceived the people;" and the Pharisees sought for him, to do him a mischief. But when they despaired of finding him in the midst of the feast and the people, he made sermons openly, in the midst of the temple; whom when he had convinced, by the variety and divinity of his miracles and discourses, they gave the greatest testimony in the world of human weakness, and how prevalent a prejudice is above the confidence and conviction of a demonstration. For a proverb, a mistake, an error in matter of circumstance, did, in their understandings, outweigh multitudes of miracles and arguments; and because "Christ was of Galilee," because "they knew whence he was," because of the proverb, that "out of Galilee comes no prophet," because "the rulers did not believe in him," these outweighed the demonstrations of his mercy, and his power, and divinity. But yet "very many believed on him; and no man durst lay hands to take him; for as yet his time was not come," in which he meant to give himself up to the power of the Jews: and therefore, when the Pharisees sent officers to seize him, they also became his disciples, being themselves surprised by the excellency of his doctrine.

20. After this "Jesus went to the mount of Olivet," on the east of Jerusalem, and "the next day returned again into the temple," where "the scribes and Pharisees brought him a woman taken in the act of adultery," tempting him to give sentence, that they might accuse him of severity or intermeddling, if he condemned her; or of remissness and popularity, if he did acquit her. But Jesus found out an expedient for their difficulty, and changed the scene, by bidding "the innocent person among them cast the first stone at the adulteress;" and then "stooping down," to give them fair occasion to withdraw, "he wrote upon the ground with his finger," whilst they left the woman and her crime to a more private censure: "Jesus was left alone, and the woman in the midst," whom Jesus dismissed, charging her to "sin no more." And, a while after, Jesus begins again to discourse to them, "of his mission from the Father, of his crucifixion and exaltation from the earth, of the reward of believers, of the excellency of truth, of spiritual liberty and relations; who are the sons of Abraham, and who the children of the devil; of his own eternal generation, of the desire of Abraham to see his day." In which sermon he continued, adding still new excellencies, and confuting their malicious and vainer calumnies, till they, that they might also confute him, "took up stones to cast at him;" but he "went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by."

21. But, in his passage, he met a man who had been born blind: and after he had discoursed cursorily of the cause of that blindness, it being a misery not sent as a punishment to "his own or his parents' sin," but as an occasion to make public "the glory of God;" he, to manifest that himself was "the light of the world" in all senses, said it now, and proved it by a miracle: for, sitting down, "he made clay of spittle," and, "anointing the eyes of the blind man," bid him "go wash in Siloam;" which was a pool of limpid water, which God sent at the prayer of Isaiah the prophet, a little before his death,[g] to satisfy the necessities of his people, oppressed with thirst and a strict siege; and it stood at the foot of the mount Sion, and gave its water at first by returns and periods, always to the Jews, but not to the enemies. And those intermitted springings were still continued, but only a pool was made from the frequent effluxes. The blind man "went, and washed, and returned seeing;" and was incessantly vexed by the Pharisees, to tell them the manner and circumstances of the cure: and when the man had averred the truth, and named his physician, giving him a pious and charitable testimony, the Pharisees, because they could not force him to disavow his good opinion of Jesus, "cast him out of the synagogue." But Jesus, meeting him, received him into the church, told him he was Christ; and the man became again enlightened, and he "believed, and worshipped." But the Pharisees blasphemed: for such was the dispensation of the Divine mysteries, that the blind should see, and they which think they see clearly should become blind, because they had not the excuse of ignorance to

[g] Epiphan. de Vita et Interitu Prophet. c. 7.

lessen or take off the sin; but, in the midst of light, they shut their eyes, and doted upon darkness, and "therefore did their sin remain."

22. But Jesus continued his sermon among the Pharisees, insinuating reprehensions in his dogmatical discourses, which, like light, shined, and discovered error. For, by discoursing "the properties of a 'good shepherd' and the lawful way of 'intromission,' he proved them to be 'thieves and robbers,' because they refused to 'enter in by Jesus,' who is 'the door of the sheep;' and, upon the same ground, reproved all those false Christs, which before him usurped the title of Messias; and proved his own vocation and office by an argument, which no other shepherd would use, because he 'laid down his life for his sheep:' others would take the fleece and eat the flesh, but none but himself would die for his sheep; but he would first die, and then gather his 'sheep' together 'into one fold,' (intimating the calling of the gentiles;) to which purpose he was 'enabled by his Father to lay down his life, and to take it up;' and had also endeared them to his Father, that they should be 'preserved unto eternal life, and no power should be able to take them out of his hand, or the hand of his Father:' for because Jesus was 'united to the Father,' the Father's care preserved the Son's flocks."

23. But the Jews, to requite him for his so divine sermons, betook themselves to their old argument: "they took up stones again to cast at him," pretending he had blasphemed: but Jesus proved it to be no blasphemy to call himself "the Son of God," because "they to whom the word of God came, are," in Scripture, "called Gods." But nothing could satisfy them, whose temporal interest was concerned not to consent to such doctrine, which would save their souls by ruining their temporal concernments. But when "they sought again to take him, Jesus escaped out of their hands, and went away beyond Jordan, where John at first baptized:" which gave the people occasion to remember that "John did no miracle," but this man does many; and John, whom all men did revere and highly account of, for his office and sanctity, gave testimony to Jesus. "And many believed on him there."

24. After this, Jesus knowing that "the harvest was great," and as yet the labourers had been few, sent out seventy-two of his disciples, with the like commission as formerly the twelve apostles, that they might "go before to those places, whither himself meant to come." Of which number were the seven, whom afterwards the apostles set over the widows, and Matthias, Mark, and some [h] say Luke, Justus, Barnabas, Apelles, Rufus, Niger, Cephas, (not Peter,) Thaddæus, Aristion, and John. The rest of the names could not be recovered by the best diligence of Eusebius and Epiphanius. But when they returned from their journey, they rejoiced greatly in the legation and power, and Jesus also "rejoiced in spirit," giving glory to God, that he had "made his revelations to babes" and the more imperfect persons; like the lowest valleys, which receive from heaven the greatest floods of rain and blessings, and stand thick with corn and flowers, when the mountains are unfruitful in their height and greatness.

25. And now a doctor of the law came to Jesus, asking him a question of the greatest consideration that a wise man could ask, or a prophet answer: "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus referred him to the Scriptures, and declared the way to heaven to be this only, "to love the Lord with all our powers and faculties, and our neighbour as ourself." But when the lawyer, being captious, made a scruple in a smooth rush, asking what is meant by "neighbour;" Jesus told him, by a parable of a traveller fallen into the hands of robbers, and neglected by a priest and by a Levite, but relieved by a Samaritan, that no distance of country or religion destroys the relation of neighbourhood; but every person, with whom we converse in peace and charity, is that neighbour whom we are to love as ourselves.

26. Jesus, having departed from Jerusalem upon the fore-mentioned danger, came to a village called Bethany, where Martha, making great and busy preparation for his entertainment, to express her joy and her affections to his person, desired Jesus to dismiss her sister Mary from his feet, who sat there feasting herself with the viands and sweetnesses of his doctrine, incurious of the provisions for entertainment. But Jesus commended her choice; and though he did not expressly disrepute Martha's civility, yet he preferred Mary's religion and sanctity of affections. In this time (because "the night drew on, in which no man could work") Jesus hastened to do his Father's business, and to pour out whole cataracts of holy lessons, like the fruitful Nilus swelling over the banks, and filling all the trenches, to make a plenty of corn and fruits great as the inundation. Jesus therefore teaches his disciples "that form of prayer, the second time, which we call 'the Lord's Prayer:' teaches them assiduity and indefatigable importunity in prayer, by a parable of an importunate neighbour borrowing loaves at midnight, and a troublesome widow, who forced an unjust judge to do her right by her clamorous and hourly addresses: encourages them to pray, by consideration of the Divine goodness and fatherly affection, far more indulgent to his sons than natural fathers are to their dearest issue; and adds a gracious promise of success to them that pray. He reproves Pharisaical ostentation; arms his disciples against the fear of men and the terrors of persecution, which can arrive but to the incommodities of the body; teaches the fear of God, who is Lord of the whole man, and can accurse the soul, as well as punish the body. He refuses to divide the inheritance between two brethren, as not having competent power to become lord in temporal jurisdictions. He preaches against covetousness, and the placing felicities in worldly possessions, by a parable of a rich man, whose riches were too big for his barns, and big enough for his soul, and he ran over into voluptuousness, and stupid complacen-

[h] Epiphan. Pan. lib. i. tom. 1. Euseb. lib. i. c. 12. Papius, apud Euseb. lib. iii. c. 33.

cies in his perishing goods: he was snatched from their possession, and his soul taken from him, in the violence of a rapid and hasty sickness, in the space of one night. He discourses of Divine providence and care over us all, and descending even as low as grass. He exhorts to alms-deeds, to watchfulness, and preparation against the sudden and unexpected coming of our Lord to judgment, or the arrest of death: tells the offices and sedulity of the clergy, under the apologue of stewards and governors of their Lord's houses; teaches them gentleness and sobriety, and not to do evil upon confidence of their Lord's absence and delay; and teaches the people, even of themselves, to judge what is right concerning the signs of the coming of the Son of man. And the end of all these discourses was, that all men should repent, and live good lives, and be saved."

27. At this sermon "there were present some, that told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices." For the Galileans were a sort of people, that taught it to be unlawful to pay tribute to strangers, or to pray for the Romans; and because the Jews did both, they refused to communicate in their sacred rites, and would sacrifice apart: at which solemnity, when Pilate, the Roman deputy, had apprehended many of them, he caused them all to be slain, making them to die upon the same altars. These were of the province of Judea, but of the same opinion with those who taught in Galilee, from whence the sect had its appellative. But to the story: Jesus made reply, that these external accidents, though they be sad and calamitous, yet they are no arguments of condemnation against the persons of the men, to convince them of greater guilt than others, upon whom no such visible signatures have been imprinted. The purpose of such chances is, that we should "repent, lest we perish" in the like judgment.

28. About this time a certain ruler of a synagogue renewed the old question about the observation of the sabbath, repining at Jesus, that he cured "a woman that was crooked, loosing her from her infirmity, with which she had been afflicted eighteen years." But Jesus made the man ashamed, by an argument from their own practice, who themselves "loose an ox from the stall on the sabbath, and lead him to watering:" and by the same argument he also stopped the mouths of the scribes and Pharisees, which were open upon him, for curing an hydropic person upon the sabbath. For Jesus, that he might draw off and separate christianity from the yoke of ceremonies, by abolishing and taking off the strictest Mosaical rites, chose to do very many of his miracles upon the sabbath, that he might do the work of abrogation and institution both at once; not much unlike the sabbatical pool in Judea, which was dry six days, but gushed out in a full stream upon the sabbath.[1] For though, upon all days, Christ was operative and miraculous, yet many reasons did concur and determine him to a more frequent working upon those days of public ceremony and convention. But, going forth from thence, he went up and down the cities of Galilee, re-enforcing the same doctrine he had formerly taught them, and daily adding new precepts, and cautions, and prudent insinuations: "advertising of the multitudes of them that perish, and the paucity of them that shall be saved, and that we should 'strive to enter in at the strait gate;' that 'the way to destruction is broad' and plausible, 'the way to heaven' nice and austere, 'and few there be that find it;' teaches them modesty at feasts, and entertainments of the poor: discourses of the many excuses and unwillingnesses of persons who were invited to the feast of the kingdom, the refreshments of the gospel; and tacitly insinuates the rejection of the Jews, who were the first 'invited,' and the calling of the gentiles, who were the persons 'called in from the highways and hedges.' He reprehends Herod for his subtilty and design to kill him; prophesies that he should die at Jerusalem; and intimates great sadnesses future to them, for 'neglecting this, their day' of visitation, and for 'killing the prophets and the messengers sent from God.'"

29. It now grew towards winter, and the Jews' feast of Dedication was at hand; therefore, Jesus went up to Jerusalem to the feast, where he preached in Solomon's porch, which part of the temple stood entire from the first ruins: and the end of his sermon was, that the Jews had like to have stoned him. But, retiring from thence, he went beyond Jordan, where he taught the people, in a most elegant and persuasive parable, concerning "the mercy of God in accepting penitents, in the parable of the 'prodigal son' returning; discourses of the design of the Messias coming into the world, to recover erring persons from their sin and danger, in the apologues of the 'lost sheep,' and 'groat;' and, under the representment of an unjust but prudent steward, he taught us so to employ our present opportunities and estates, by laying them out in acts of mercy and religion, that, when our souls shall be dismissed from the stewardship and custody of our body, we 'may be entertained in everlasting habitations.' He instructeth the Pharisees in the question of divorces, limiting the permissions of separations to the only cause of fornication: preferreth holy celibate before the estate of marriage, in them to whom the gift of continency is given, in order to the kingdom of heaven. He telleth a story or a parable, (for which is uncertain,) of a rich man (whom Euthymius, out of the tradition of the Hebrews, nameth Nymensis) and Lazarus; the first a voluptuous person, and uncharitable; the other, pious, afflicted, sick, and a beggar; the first died, and went to hell; the second, to Abraham's bosom; God so ordering the dispensation of good things, that we cannot easily enjoy two heavens; nor shall the infelicities of our lives, if we be pious, end otherwise than in a beatified condition. The epilogue of which story discovered this truth also, that the ordinary means of salvation are the express revelations of Scripture, and the ministries of God's appointment; and whosoever neglects these, shall not be supplied with means extraordinary, or, if he were, they would be totally ineffectual."

[1] Joseph. de Bello Jud. lib. vii. c. 24.

30. And still the people drew water from the fountains of our Saviour, which streamed out in a full and continual emanation. For, adding wave to wave, "line to line, precept upon precept," he "reproved the fastidiousness of the Pharisee, that came with eucharist to God, and contempt to his brother; and commended the humility of the publican's address, who came deploring his sins, and, with modesty, and penance, and importunity, begged, and obtained a mercy. Then he laid hands upon certain young children, and gave them benediction, charging his apostles to admit infants to him, because to them, in person, and to such, in emblem and signification, the kingdom of heaven does appertain. He instructs a young man in the ways and counsels of perfection, besides the observation of precepts, by heroical renunciations, and acts of munificent charity." Which discourse, because it alighted upon an indisposed and an unfortunate subject, ("for the young man was very rich,") Jesus discourses "how hard it is for a rich man to be saved; but he expounds himself to mean, 'they that trust in riches;' and, however it is a matter of so great temptation, that it is almost impossible to escape, yet 'with God nothing is impossible.'" But, when the apostles heard the Master bidding the young man "sell all, and give to the poor, and follow him," and for his reward promised him "a heavenly treasure;" Peter, in the name of the rest, began to think that this was their case, and the promise also might concern them; and asking him this question, What shall we have, who have forsaken all, and followed thee? Jesus answered, that they should "sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

31. And Jesus extended this mercy to every disciple, that should "forsake either house, or wife, or children, or any thing, for his sake and the gospel's," and that they "should receive a hundredfold in this life," by way of comfort and equivalence, "and, in the world to come," thousands of glories and possessions, in fruition and redundancy. For "they that are last shall be first, and the first shall be last;" and the despised people of this world shall reign like kings, and contempt itself shall swell up into glory, and poverty into an eternal satisfaction. And these rewards shall not be accounted according to the privileges of nations, or priority of vocation, but readiness of mind and obedience, and sedulity of operation after calling: which Jesus taught his disciples in the parable of the labourers "in the vineyard," to whom the master gave the same reward, though the times of their working were different; as their calling and employment had determined the opportunity of their labours.

DISCOURSE XVII.

Of Scandal, or giving and taking Offence.[a]

1. A sad curse being threatened, in the gospel, to them who "offend any of Christ's little ones," that is, such as are novices and babes in christianity, it concerns us to learn our duty, and perform it, that we may avoid the curse: for, "Woe to all them by whom offences come."[b] And although the duty is so plainly explicated, and represented in gloss and case, by the several commentaries of St. Paul, upon this menace of our blessed Saviour;[c] yet, because our English word "offence," which is commonly used in this question of scandal, is so large and equivocal, that it hath made many pretences, and intricated this article to some inconvenience, it is not without good purpose to draw into one body those propositions, which the masters of spiritual life have described in the managing of this question.

2. First: By whatsoever we do our duty to God, we cannot directly do offence, or give scandal, to our brother; because, in such cases where God hath obliged us, he hath also obliged himself to reconcile our duty to the designs of God, to the utility of souls, and the ends of charity. And this proposition is to be extended to our obedience to the lawful constitutions of our competent superiors, in which cases we are to look upon the commandment, and leave the accidental events to the disposition of that Providence, who reconciles dissonances in nature, and concentres all the variety of accidents into his own glory. And whosoever is offended at me for obeying God, or God's vicegerent, is offended at me for doing my duty; and in this there is no more dispute, but whether I shall displease God, or my peevish neighbour. These are such, whom the Spirit of God complains of, under other representments: they "think it strange we run not into the same excess of riot;" their "eye is evil, because" their Master's "eye is good:" and the abounding of God's grace also may become to them an occasion of falling, and the long-suffering of God the encouragement to sin. In this there is no difficulty; for in what case soever we are bound to obey God, or man, in that case, and in that conjunction of circumstances, we have nothing permitted to our choice, and have no authority to remit of the right of God, or our superior. And, to comply with our neighbour in such questions, besides that it cannot serve any purposes of piety, if it declines from duty in any instance, it is like giving alms out of the portion of orphans, or building hospitals with the money and spoils of sacrilege. It is pusillanimity, or hypocrisy, or a denying to confess Christ before men, to comply with any man, and to offend God, or omit a duty. Whatsoever is necessary to be done, and is made so by God, no weakness or peevishness of man can make necessary not to be done. For the matter of scandal is a duty beneath the prime obligations of religion.

3. Secondly: But every thing which is used in religion, is not matter of precise duty; but there are some things, which indeed are pious and religious, but dispensable, voluntary, and commutable; such as are, voluntary fasts, exterior acts of discipline and mortification, not enjoined, great degrees of exterior worship, prostration, long prayers, vigils: and

[a] Ad Num. 3. [b] Matt. xviii. 7. [c] Rom. xiv. 1 Cor. viii. Gal. ii.

in these things, although there is not directly a matter of scandal, yet there may be some prudential considerations in order to charity and edification. By pious actions, I mean either particular pursuances of a general duty, which are uncommanded in the instance, such as are the minutes and expresses of alms; or else they are commended, but in the whole kind of them unenjoined, such as divines call the "counsels of perfection." In both these cases, a man cannot be scandalous. For the man doing, in charity and the love of God, such actions which are aptly expressive of love, the man, I say, is not uncharitable in his purposes: and the actions themselves, being either attempts or proceedings toward perfection, or else actions of direct duty, are as innocent in their productions as in themselves, and, therefore, without the malice of the recipient, cannot induce him into sin: and nothing else is scandal. To do any pious act proceeds from the Spirit of God, and to give scandal, from the spirit of malice, or indiscretion; and, therefore, a pious action, whose fountain is love and wisdom, cannot end in uncharitableness or imprudence. But because, when any man is offended at what I esteem piety, there is a question whether the action be pious or not; therefore, it concerns him that works, to take care that his action be either an act of duty, though not determined to a certain particular; or else, be something counselled in Scripture, or practised by a holy person, there recorded, and no where reproved; or a practice warranted by such precedents, which modest, prudent, and religious persons account a sufficient inducement of such particulars: for he that proceeds upon such principles, derives the warrant of his actions from beginnings, which secure the particular and quits the scandal.

4. This, I say, is a security against the uncharitableness and the sin of scandal; because a zeal of doing pious actions is a zeal according to God: but it is not always a security against the indiscretion of the scandal. He that reproves a foolish person in such circumstances that provoke him, or make him impudent or blasphemous, does not give scandal, and brings no sin upon himself, though he occasioned it in the other: but, if it was probable such effects should be consequent to the reprehension, his zeal was imprudent and rash; but so long as it was zeal for God, and, in its own matter, lawful, it could not be an active or guilty scandal: but if it be no zeal, and be a design to entrap a man's unwariness, or passion, or shame, and to disgrace the man, by that means, or any other, to make him sin, then it is directly the offending of our brother. They that "preached Christ out of envy," intended to do offence to the apostles: but, because they were impregnable, the sin rested in their own bosom, and God wrought his own ends by it. And, in this sense, they are scandalous persons, who "fast for strife," who pray for rebellion, who entice simple persons into the snare, by colours of religion. Those very exterior acts of piety become an offence, because they are done to evil purposes; to abuse proselytes, and to draw away disciples after them, and make them love the sin, and march under so splendid and fair colours. They who, out of strictness and severity of persuasion, represent the conditions of the gospel alike to every person, that is, nicer than Christ described them, in all circumstances, and deny such liberties of exterior desires and complacency, which may be reasonably permitted to some men, do very indiscreetly, and may occasion the alienation of some men's minds from the entertainments of religion: but this being accidental to the thing itself, and to the purpose of the man, is not the sin of scandal, but it is the indiscretion of scandal, if, by such means, he divorces any man's mind from the cohabitation and unions of religion: and yet, if the purpose of the man be to affright weaker and unwise persons, it is a direct scandal, and one of those ways which the devil uses towards the peopling of his kingdom; it is a plain laying of a snare to entrap feeble and uninstructed souls.

5. But if the pious action have been formerly joined with any thing that is truly criminal, with idolatry, with superstition, with impious customs or impure rites, and by retaining the piety, I give cause to my weak brother to think I approve of the old appendage, and, by my reputation, invite him to swallow the whole action without discerning; the case is altered; I am to omit that pious action, if it be not under command, until I have acquitted it from the suspicion of evil company. But when I have done what, in prudence, I guess sufficient to thaw the frost of jealousy, and to separate those dissonances, which formerly seemed united, I have done my duty of charity, by endeavouring to free my brother from the snare, and I have done what, in christian prudence, I was obliged, when I have protested against the appendant crime: if, afterwards, the same person shall entertain the crime, upon pretence of my example, who have plainly disavowed it, he lays the snare for himself, and is glad of the pretence, or will, in spite, enter into the net, that he might think it reasonable to rail at me. I may not, with christian charity or prudence, wear the picture of our blessed Lord in rings or medals,[d] though with great affection and designs of doing him all the honour that I can, if, by such pictures, I invite persons, apt more to follow me than to understand me, to give divine honour to a picture; but when I have declared my hatred of superstitious worshippings, and given my brother warning of the snare, which his own mistake, or the devil's malice, was preparing for him, I may then, without danger, signify my piety and affections in any civil representments, which are not against God's law or the customs of the church, or the analogy of faith. And there needs no other reason to be given for this rule, than that there is no reason to be given against it. If the nature of the thing be innocent, and the purpose of the man be pious, and he hath used his moral industry to secure his brother against accidental mischances and abuses;

[d] Ἐν δακτύλῳ Θεοῦ εἰκόνα μὴ περιφέρειν, dictum proverbialiter, contra leves et inanes ceremonias civilis et popularis religionis.

his duty, in this particular, can have no more parts and instances.

6. But it is too crude an assertion, to affirm indefinitely, that whatsoever hath been abused to evil or superstitious purposes, must presently be abjured, and never entertained, for fear of scandal; for it is certain, that the best things have been most abused. Have not some persons used certain verses of the Psalter, as an antidote against the toothach? and carried the blessed sacrament in pendants about their necks, as a charm to countermand witches? and St. John's Gospel, as a spell against wild beasts, and wilder untamed spirits? Confession of sins to the ministers of religion hath been made an instrument to serve base ends; and so, indeed, hath all religion been abused: and some persons have been so receptive of scandal, that they suspected all religion to be a mere stratagem, because they have observed very many men have used it so. For some natures are like sponges or sugar, whose utmost verge if you dip in wine, it drowns itself by the moisture it sucks up, and is drenched all over, receiving its alteration from within; its own nature did the mischief, and plucks on its own dissolution. And these men are greedy to receive a scandal; and when it is presented but in small instances, they suck it up to the dissolution of their whole religion; being glad of a quarrel, that their impieties may not want all excuse. But yet, it is certainly very unreasonable to reject excellent things, because they have been abused; as if separable accidents had altered natures and essences, or that they resolve never to forgive the duties, for having once fallen into the hands of unskilful or malicious persons. Hezekiah took away the brazen serpent, because the people abused it to idolatry; but the serpent had long before lost its use: and yet, if the people had not been a peevish, and refractory, and superstitious people, in whose nature it was to take all occasions of superstition; and further yet, if the taking away such occasions and opportunities of that sin in special, had not been most agreeable with the designs of God, in forbidding to the people the common use of all images in the second commandment, which was given them after the erection of that brazen statue; Hezekiah possibly would not, or at least had not, been bound to have destroyed that monument of an old story and a great blessing, but have sought to separate the abuse from the minds of men, and retained the image. But in christianity, when none of these circumstances occur, where, by the greatness and plenty of revelations, we are more fully instructed in the ways of duty; and when the thing itself is pious, and the abuse very separable, it is infinite disparagement to us, or to our religion, either that our religion is not sufficient to cure an abuse, or that we will never part with it; but we must unpardonably reject a good, because it had once upon it a crust or spot of leprosy, though, since, it hath been washed in the waters of reformation. The primitive christians abstained from actions of themselves indifferent, which the unconverted people used, if those actions were symbolical, or adopted into false religions, or not well understood by those they were bound to satisfy: but when they had washed off the accrescences of gentile superstition, they chose such rites which their neighbours used, and had designs not imprudent or unhandsome; and they were glad of heathen temples, to celebrate the christian rites in them, and they made no other change, but that they ejected the devil, and invited their Lord into the possession.

7. Thirdly: In things merely indifferent, whose practice is not limited by command, nor their nature heightened by an appendant piety, we must use our liberty so as may not offend our brother, or lead him into a sin directly or indirectly. For scandal being directly against charity, it is to be avoided in the same measure, and by the same proportions, in which charity is to be pursued. Now we must so use ourselves, that we must cut off a foot, or pluck out an eye, rather than the one should bear us, and the other lead us, to sin and death; we must rather rescind all the natural and sensual, or dearest invitations to vice, and deny ourselves lawful things, than that lawful things should betray us to unlawful actions. And this rule is the measure of charity: our neighbour's soul ought to be dearer unto us than any temporal privilege. It is lawful for me to eat herbs, or fish, and to observe an ascetic diet; but if, by such austerities, I lead others to a good opinion of Montanism, or the practices of Pythagoras, or to believe flesh to be impure, I must rather alter my diet, than teach him to sin by mistaking me. St. Paul gave an instance of eating flesh, sold in the shambles, from the idol-temples: to eat it, in the relation of an idol-sacrifice, is a great sin; but when it is sold in the shambles, the property is altered to them that understand it so. But yet, even this Paul would not do, if, by so doing, he should encourage undiscerning people to eat all meat conveyed from the temple, and offered to devils. It is not in every man's head to distinguish formalities, and to make abstractions of purpose from exterior acts; and to alter their devotions, by new relations and respects, depending upon intellectual and metaphysical notions. And, therefore, it is not safe to do an action which is not lawful, but after the making distinctions, before ignorant and weaker persons, who swallow down the bole and the box that carries it, and never pare their apple, or take the core out. If I, by the law of charity, must rather quit my own goods, than suffer my brother to perish; much rather must I quit my privilege, and those superstructures of favour and grace, which Christ hath given me beyond my necessities, than wound the spirit and destroy the soul of a weak man, "for whom Christ died." It is an inordinate affection, to love my own ease, and circumstances of pleasure, before the soul of a brother; and such a thing are the privileges of christian liberty; for Christ hath taken off from us the restraints which God had laid upon the Jews, in meat and holydays: but these are but circumstances of grace, given us for opportunities, and cheap instances of charity. We should ill die for our brother, who will not lose a meal to prevent his sin, or change a dish to save his soul. And if the thing be indifferent to us, yet

it ought not to be indifferent to us whether our brother live or die.

8. Fourthly: And yet we must not, to please peevish or froward people, betray our liberty which Christ hath given us. If any man opposes the lawfulness and license of indifferent actions, or be disturbed at my using my privileges innocently; in the first case, I am bound to use them still; in the second, I am not bound to quit them to please him. For, in the first instance, he that shall cease to use his liberty to please him that says his liberty is unlawful, encourages him that says so in his false opinion, and, by complying with him, gives the scandal; and he who is angry with me for making use of it, is a person that, it may be, is "crept in, to spy out" and invade "my liberty," but not apt to be reduced into sin by that act of mine, which he detests, for which he despises me, and so makes my person unapt to be exemplar to him. To be angry with me for doing what Christ hath allowed me, and which is part of the liberty he purchased for me, when he took upon himself the form of a servant, is to judge me, and to be uncharitable to me: and he that does so, is beforehand with me, and upon the active part; he does the scandal to me, and, by offering to deprive me of my liberty, he makes my way to heaven narrower and more encumbered than Christ left it, and so places a stumbling-stone in my way; I put none in his. And if such peevishness and discontent of a brother engages me to a new and unimposed yoke, then it were in the power of my enemy, or any malevolent person, to make me never to keep festival, or never to observe any private fast; never to be prostrate at my prayers, nor to do any thing but according to his leave; and his humour shall become the rule of my actions; and then my charity to him shall be the greatest uncharitableness in the world to myself, and his liberty shall be my bondage. Add to this, that such complying and obeying the peevishness of discontented persons, is to no end of charity; for besides that such concessions never satisfy persons who are unreasonably angry, because by the same reason they may demand more, as they ask this, for which they had no reason at all; it also encourages them to be peevish, and gives fuel to the passion, and feeds the wolf; and so encourages the sin, and prevents none.

9. Fifthly: For he only gives scandal, who induces his brother directly or collaterally into sin, as appears by all the discourses in Scripture guiding us in this duty; and it is called "laying a stumbling-block in our brother's way, wounding the conscience of our weak brother."[e] Thus Balaam was said to lay a scandal before the sons of Israel, by tempting them to fornication with the daughters of Moab. Every evil example, or imprudent, sinful, and unwary deportment, is a scandal; because it invites others to do the like, leading them by the hand, taking off the strangeness and insolency of the act, which deters many men from entertaining it; and it gives some offers of security to others, that they shall escape as we have done; besides that it is in the nature of all agents, natural and moral, to assimilate, either by proper efficiency, or by counsel and moral invitements, others to themselves. But this is a direct scandal: and such it is, to give money to an idle person, who you know will be drunk with it; or to invite an intemperate person to an opportunity of excess, who desires it always, but without thee wants it. Indirectly and accidentally, but very criminally, they give scandal, who introduce persons into a state of life, from whence, probably, they pass into a state of sin. So did the Israelites, who married their daughters to the idolatrous Moabites; and so do they, who intrust a pupil to a vicious guardian. For, although God can preserve children in the midst of flames, without scorching; yet if they singe their hair, or scorch their flesh, they that put them in are guilty of the burning. And yet, further, if persons so exposed to danger should escape by miracle, yet they escape not who expose them to the danger. They who threw the children of the captivity into the furnace, were burnt to death though the children were not hurt: and the very offering a person in our trust to a certain or probable danger, foreseen and understood, is a likely way to pass sin upon the person so exposed, but a certain way to contract it in ourselves; it is directly against charity, for no man loves a soul unless he loves its safety; and he cares not to have his child safe, that throws him into the fire. Hither are to be reduced all false doctrines, aptly productive of evil life; the doctrines are scandalous, and the men guilty, if they understand the consequents of their own propositions: or if they think it probable, that persons will be led by such doctrines into evil persuasions, though themselves believe them not to be necessary products of their opinions; yet the very publishing such opinions, which, of themselves not being necessary, or otherwise very profitable, are apt to be understood, by weak persons at least, to ill ends, is against charity, and the duty we owe to our brother's soul.

10. Sixthly: It is not necessary for ever to abstain from things indifferent, to prevent the offending of a brother; but only till I have taken away that rock, against which some did stumble, or have done my endeavour to remove it. In questions of religion, it is lawful to use primitive and ancient words, at which men have been weakened and seem to stumble, when the objection is cleared, and the ill consequents and suspicion disavowed: and it may be of good use, charity, and edification, to speak the language of the purest ages, although that some words were used also in the impurest ages, and descended along, upon changing and declining articles; when it is rightly explicated, in what sense the best men did innocently use them, and the same sense is now protested. But in this case, it concerns prudence to see, that the benefit be greater than the danger. And the same, also, is to be said concerning all the actions and parts of christian liberty. For if, after I have removed the unevenness and objection of the accident; that is, if when I have explained my disrelish to the crime, which might possibly be gathered up and taken into prac-

[e] 1 Cor. viii. 10, 12. Rom. xiv. 21. Matt. v. 29. xiii. 57. Mark xiv. 27. vi. 3. iv. 17. Luke vii. 23. John xvi. 1.

tice by my misunderstood example, still any man will stumble and fall,—it is a resolution to fall, a love of danger, a peevishness of spirit, a voluntary misunderstanding; it is not a misery in the man, more than it is his own fault: and whenever the cause of any sin becomes criminal to the man that sins, it is certain, that if the other, who was made the occasion, did disavow and protest against the crime, the man that sins is the only guilty person, both in the effect and cause too; for the other could do no more but use a moral and prudent industry, to prevent a being misinterpreted; and if he were tied to more, he must quit his interest for ever in a perpetual scruple; and it is like taking away all laws to prevent disobedience, and making all even to secure the world against the effects of pride or stubbornness. I add to this, that since actions indifferent in their own natures, are not productive of effects and actions criminal, it is merely by accident that men are abused into a sin; that is, by weakness, by misconceit, by something that either discovers malice or indiscretion; which, because the act itself does not of itself, if the man does not voluntarily or by intention, the sin dwells no where but with the man that entertains it: the man is no longer weak than he is mistaken, and he is not mistaken or abused into the sin, by example of any man who hath rightly stated his own question, and divorced the suspicion of the sin from his action; whatsoever comes after this, is not weakness of understanding, but strength of passion; and he that is "always learning, and never comes to the knowledge of the truth," is something besides a silly man. Men cannot be always "babes in Christ,"[f] without their own fault; they are no longer "Christ's little ones" than they are inculpably ignorant. For it is but a mantle cast over pride and frowardness to think ourselves able to teach others, and yet pretend offence and scandal; to scorn to be instructed, and yet complain that we are offended, and led into sin for want of knowledge of our duty. He that understands his duty, is not a person capable of scandal by things indifferent. And it is certain, that no man can say, concerning himself, that he is scandalized at another; that is, that he is led into sin by mistake and weakness; for if himself knows it, the mistake is gone. Well may the guides of their souls complain, concerning such persons, that their sin is procured by offending persons or actions; but he that complains concerning himself, to the same purpose, pretends ignorance for other ends, and contradicts himself by his complaint and knowledge of his error. The boy was prettily peevish, who, when his father bade him pronounce Thalassius, told him he could not pronounce Thalassius, at the same time speaking the word: just so impotent, weak, and undiscerning a person is that, who would forbid me to do an indifferent action, upon pretence that it makes him ignorantly sin; for his saying so confutes his ignorance, and argues him of a worse folly: it is like asking my neighbour, whether such an action be done against my own will.

11. Seventhly: When an action is apt to be mistaken to contrary purposes, it concerns the prudence and charity of a christian, to use such compliance, as best co-operates to God's glory, and hath in it the less danger. The apostles gave an instance in the matter of circumcision, in which they walked warily, and with variety of design, that they might invite the gentiles to the easy yoke of christianity, and yet not deter the Jews, by a disrespect of the law of Moses. And therefore St. Paul circumcised Timothy, because he was among the Jews, and descended from a Jewish parent; and in the instance gave sentence in compliance with the Jewish persuasion, because Timothy might well be accounted for a Jew by birth; unto them the rites of Moses were for a while permitted. But when Titus was brought upon the scene of a mixed assembly, and was no Jew, but a Greek, to whom Paul had taught "they ought not to be circumcised;"[g] although some Jews watched what he would do, yet he plainly refused to circumcise him, choosing rather to leave the Jews angry, than the gentiles scandalized, or led into an opinion that circumcision was necessary, or that he had taught them otherwise out of collateral ends, or that now he did so. But when a case of christian liberty happened to St. Peter, he was not so prudent in his choice; but, at the coming of certain Jews from Jerusalem, withdrew himself from the society of the gentiles; not considering, that it was worse if the gentiles, who were invited to christianity by the sweetness of its liberty and compliance, should fall back, when they that taught them the excellency of christian liberty durst not stand to it, than if those Jews were displeased at christianity, for admitting gentiles into its communion, after they had been instructed that God had broken down the partition-wall, and made them one sheepfold. It was of greater concernment to God's glory, to gain the gentiles, than to retain the Jews; and yet if it had not, the apostles were bound to bend to the inclinations of the weaker, rather than be mastered by the wilfulness of the stronger, who had been sufficiently instructed in the articles of christian liberty, and in the adopting the gentiles into the family of God. Thus, if it be a question, whether I should abate any thing of my external religion or ceremonies, to satisfy an heretic or a contentious person, who pretends scandal to himself, and is, indeed, of another persuasion; and at the same time I know, that good persons would be weakened at such forbearance, and estranged from the good persuasion and charity of communion, which is part of their duty; it more concerns charity and the glory of God, that I secure the right, than twine about the wrong, wilful, and malicious persons. A prelate must rather fortify and encourage obedience, and strengthen discipline, than by remissness toward refractory spirits, and a desire not to seem severe, weaken the hands of conscientious persons, by taking away the marks of difference between them that obey and them that obey not: and in all cases, when the question is between a friend to be secured from apostasy, or an enemy to be gained from indifferency, St. Paul's

[f] Ἀσθενεῖς τῇ πίστει. Rom. xiv. 1. 1 Cor. viii. 10, 12.

[g] Gal. ii. 3, 4, &c.

rule is to be observed: "Do good to all, but especially to the household of faith." When the church, in a particular instance, cannot be kind to both, she must first love her own children.

12. Eighthly: But when the question is between pleasing and contenting the fancies of a friend, and the gaining of an enemy, the greater good of the enemy is infinitely to be preferred, before the satisfying the unnecessary humour of the friend; and, therefore, that we may gain persons of a different religion, it is lawful to entertain them in their innocent customs: that we may represent ourselves charitable and just, apt to comply in what we can, and yet for no end complying farther than we are permitted. It was a policy of the devil, to abuse christians to the rites of Mithra, by imitating the christian ceremonies; and the christians themselves were beforehand with him in that policy; for they facilitated the reconcilement of Judaism with christianity by common rites, and invited the gentiles to the christian churches, because they never violated the heathen temples, but loved the men, and imitated their innocent rites, and only offered to reform their errors, and hallow their abused purposes: and this, if it had no other contradictory or unhandsome circumstance, gave no offence to other christians, when they had learned to trust them with the government of ecclesiastical affairs, to whom God had committed them: and they all had the same purposes of religion and charity. And when there is no objection against this, but the furies or greater heats of a mistaken zeal, the compliance with evil or unbelieving persons, to gain them from their errors to the ways of truth and sincerity, is great prudence and great charity; because it chooses and acts a greater good, at no other charge or expense but the discomposing of an intemperate zeal.

13. Ninthly: We are not bound to intermit a good or a lawful action, as soon as any man tells us it is scandalous; (for that may be an easy stratagem to give me laws, and destroy my liberty;) but either when the action is of itself, or by reason of a public known indisposition of some persons, probably introductive of a sin; or when we know it is so in fact. The other is but affrighting a man; this only is prudent, that my charity be guided by such rules, which determine wise men to actions or omissions respectively. And, therefore, a light fame is not strong enough to wrest my liberty from me; but a reasonable belief, or a certain knowledge, in the taking of which estimate we must neither be too credulous and easy, nor yet ungentle and stubborn, but do according to the actions of wise men and the charities of a christian. Hither we may refer the rules of abstaining from things which are of evil report. For not every thing which is of good report is to be followed; for then a false opinion, when it is become popular, must be professed for conscience sake: nor yet every thing that is of bad report is to be avoided; for nothing endured more shame and obloquy than christianity, at its first commencement. But by "good report," we are to understand such things, which are well reported of by good men and wise men, or Scripture, or the consent of nations. And thus, for a woman to marry within the year of mourning is scandalous; because it is of evil report, gives suspicion of lightness, or some worse confederacy, before the death of her husband. The thing itself is apt to minister the suspicion, and this we are bound to prevent; and unless the suspicion be malicious, or imprudent and unreasonable, we must conceal our actions from the surprises and deprehensions of suspicion. It was scandalous amongst the old Romans not to marry; among the christians, for a clergyman to marry twice, because it was against an apostolical canon: but when it became of ill report for any christian to marry a second time, because this evil report was begun by the errors of Montanus, and is against a permission of holy Scripture, no lay christian was bound to abstain from a second bed, for fear of giving scandal.

14. Tenthly: The precept of avoiding scandal concerns the governors of the church or state, in the making and execution of laws. For no law in things indifferent ought to be made to the provocation of the subject, or against that public disposition, which is in the spirits of men; and will, certainly, cause perpetual irregularities and schisms. Before the law be made, the superior must comply with the subject; after it is made, the subject must comply with the law. But in this, the church hath made fair provision, accounting no laws obligatory, till the people have accepted them, and given tacit approbation: for ecclesiastical canons have their time of probation; and if they become a burden to the people, or occasion schisms, tumults, public disunion of affections, and jealousies against authority, the laws give place, and either fix not when they are not first approved, or disappear by desuetude. And in the execution of laws, no less care is to be taken; for many cases occur, in which the laws can be rescued from being a snare to men's consciences, by no other way but by dispensation, and slacking of the discipline as to certain particulars. Mercy and sacrifice, the letter and the spirit, the words and the intention, the general case and the particular exception, the present disposition and the former state of things, are oftentimes so repugnant, and of such contradictory interests, that there is no stumbling-block more troublesome or dangerous, than a severe literal and rigorous exacting of laws in all cases. But when stubbornness or a contentious spirit, when rebellion and pride, when secular interest, or ease and licentiousness, set men up against the laws, the laws then are upon the defensive, and ought not to give place. It is ill to cure particular disobedience, by removing a constitution, decreed by public wisdom, for a general good. When the evil occasioned by the law is greater than the good designed, or than the good which will come by it in the present constitution of things, and the evil can by no other remedy be healed, it concerns the lawgiver's charity to take off such positive constitutions, which in the authority are merely human, and in the matter indifferent, and evil in the event. The sum of this whole duty I shall choose to represent, in the words of an excellent person,

St. Jerome: "We must, for the avoiding of scandal, quit every thing which may be omitted, without prejudice to the threefold truth, of life, of justice, and doctrine:" meaning, that what is not expressly commanded by God or our superiors, or what is not expressly commended as an act of piety and perfection, or what is not an obligation of justice; that is, in which the interest of a third person, or else our own christian liberty, is not totally concerned, all that is to be given in sacrifice to mercy, and to be made matter of edification and charity, but not of scandal; that is, of danger, and sin, and falling, to our neighbour.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal Jesus, who art made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, give us of thy abundant charity; that we may love the eternal benefit of our brother's soul, with a true, diligent, and affectionate care and tenderness. Give us a fellow-feeling of one another's calamities, a readiness to bear each other's burdens, aptness to forbear, wisdom to advise, counsel to direct, and a spirit of meekness and modesty trembling at our infirmities, fearful in our brother's dangers, and joyful in his restitution and securities. Lord, let all our actions be pious and prudent, ourselves "wise as serpents and innocent as doves," and our whole life exemplar, and just and charitable; that we may, like lamps shining in thy temple, serve thee, and enlighten others, and guide them to thy sanctuary; and that, shining clearly and burning zealously, when the Bridegroom shall come to bind up his jewels, and beautify his spouse, and gather his saints together, we, and all thy christian people, knit in a holy fellowship, may "enter into the joy of our Lord," and partake of the eternal refreshments of the kingdom of light and glory, where thou, O holy and eternal Jesu, livest and reignest in the excellencies of a kingdom, and the infinite durations of eternity. Amen.

DISCOURSE XVIII.

Of the Causes and Manner of the Divine Judgments.[a]

1. GOD'S judgments are like "the writing upon the wall," which was a missive of anger from God upon Belshazzar; it came upon an errand of revenge, and yet it was writ in so dark characters,[b] that none could read it but a prophet. Whenever God speaks from heaven, he would have us to understand his meaning; and if he declares not his sense in particular signification, yet we understand his meaning well enough, if every voice of God lead us to repentance. Every sad accident is directed against sin, either to prevent it, or to cure it; to glorify God, or to humble us; to make us go forth of ourselves, and to rest upon the centre of all felicities, that we may derive help from the same hand that smote us. Sin and punishment are so near relatives, that when God hath marked any person with a sadness or unhandsome accident, men think it warrant enough for their uncharitable censures, and condemn the man whom God hath smitten, making God the executioner of our uncertain or ungentle sentences. "Whether sinned, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" said the Pharisees to our blessed Lord. "Neither this man nor his parents," was the answer: meaning, that God had other ends in that accident to serve; and it was not an effect of wrath, but a design of mercy, both directly and collaterally. God's glory must be seen clearly, by occasion of the curing the blind man. But, in the present case, the answer was something different. Pilate slew the Galileans when they were sacrificing in their conventicles apart from the Jews. For they first had separated from obedience, and paying tribute to Cæsar; and then from the church, who disavowed their mutinous and discontented doctrines. The causes of the one and the other are linked in mutual complications and endearment; and he who despises the one will quickly disobey the other. Presently, upon the report of this sad accident, the people ran to the judgment-seat, and every man was ready to be accuser, and witness, and judge, upon these poor destroyed people. But Jesus allays their heat: and though he would by no means acquit these persons from deserving death for their denying tribute to Cæsar, yet he alters the face of the tribunal, and makes those persons, who were so apt to be accusers and judges, to act another part, even of guilty persons too, that, since they will needs be judging, they might judge themselves: for "Think not these were greater sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered such things. I tell you, Nay; but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish;"[c] meaning, that although there was great probability to believe such persons, schismatics (I mean) and rebels, to be the greatest sinners of the world, yet themselves, who had designs to destroy the Son of God, had deserved as great damnation. And yet it is observable, that the holy Jesus only compared the sins of them that suffered, with the estate of the other Galileans who suffered not; and that also applies it to the persons present who told the news: to consign this truth unto us, that when persons, confederate in the same crimes, are spared from a present judgment falling upon others of their own society, it is indeed a strong alarm to all to secure themselves by repentance against the hostilities and eruptions of sin;[d] but yet it is no exemption or security to them that escape, to believe themselves persons less sinful: for God sometimes decimates or tithes delinquent persons, and they die for a common crime, according

[a] Ad Num. 21, et 27.

[b] Παντῇ δ' ἀθανάτων ἀφανὴς νόος ἀνθρώποισι.—SOLON.

[c] Luke xiii. 2, 3.

[d] ——Χρόνῳ τοι κυρία τ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ
Θεοῦς ἀτίζων τις βροτῶν δώσει δίκην.—ÆSCH. Ἱκετίδες.

Pius scilicet Deus partem percussit sententiæ suæ gladio, ut partem corrigeret exemplo, probaretque omnibus simul et coërcendo censuram, et indulgendo pietatem.—SALVIAN.

as God hath cast their lot in the decrees of predestination; and either they that remain are sealed up to a worse calamity, or left within the reserves and mercies of repentance; for in this there is some variety of determination and undiscerned providence.

2. The purpose of our blessed Saviour is of great use to us in all the traverses and changes, and especially the sad and calamitous accidents, of the world. But in the misfortune of others, we are to make other discourses concerning Divine judgments, than when the case is of nearer concernment to ourselves. For, first, when we see a person come to an unfortunate and untimely death,[e] we must not conclude such a man perishing and miserable to all eternity. It was a sad calamity that fell upon the man of Judah, that returned to eat bread into the prophet's house contrary to the word of the Lord: he was abused into the act by a prophet and a pretence of a command from God; and whether he did violence to his own understanding, and believed the man because he was willing, or did it in sincerity, or in what degree of sin or excuse the action might consist, no man there knew: and yet a lion slew him, and the lying prophet that abused him escaped, and went to his grave in peace. Some persons joined in society or interest with criminals,[f] have perished in the same judgments; and yet it would be hard to call them equally guilty, who, in the accident, were equally miserable and involved. And they who are not strangers in the affairs of the world, cannot but have heard or seen some persons, who have lived well and moderately, though not like the flames of the holocaust, yet, like the ashes of incense, sending up good perfumes, and keeping a constant and slow fire of piety and justice, yet have been surprised in the midst of some unusual, unaccustomed irregularity, and died in that sin: a sudden gaiety of fortune, a great joy, a violent change, a friend is come, or a marriage-day, hath transported some persons to indiscretions and too bold a license; and the indiscretion hath betrayed them to idle company, and the company to drink, and drink to a fall, and that hath hurried them to their grave. And it were a sad sentence to think God would not repute the untimely death for a punishment great enough to that deflexion from duty, and judge the man according to the constant tenour of his former life; unless such an act was of malice great enough to outweigh the former habits, and interrupt the whole state of acceptation and grace. Something like this was the case of Uzzah, who espying the tottering ark, went to support it with an unhallowed hand: God smote him, and he died immediately. It were too severe to say, his zeal and indiscretion carried him beyond a temporal death to the ruins of eternity. Origen, and many others, have "made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven," and did well after it; but those that did so, and died of the wound, were smitten of God, and died in their folly; and yet it is rather to be called a sad consequence of their indiscretion, than the express of a final anger from God Almighty. For as God takes off our sins and punishments by parts, remitting to some persons the sentence of death, and inflicting the fine of a temporal loss, or the gentle scourge of a lesser sickness: so also he lays it on by parts, and according to the proper proportions of the man and of the crime; and every transgression and lesser deviation from our duty does not drag the soul to death eternal, but God suffers our repentance, though imperfect, to have an imperfect effect, knocking off the fetters by degrees, and leading us in some cases to a council, in some to judgment, and in some to hell-fire: but it is not always certain that he who is led to the prison-doors, shall there lie entombed; and a man may, by a judgment, be brought to the gates of hell, and yet those gates shall not prevail against him. This discourse concerns persons, whose life is habitually fair and just, but are surprised in some unhandsome, but less criminal, action, and die, or suffer some great calamity, as the instrument of its expiation or amendment.

3. Secondly: But if the person upon whom the judgment falls be habitually vicious, or the crime of a clamorous nature or deeper tincture; if the man "sin a sin unto death," and either meets it, or some other remarkable calamity not so feared as death; provided we pass no farther than the sentence we see then executed, it is not against charity or prudence to say, this calamity, in its own formality, and by the intention of God, is a punishment and judgment. In the favourable cases of honest and just persons, our sentence and opinions ought also to be favourable, and, in such questions, to incline ever to the side of charitable construction, and read other ends of God in the accidents of our neighbour than revenge or express wrath. But when the impiety of a person is scandalous and notorious, when it is clamorous and violent, when it is habitual and yet corrigible, if we find a sadness and calamity dwelling with such a sinner, especially if the punishment be spiritual, we read the sentence of God written with his own hand, and it is not sauciness of opinion, or a pressing into the secrets of Providence, to say the same thing which God hath published to all the world in the expresses of his Spirit. In such cases we are to observe the "severity of God, on them that fall severity;" and to use those judgments as instruments of the fear of God, and arguments to hate sin; which we could not well do, but that we must look on them as verifications of God's threatening against great and impenitent sinners. But then, if we descend to particulars, we may easily be deceived.

4. For some men are diligent to observe the accidents and chances of Providence upon those especially who differ from them in opinion; and

[e] De Ananiâ et Sapphirâ, dixit Origines, digni enim erant in hoc seculo recipere peccatum suum, ut mundiores exeant ab hac vitâ, mundati castigatione sibi illatâ per mortem communem, quoniam credentes erant in Christum. Idem ait S. Aug. lib. iii. c. 1. cont. Parmen. et Cassian.

[f] ——Vetabo qui Cereris sacrum
Vulgârit arcanæ, sub iisdem
Sit trabibus, fragilemque mecum
Solvat phaselum: sæpe Diespiter,
Neglectus, incesto addidit integrum.—Hor. lib. iii. Od. 2.

whatever ends God can have, or whatever sins man can have, yet we lay that in fault, which we therefore hate, because it is most against our interest; the contrary opinion is our enemy, and we also think God hates it. But such fancies do seldom serve either the ends of truth or charity. Pierre Calceon died under the barber's hand;[g] there wanted not some, who said it was a judgment upon him for condemning to the fire the famous Pucelle of France, who prophesied the expulsion of the English out of the kingdom. They that thought this, believed her to be a prophetess; but others, that thought her a witch, were willing to find out another conjecture for the sudden death of the gentleman. Garnier, earl of Gretz, kept the patriarch of Jerusalem from his right in David's tower and the city, and died within three days; and, by Dabert the patriarch, it was called a judgment upon him for his sacrilege. But the uncertainty of that censure appeared to them, who considered that Baldwin (who gave commission to Garnier to withstand the patriarch) did not die; but Godfrey of Bouillon did die immediately after he had passed the right of the patriarch: and yet, when Baldwin was beaten at Rhamula, some bold people pronounced, that then God punished him upon the patriarch's score, and thought his sacrilege to be the secret cause of his overthrow;[h] and yet his own pride and rashness was the more visible, and the judgment was but a cloud, and passed away quickly into succeeding victory. But I instance in a trifle. Certain it is, that God removed the candlestick from the Levantine churches, because he had a quarrel unto them; for that punishment is never sent upon pure designs of emendation, or for direct and immediate purposes of the Divine glory, but ever makes reflection upon the past sin: but when we descend to a judgment of the particulars, God walks so in the dark to us, that it is not discerned upon what ground he smote them. Some say it was because they dishonoured the eternal Jesus, in denying the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Son. And in this some thought themselves sufficiently assured by a sign from heaven,[i] because the Greeks lost Constantinople upon Whitsunday, the day of the festival of the Holy Spirit. The church of Rome calls the churches of the Greek communion schismatical, and thinks God righted the Roman quarrel when he revenged his own. Some think they were cut off for being breakers of images; others think that their zeal against images was a means they were cut off no sooner; and yet he that shall observe what innumerable sects, heresies, and factions were commenced amongst them, and how they were wanton with religion, making it serve ambitious and unworthy ends, will see that, besides the ordinary conjectures of interested persons, they had such causes of their ruin, which we also now feel heavily incumbent upon ourselves. To see God adding eighteen years to the life of Hezekiah upon his prayer, and yet cutting off the young son of David begotten in adulterous embraces; to see him rejecting Adonijah, and receiving Solomon to the kingdom, begotten of the same mother, whose son God in anger formerly slew; to observe his mercies to Manasses, in accepting him to favour, and continuing the kingdom to him, and his severity to Zedekiah, in causing his eyes to be put out; to see him rewarding Nebuchadnezzar with the spoils of Egypt for destroying Tyre, and executing God's severe anger against it, and yet punishing others for being executioners of his wrath upon Jerusalem, even then when he purposed to chastise it; to see Wenceslaus raised from a peasant to a throne, and Pompey, from a great prince, reduced to that condition, that a pupil and an eunuch passed sentence of death upon him; to see great fortunes fall into the hand of a fool, and honourable old persons, and learned men, descend to unequal beggary; to see him strike a stroke with his own hand in the conversion of Saul, and another quite contrary in the cutting off of Judas, must needs be some restraint to our judgments concerning the general state of those men who lie under the rod; but it proclaims an infinite uncertainty in the particulars, since we see contrary accidents happening to persons guilty of the same crime, or put in the same indispositions. God hath marked all great sins with some signal and express judgments, and hath transmitted the records of them, or represented them before our eyes; that is, hath done so in our age, or it hath been noted to have been done before; and that being sufficient to affright us from those crimes, God hath not thought it expedient to do the same things to all persons in the same cases, having to all persons produced instances and examples of fear by fewer accidents, sufficient to restrain us, but not enough to pass sentence upon the changes of Divine providence.

5. But sometimes God speaks plainer, and gives us notice what crimes he punishes in others, that we may the rather decline such rocks of offence. If the crime and the punishment be symbolical, and have proportion and correspondence of parts, the hand of God strikes the man, but holds up one finger to point at the sin. The death of the child of Bathsheba was a plain declaration, that the anger of God was upon David for the adulterous mixture. That blasphemer, whose tongue was presently struck with an ulcerous tumour, with his tongue declared the glories of God and his own shame. And it was not doubted but God, when he smote the lady of Dominicus Silvius, the duke of Venice, with a loathsome and unsavoury disease, did intend to chastise a remarkable vanity of hers in various and costly perfumes, which she affected in an unreasonable manner, and to very evil purposes. And that famous person, and of excellent learning, Giacchettus of Geneva,[k] being by his wife found dead in the unlawful embraces of a stranger woman, who also died at the same instant, left an excellent example of

[g] Pendula dum tonsor secat excrementa capilli,
Exspirans cadit, et gelidâ tellure cadaver
Decubat: ultrices sic pendunt crimina pœnas.
VALERAND.

[h] Baron. A. D. 1100 et 2024.
[i] Estius.
[k] Fulgos. lib. ix. c. 12.

God's anger upon the crime, and an evidence that he was then judged for his intemperate lust. Such are all those punishments, which are natural consequents to a crime: as dropsies, redness of eyes, dissolution of nerves, apoplexies,[1] to continual drunkenness; to intemperate eating, short lives and sudden deaths; to lust, a caitive slavish disposition, and a foul diseased body; fire and sword, and depopulation of towns and villages, the consequents of ambition and unjust wars; poverty to prodigality; and all those judgments which happen upon cursings and horrid imprecations, when God is, under a curse, called to attest a lie, and to connive at impudence; or when the oppressed persons, in the bitterness of their souls, wish evil and pray for vengeance on their oppressors; or that the church, upon just cause, inflicts spiritual censures, and "delivers unto Satan," or curses and declares the Divine sentence against sinners, as St. Peter against Ananias and Sapphira, and St. Paul against Elymas, and of old, Moses against Pharaoh and his Egypt. (Of this nature also was the plague of a withered hand inflicted upon Jeroboam, for stretching forth his hand to strike the prophet.) In these, and all such instances, the offspring is so like the parent, that it cannot easily be concealed. Sometimes the crime is of that nature, that it cries aloud for vengeance, or is threatened with a special kind of punishment, which, by the observation and experience of the world, hath regularly happened to a certain sort of persons: such as are dissolutions of estates, the punishment of sacrilege; a descending curse upon posterity for four generations, specially threatened to the crime of idolatry; any plague whatsoever to oppression; untimely death to murder; an unthriving estate to the detention of tithes, or whatsoever is God's portion allotted for the services of religion: untimely and strange deaths to the persecutors of christian religion: Nero killed himself; Domitian was killed by his servants; Maximinus and Decius were murdered, together with their children; Valerianus imprisoned, flayed, and slain with tortures, by Sapor, king of Persia; Diocletian perished by his own hand, and his house was burnt with the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah, with fire from above; Antiochus, the president under Aurelian, while Agapetus was in his agony and sufferance of martyrdom, cried out of a flame within him, and died; Flaccus vomited out his entrails presently after he had caused Gregory, bishop of Spoleto, to be slain; and Dioscorus, the father of St. Barbara, accused and betrayed his daughter to the hangman's cruelty for being a christian, and he died by the hand of God by fire from heaven. These are God's tokens, marks upon the body of infected persons, and declare the malignity of the disease, and bid us all beware of those determined crimes.

6. Thirdly: But then, in these and all other accidents, we must first observe from the cause to the effect, and then judge from the effect concerning the nature and the degree of the cause. We cannot conclude, This family is lessened, beggared, or extinct, therefore they are guilty of sacrilege: but thus, They are sacrilegious, and God hath blotted out their name from among the posterities, therefore this judgment was an express of God's anger against sacrilege: the judgment will not conclude a sin, but when a sin infers the judgment with a legible character and a prompt signification, not to understand God's choice is next to stupidity or carelessness. Arius was known to be a seditious, heretical, and dissembling person, and his entrails descended on the earth, when he went to cover his feet:[m] it was very suspicious that this was the punishment of those sins, which were the worst in him: but he that shall conclude Arius was an heretic or seditious, upon no other ground but because his bowels gushed out, begins imprudently, and proceeds uncharitably. But it is considerable, that men do not arise to great crimes on the sudden, but by degrees of carelessness to lesser impieties, and then to clamorous sins: and God is therefore said to punish great crimes, or actions of highest malignity, because they are commonly productions from the spirit of reprobation; they are the highest ascents, and suppose a body of sin. And therefore, although the judgment may be intended to punish all our sins, yet it is like the Syrian army, it kills all that are its enemies, but it hath a special commission "to fight against none but the king of Israel," because his death would be the dissolution of the body. And if God humbles a man for his great sin, that is, for those acts which combine and consummate all the rest, possibly the body of sin may separate, and be apt to be scattered and subdued by single acts and instruments of mortification: and therefore it is but reasonable, in our making use of God's judgments upon others, to think that God will rather strike at the greatest crimes; not only because they are in themselves of greatest malice and iniquity, but because they are the sum total of the rest, and, by being great progressions in the state of sin, suppose all the rest included; and we, by proportioning and observing the judgment to the highest, acknowledge the whole body of sin to lie under the curse, though the greatest only was named, and called upon with the voice of thunder. And yet, because it sometimes happens, that, upon the violence of a great and new occasion, some persons leap into such a sin, which, in the ordinary course of sinners, uses to be the effect of an habitual and growing state, then, if a judgment happens, it is clearly appropriate to that one great crime, which, as of itself it is equivalent to a vicious habit, and

[1] Pœna tamen præsens, cùm tu deponis amictum
Turgidus, et crudum pavonem in balnea portas.
Hinc subitæ mortes atque intestata senectus.
JUVEN. Sat. 1.

Quos nimis effrænos habui, nunc vapulo renes.
Sic luitur juvenis culpa dolore senis.

[m] ——————— Ruit Arius alvo
Infelix plus mente cadens, lethumque peremptus
Cum Juda commune tulit, qui gutture pendens
Visceribus curvatus obit: nec pœna sequestrat
Quos par culpa ligat, qui majestatis honori
Vulnus ab ore parant. Hic prodidit, ille diremit
Sacrilegâ de voce. ———
Poet. Christ. apud Baron. T. 3. ad ann. Christ. 336.

interrupts the acceptation of all its former contraries, so it meets with a curse, such as usually God chooses for the punishment of a whole body and state of sin. However, in making observation upon the expresses of God's anger, we must be careful that we reflect not with any bitterness or scorn upon the person of our calamitous brother, lest we make that to be an evil to him, which God intends for his benefit, if the judgment was medicinal; or that we increase the load, already great enough to sink him beneath his grave, if the judgment was intended for a final abscission.

7. Fourthly: But if the judgments descend upon ourselves, we are to take another course; not to inquire into particulars to find out the proportions, (for that can only be a design to part with just so much as we must needs,) but to amend all that is amiss; for then only we can be secure to remove the Achan, when we keep nothing within us, or about us, that may provoke God to jealousy or wrath. And that is the proper product of holy fear, which God intended should be the first effect of all his judgments: and of this God is so careful, and yet so kind and provident, that fear might not be produced always at the expense of a great suffering, that God hath provided for us certain prologues of judgment, and keeps us waking with alarms, that so he might reconcile his mercies with our duties. Of this nature are epidemical diseases, not yet arrived at us, prodigious tempests, thunder and loud noises from heaven; and he that will not fear, when God speaks so loud, is not yet made soft with the impresses and perpetual droppings of religion. Venerable Bede reports of St. Chad,[n] that if a great gust of wind suddenly arose, he presently made some holy ejaculation, to beg favour of God for all mankind who might possibly be concerned in the effects of that wind; but, if a storm succeeded, he fell prostrate to the earth, and grew as violent in prayer as the storm was, either at land or sea. But if God added thunder and lightning, he went to the church, and there spent all his time, during the tempest, in reciting litanies, psalms, and other holy prayers, till it pleased God to restore his favour, and to seem to forget his anger. And the good bishop added this reason; because these are the extensions and stretchings forth of God's hand, and yet he did not strike: but he that trembles not, when he sees God's arm held forth to strike us, understands neither God's mercies, nor his own danger; he neither knows what those horrors were, which the people saw from mount Sinai, nor what the glories and amazement shall be at the great day of judgment. And if this religious man had seen Tullus Hostilius, the Roman king, and Anastasius, a christian emperor, but a reputed heretic, struck dead with thunderbolts, and their own houses made their urns, to keep their ashes in; there could have been no posture humble enough, no prayers devout enough, no place holy enough, nothing sufficiently expressive of his fear, and his humility, and his adoration, and religion, to the almighty and infinite power, and glorious mercy, of God, sending out his emissaries to denounce war with designs of peace. A great Italian general, seeing the sudden death of Alfonsus, duke of Ferrara, kneeled down instantly, saying, "And shall not this sight make me religious?" Three and twenty thousand fell,[o] in one night, in the Israelitish camp, who were all slain for fornication. And this so prodigious a judgment was recorded in Scripture for our example and affrightment, that we should not, with such freedom, entertain a crime which destroyed so numerous a body of men in the darkness of one evening. Fear, and modesty, and universal reformation, are the purposes of God's judgments upon us, or in our neighbourhood.

8. Fifthly: Concerning judgments happening to a nation, or a church, the consideration is particular, because there are fewer capacities of making sins to become national than personal; and therefore if we understand when a sin is national, we may the rather understand the meaning of God's hand, when he strikes a people. For national sins grow higher and higher, not merely according to the degree of the sin, or the intention alone, but according to the extension; according to its being national, so it is productive of more or less mischief to a kingdom. Customary iniquities amongst the people do then amount to the account of national sins, when they are of so universal practice as to take in well near every particular;[p] such as was that of Sodom, not to leave "ten righteous" in all the country: and such were the sins of the old world, who left but "eight persons" to escape the angry baptism of the flood. And such was the murmur of the children of Israel, refusing to march up to Canaan at the commandment of God, they all murmured but Caleb and Joshua; and this, God, in the case of the Amalekites, calls "the fulfilling of their sins," and a "filling up the measure of their iniquities." And hither also I reckon the defection of the ten tribes from the house of Judah, and the Samaritan schism: these caused the total extirpation of the offending people. For although these sins were personal and private at first, yet, when they come to be universal, by diffusion and dissemination, and the good people remaining among them are but like drops of wine in a tun of water, of no consideration with God, save only to the preservation "of their own persons;"[q] then, although the persons be private, yet all private or singular persons make the nation. But this hath happened but seldom in christianity: I think indeed never, except in the case of mutinies and rebellion against their lawful prince, or the attesting violence done in unjust wars. But God only knows, and no man can say, when any sin is national by diffusion; and therefore, in this case, we cannot make any certain judgment or advantage to ourselves, or very rarely, by observing the changes of Providence upon a people.

9. But the next above this, in order to the pro-

[n] Hist. Gent. Anglor. lib. iii. c. 18.

[o] 1 Cor. x. 8.

[p] Fœcunda culpæ secula nuptias
Primùm inquinavere, et genus, et domos.
Hoc fonte derivata clades
In patriam populumque fluxit.—HOR. lib. iii. Od. 6.

[q] Ezek. xiv. 20.

curing popular judgments, is public impunities, the not doing justice upon criminals publicly complained of and demanded, especially when the persons interested call for justice and execution of good laws, and the prince's arm is at liberty and in full strength, and there is no contrary reason, in the particular instance, to make compensation to the public for the omission, or no care taken to satisfy the particular. Abimelech thought he had reason to be angry with Isaac, for saying Rebecca was his sister; for "one of the people might have lain with thy wife, and thou shouldst have brought evil upon us:" meaning that the man should have escaped unpunished, by reason of the mistake, which very impunity he feared might be expounded to be a countenance and encouragement to the sin. But this was no more than his fear. The case of the Benjamites comes home to this present article; for they refused to do justice upon the men that had ravished and killed the Levite's concubine; they lost twenty-five thousand in battle, their cities were destroyed, and the whole tribe almost extinguished. For punishing public and great acts of injustice is called, in Scripture, "putting away the evil from the land;"[r] because, to this purpose, the sword is put into the prince's hand, and he "bears the sword in vain," who ceases to protect his people: and not to punish the evil is a voluntary retention of it, unless a special case intervene, in which the prince thinks it convenient to give a particular pardon; provided this be not encouragement to others, nor, without great reason, big enough to make compensation for the particular omission, and, with care, to render some other satisfaction to the person injured: in all other cases of impunity, that sin becomes national by forbearing, which, in the acting, was personal; and it is certain the impunity is a spring of universal evils, it is no thank to the public, if the best man be not as bad as the worst.

10. But there is a step beyond this, and of a more public concernment: such are the "laws of Omri," when a nation consents to and makes ungodly statutes; when "mischief is established as a law," then the nation is engaged to some purpose. When I see the people despise their governors, scorn, and rob, and disadvantage the ministers of religion, make rude addresses to God, to his temple, to his sacraments; I look upon it as the insolence of an untaught people, who would as readily do the contrary, if the fear of God and the king were upon them by good examples, and precepts, and laws, and severe executions. And further yet, when the more public and exemplar persons are without sense of religion, without a dread of majesty, without reverence to the church, without impresses of conscience and the tendernesses of a religious fear towards God; as the persons are greater in estimation of law, and in their influences upon the people, so the score of the nation advances, and there is more to be paid for in popular judgments. But when iniquity or irreligion is made a sanction, and either God must be dishonoured, or the church exauthorated, or her rites invaded by a law; then the fortune of the kingdom is at stake.[s] No sin engages a nation so much, or is so public, so solemn iniquity, as is a wicked law. Therefore, it concerns princes and states to secure the piety and innocency of their laws; and if there be any evil laws, which, upon just grounds, may be thought productive of God's anger, because a public misdemeanour cannot be expiated but by a public act of repentance, or a public calamity, the laws must either have their edge abated by a desuetude, or be laid asleep by a non-execution, or dismembered by contrary provisoes, or have the sting drawn forth by interpretation, or else, by abrogation, be quite rescinded. But these are national sins within itself, or within its own body, by the act of the body (I mean) diffusive or representative, and they are like the personal sins of men in or against their own bodies, in the matter of sobriety. There are others in the matter of justice, as the nation relates to other people communicating in public intercourse.

11. For as the intercourse between man and man, in the actions of commutative and distributive justice, is the proper matter of virtues and vices personal; so are the transactions between nation and nation, against the public rules of justice, sins national directly, and in their first original, and answer to injustice between man and man. Such are commencing war upon unjust titles, invasion of neighbours' territories, confederacies and aids upon tyrannical interest, wars against true religion or sovereignty, violation of the laws of nations, which they have consented to as the public instrument of accord and negociation, breach of public faith, defending pirates, and the like. When a public judgment comes upon a nation, these things are to be thought upon, that we may not think ourselves acquitted by crying out against swearing, and drunkenness, and cheating in manufactures, which, unless they be of universal dissemination, and made national by diffusion, are paid for upon a personal score; and the private infelicities of our lives will either expiate or punish them severely. But while the people mourn for those sins of which their low condition is capable, sins that may produce a popular fever, or, perhaps, the plague, where the misery dwells in cottages, and the princes often have indemnity, as it was in the case of David: yet we may not hope to appease a war, to master a rebellion, to cure the public distemperatures of a kingdom, which threaten not the people only, or the governors also, but even the government itself, unless the sins of a more public capacity be cut off by public declarations, or other acts of national justice and religion. But the duty which concerns us, in all such cases, is, that every man, in every capacity, should inquire into himself, and for his own portion of the calamity, put in his own symbol of emendation for his particular, and his prayers for the public interest: in which it is not safe that

[r] Deut. xvii. 12. xix. 13, 19. xxi. 9, 21, et alibi.

[s] —— Ilion, Ilion
Fatalis incestusque Judex,
Et mulier peregrina vertit
In pulverem, ex quo destituit Deos
Mercede pactâ Laomedon.—Hor. lib. iii. Od. 3.

any private persons should descend to particular censures of the crimes of princes and states, no, not towards God, unless the matter be notorious, and past a question; but it is a sufficient assoilment of this part of his duty, if, when he hath set his own house in order, he would pray with indefinite significations of his charity and care of the public, that God would put it into the hearts of all whom it concerns, to endeavour the removal of the sin, that hath brought the exterminating angel upon the nation. But yet there are, sometimes, great lines drawn by God, in the expresses of his anger, in some judgments upon a nation; and when the judgment is of that danger as to invade the very constitution of a kingdom, the proportions that judgments many times keep to their sins, intimate that there is some national sin, in which, either by diffusion or representation, or in the direct matter of sins, as false oaths, unjust wars, wicked confederacies, or ungodly laws, the nation, in the public capacity, is delinquent.

12. For as the nation hath, in sins, a capacity distinct from the sins of all the people, inasmuch as the nation is united in one head, guarded by a distinct and a higher angel, as Persia by St. Michael, transacts affairs in a public right, transmits influence to all particulars from a common fountain, and hath intercourse with other collective bodies, who also distinguish from their own particulars: so, likewise, it hath punishments distinct from those infelicities which vex particulars, punishments proportionable to itself, and to its own sins; such as are changes of governments, of better into worse, of monarchy into aristocracy, and so to the lowest ebb of democracy; death of princes, infant kings, foreign invasions, civil wars, a disputable title to the crown, making a nation tributary, conquest by a foreigner, and, which is worst of all, removing the candlestick from a people, by extinction of the church, or that which is necessary to its conservation, the several orders and ministries of religion: and the last hath also proper sins of its own analogy; such as are false articles in the public confessions of a church, schism from the catholic, public scandals, a general viciousness of the clergy, an indifference in religion, without warmth and holy fires of zeal, and diligent pursuance of all its just and holy interests.[t] Now in these, and all parallel cases, when God by punishments hath probably marked and distinguished the crime, it concerns public persons to be the more forward and importunate in consideration of public irregularities: and, for the private also, not to neglect their own particulars; for, by that means, although not certainly, yet probably, they may secure themselves from falling in the public calamity. It is not infallibly sure, that holy persons shall not be smitten by the destroying angel; for God, in such deaths, hath many ends of mercy, and some of providence, to serve: but such private and personal emendations and devotions, are the greatest securities of the men against the judgment, or the evil of it, preserving them in this life, or wafting them over to a better. Thus many of the Lord's champions did fall in battle, and the armies of the Benjamites did twice prevail upon the juster people of all Israel; and the Greek empire hath declined and shrunk, under the fortune and power of the Ottoman family; and the Holy Land, which was twice possessed by christian princes, is now in the dominion of unchristened Saracens; and, in the production of these alterations, many a gallant and pious person suffered the evils of war, and the change of an untimely death.

13. But the way for the whole nation to proceed, in cases of epidemical diseases, wars, great judgments, and popular calamities, is to do, in the public proportion, the same that every man is to do for his private; by public acts of justice, repentance, fastings, pious laws, and execution of just and religious edicts, making peace, quitting of unjust interests, declaring publicly against a crime, protesting in behalf of the contrary virtue or religion: and to this also, every man, as he is a member of the body politic, must co-operate; that, by a repentance in diffusion, help may come, as well as by a sin of universal dissemination the plague was hastened and invited the rather. But in these cases, all the work of discerning and pronouncing, concerning the cause of the judgment, as it must be without asperity, and only for designs of correction and emendation, so it must be done by kings and prophets, and the assistance of other public persons, to whom the public is committed. Joshua cast lots upon Achan, and discovered the public trouble in a private instance; and of old, the prophets had it in commission to reprove the popular iniquity of nations, and the confederate sins of kingdoms: and, in this, christianity altered nothing. And when this is done modestly, prudently, humbly, and penitently, oftentimes the tables turn immediately, but always in due time; and a great alteration in a kingdom becomes the greatest blessing in the world, and fastens the church, or the crown, or the public peace, in bands of great continuance and security; and, it may be, the next age shall feel the benefits of our sufferance and repentance. And, therefore, as we must endeavour to secure it, so we must not be too decretory in the case of others, or disconsolate or diffident in our own, when it may so happen, that all succeeding generations shall see, that God pardoned us, and loved us, even when he smote us. Let us all learn to fear, and walk humbly. The churches of Laodicea and the Colossians suffered a great calamity, within a little while after the Spirit of God had sent them two epistles, by the ministry of St. Paul; their cities were buried in an earthquake: and yet, we have reason to think, they were churches beloved of God, and congregations of holy people.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal and powerful God! thou just and righteous Governor of the world! who callest all orders

[t] Diis te minorem quòd geris, imperas.
Hinc omne principium, huc refer exitum.

Dii multa neglecti dederunt
Hesperiæ mala luctuosæ.—Hor. lib. iii. Od. 6.

of men by precepts, promises, and threatenings, by mercies and by judgments; teach us to admire and adore all the wisdom, the effects, and infinite varieties of thy providence; and make us to dispose ourselves so, by obedience, by repentance, by all the manners of holy living, that we may never provoke thee to jealousy, much less to wrath and indignation against us. Keep far from us the sword of the destroying angel, and let us never perish in the public expresses of thy wrath, in diseases epidemical, with the furies of war, with calamitous, sudden, and horrid accidents, with unusual diseases; unless that our so strange fall be more for thy glory, and our eternal benefit, and then thy will be done: we beg thy grace, that we may cheerfully conform to thy holy will and pleasure. Lord, open our understandings, that we may know the meaning of thy voice, and the signification of thy language, when thou speakest from heaven in signs and judgments; and let a holy fear so soften our spirits, and an intense love so inflame and sanctify our desires, that we may apprehend every intimation of thy pleasure at its first, and remotest, and most obscure representment, that so we may, with repentance, go out to meet thee, and prevent the expresses of thine anger. Let thy restraining grace, and the observation of the issues of thy justice, so allay our spirits, that we be not severe and forward in condemning others, nor backward in passing sentence upon ourselves. Make us to obey thy voice, described in holy Scripture, to tremble at thy voice, expressed in wonders and great effects of providence, to condemn none but ourselves, nor to enter into the recesses of thy sanctuary, and search the forbidden records of predestination; but that we may read our duty in the pages of revelation, not in the labels of accidental effects; that thy judgments may confirm thy word, and thy word teach us our duty, and we, by such excellent instruments, may enter in, and grow up in the ways of godliness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SECTION XV.

Of the Accidents happening from the Death of Lazarus, until the Death and Burial of Jesus.

1. WHILE Jesus was in Galilee, messengers came to him from Martha and her sister Mary, that he would hasten into Judea, to Bethany, to relieve the sickness and imminent dangers of their brother Lazarus. But he deferred his going till Lazarus was dead; purposing to give a great probation of his divinity, power, and mission, by a glorious miracle; and to give God glory, and to receive reflections of the glory upon himself. For after he had staid two days, he called his disciples to go with him into Judea, telling them that Lazarus was dead, but he would raise him out of that sleep of death. But by that time Jesus was arrived at Bethany, "he found that Lazarus had been dead four days," and now near to putrefaction. But when Martha and Mary met him, weeping their pious tears for their dead brother, Jesus suffered the passions of pity and humanity, and wept, distilling that precious liquor into the grave of Lazarus; watering the dead plant, that it might spring into a new life, and raise his head above the ground.

2. When Jesus had, by his words of comfort and institution, strengthened the faith of the two mourning sisters, and commanded "the stone to be removed" from the grave, he made an address of adoration and eucharist to his Father, confessing his perpetual propensity to hear him, and then cried out, "Lazarus, come forth! And he that was dead came forth" from his bed of darkness, with his night-clothes on him: whom when the apostles had unloosed, at the command of Jesus, he went to Bethany: and many that were present "believed on him;" but others, wondering and malicious, went and told the Pharisees the story of the miracle, who, upon that advice, called their great council, whose great and solemn cognizance was of the greater causes of prophets, of kings, and of the holy law. At this great assembly it was, that Caiaphas, the high priest, prophesied, that it was "expedient one should die for the people. And thence they determined the death of Jesus." But he, knowing they had passed a decretory sentence against him, "retired to the city Ephraim," in the tribe of Judah, near the desert, where he staid a few days, till the approximation of the feast of Easter.

3. Against which feast, when Jesus, with his disciples, was going to Jerusalem, he told them the event of the journey would be, that the Jews "should deliver him to the gentiles;" that they "should scourge him, and mock him, and crucify him, and the third day he should rise again." After which discourse the mother of Zebedee's children begged of Jesus, for her two sons, that "one of them might sit at his right hand, the other at the left, in his kingdom." For no discourses of his passion, or intimations of the mysteriousness of his kingdom, could yet put them into right understandings of their condition. But Jesus, whose heart and thoughts were full of fancy, and apprehensions of the neighbour passion, gave them answer, in proportion to his present conceptions and their future condition. For if they desired the honours of his kingdom such as they were, they should have them, unless themselves did decline them; they "should drink of his cup," and dip in his lavatory, and be "washed with his baptism," and "sit in his kingdom," if the heavenly "Father had prepared it for" them; but the donation of that immediately was an issue of Divine election and predestination, and was only competent to them, who, by holy living and patient suffering, put themselves into a disposition of becoming vessels of election.

4. But as Jesus, in this journey, "came near Jericho," he cures "a blind man, who sat begging by the way-side:" and "espying Zaccheus, the chief

of the publicans, upon a tree, (that he, being "low of stature," might upon that advantage of station see Jesus passing by,) he invited himself to his house; who "received him with gladness," and repentance of his crimes, purging his conscience, and filling his heart and house with joy and sanctity; for immediately upon the arrival of the Master at his house, he offered restitution to all persons whom he had injured, and satisfaction; and half of his remanent estate he "gave to the poor," and so gave the fairest entertainment to Jesus, who brought along with him "salvation to his house." There it was that he spake the parable of the king, who concredited divers talents to his servants, and having at his return exacted an account, rewarded them who had improved their bank, and been faithful in their trust, with rewards proportionable to their capacity and improvement; but the negligent servant, who had not meliorated his stock, was punished with ablegation and confinement to outer darkness. And from hence sprang up that dogmatical proposition, which is mysterious and determined in christianity; "To him that hath, shall be given; and from him that hath not, shall be taken away even what he hath." After this, going forth of Jericho, he cured two blind men upon the way.

5. Six days before Easter, "Jesus came to Bethany," where he was feasted by Martha and Mary, and accompanied by Lazarus, who "sat at the table with Jesus." But "Mary brought a pound of nard pistic,"[a] and, as formerly she had done, again "anoints the feet of Jesus, and fills the house with the odour," till God himself smelt thence a savour of a sweet-smelling sacrifice. But Judas Iscariot, the thief and the traitor, repined at the vanity of the expense, (as he pretended,) because it might have been "sold for three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor." But Jesus, in his reply, taught us, that there is an opportunity for actions of religion, as well as of charity. "Mary did this against the burial of Jesus," and her religion was accepted by him, to whose honours the holocaust of love and the oblations of alms-deeds are, in their proper seasons, direct actions of worship and duty. But, at this meeting, "there came many Jews to see Lazarus, who was raised from death, as well as to see Jesus:" and because, by occasion of his resurrection, "many of them believed on Jesus;" therefore the Pharisees "deliberated about putting him to death." But God, in his glorious providence, was pleased to preserve him as a trumpet of his glories, and a testimony of the miracle, thirty years after the death of Jesus.[b]

6. "The next day," being the fifth day before the passover, "Jesus came to the foot of the mount of Olives," and "sent his disciples to Bethphage, a village in the neighbourhood," commanding them to "unloose an ass and a colt, and bring them to him," and "to tell the owners it was done for the Master's use; and they did so:" and when they brought the ass to Jesus, he rides on him to Jerusalem; and "the people," having notice of his approach, "took branches of palm-trees, and went out to meet him, strewing branches and garments in the way, crying out, Hosanna to the Son of David!" which was a form of exclamation used to the honour of God, and in great solemnities, and signifies "adoration to the Son of David, by the rite of carrying branches;"[c] which when they used in procession about their altars, they used to pray, "Lord, save us; Lord, prosper us;" which hath occasioned the reddition of "Hoschiannah" to be, amongst some, that prayer which they repeated at the carrying of the "Hoschiannah," as if itself did signify, "Lord, save us." But this honour was so great and unusual to be done, even to kings,[d] that the Pharisees, knowing this to be an appropriate manner of address to God, said one to another, by way of wonder, "Hear ye what these men say?" For they were troubled to hear the people revere him as a God.

7. When Jesus, from the mount of Olives, beheld Jerusalem, he "wept over it," and foretold great sadnesses and infelicities futurely contingent to it; which not only happened in the sequel of the story, according to the main issues and significations of this prophecy, but even to minutes and circumstances it was verified. For in the mount of Olives, where Jesus shed tears over perishing Jerusalem, the Romans first pitched their tents, when they came to its final overthrow.[e] From thence descending to the city, he went into the temple, and still the acclamations followed him, till the Pharisees were ready to burst with the noises abroad, and the tumults of envy and scorn within; and by observing that all their endeavours to suppress his glories were but like clapping their hands to veil the sun; and that in despite of all their stratagems, the whole nation was become disciple to the glorious Nazarene. And there he cured certain persons, that were "blind and lame."

8. But whilst he abode at Jerusalem, "certain Greeks, who came to the feast to worship," made their address to Philip, that they might be brought to Jesus. "Philip tells Andrew, and they both tell Jesus;" who, having admitted them, discoursed many things concerning his passion, and then prayed a petition, which is the end of his own sufferings, and of all human actions, and the purpose of the whole creation, "Father, glorify thy name." To which he was answered by "a voice from heaven, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." But this, nor the whole series of miracles that he did, the mercies, the cures, nor the divine discourses, could gain the faith of all the Jews, who were determined by their human interest; for "many of the rulers who believed on him, durst not confess him, because they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." Then Jesus again ex-

[a] Pisticam, id est, spicatam, corruptè, uti ex Latinis ferè solent Græci.—ERASM. in xiv. Marci.

[b] Epiphan. cont. Manich.

[c] Ὑψηλᾶν ἀρετᾶν καὶ
Στεφάνων ἄωτον γλυκύν.—Olymp. v. 1. Pindarus vocat palmarum ramos, altissimarum virtutum et coronarum florem suavem.

[d] Drusius de Vocib. Heb. N. T. c. 19. Canin. de locis, N. T.

[e] Joseph. de bello Jud. lib. vi. c. 3.

horted all men, "to believe on him, that so they might, in the same act, believe on God; that they might approach unto the light, and not abide in darkness; that they might obey the commandments of the Father, whose express charge it was, that Jesus should preach this gospel; and that they might not be judged at the last day by the word which they have rejected, which word, to all its observers, is everlasting life." After which sermon retiring to Bethany he abode there all night.

9. On the morrow, returning to Jerusalem, on the way being hungry, he passed by a fig-tree; where, expecting fruit, he found none, and cursed the fig-tree, which, by the next day, was dried up and withered; upon occasion of which preternatural event, Jesus discoursed of the power of faith, and its power to produce miracles. But upon this occasion, others,[f] the disciples of Jesus in after-ages, have pleased themselves with fancies and imperfect descants, as that he cursed this tree in mystery and secret intendment; it having been the tree, in the eating whose fruit, Adam, prevaricating the Divine law, made an inlet to sin, which brought in death, and the sadnesses of Jesus's passion. But Jesus, having entered the city, came into the temple, and preached the gospel; and the chief priests and scribes questioned his commission, and by what authority he did those things. But Jesus promising to answer them, if they would declare their opinions concerning John's baptism, which they durst not, for fear of "displeasing the people," or throwing dirt in their own faces, was acquitted of his obligation, by their declining the proposition.

10. But there he reproved the Pharisees and rulers, by the parable of two sons; "the first whereof said to his father, he would not obey, but repented, and did his command; the second gave good words, but did nothing: meaning, that persons of the greatest improbability were more heartily converted than they, whose outside seemed to have appropriated religion to the labels of their frontlets. He added a parable of the vineyard let out to husbandmen, who killed the servants sent to demand the fruits, and at last the son himself, that they might invade the inheritance; but made a sad commination to all such, who should either stumble at this stone, or on whom this stone should fall." After which, and some other reprehensions, which he so veiled in parable, that it might not be expounded to be calumny or declamation; although such sharp sermons had been spoken in the people's hearing, but yet so transparently, that themselves might see their own iniquity in those modest and just representments, the Pharisees would fain have seized him, but they durst not for the people, but resolved, if they could, "to entangle him in his talk;" and, therefore, "sent out spies, who should pretend" sanctity and veneration of his person, who, with a goodly insinuating preface, that "Jesus regarded no man's person, but spake the word of God," with much simplicity and justice, desired to know if it were "lawful to pay tribute to Cæsar, or not." A question which was of great dispute, because of the numerous sect of the Galileans, who denied it, and of the affections of the people, who loved their money, and their liberty, and the privileges of their nation. And now, in all probability, he shall fall under the displeasure of the people, or of Cæsar. But Jesus called to "see a penny," and finding it to be superscribed with Cæsar's image, with incomparable wisdom he brake their snare, and established an evangelical proposition for ever, saying, "Give to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's."

11. Having so excellently, and so much to their wonder, answered the Pharisees, the Sadducees bring their great objection to him against the resurrection, by putting the case of a woman married to seven husbands, and "whose wife should she be in the resurrection?" thinking that to be an impossible state, which engages upon such seeming incongruities, that a woman should at once be wife to seven men. But Jesus first answered their objection, telling them, that all those relations, whose foundation is in the imperfections and passions of flesh and blood, and duties here below, shall cease in that state, which is so spiritual, that it is like to the condition of angels, amongst whom there is no difference of sex, no cognations, no genealogies or derivation from one another; and then, by a new argument, proves the resurrection, by one of God's appellatives, who did then delight to be called "the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob:" for, since "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living," unto him even these men are alive; and if so, then either they now exercise acts of life, and therefore shall be restored to their bodies, that their actions may be complete, and they not remain in a state of imperfection to all eternity; or if they be alive, and yet cease from operation, they shall be much rather raised up to a condition, which shall actuate and make perfect their present capacities and dispositions, lest a power and inclination should for ever be in the root, and never rise up to fruit or herbage, and so be an eternal vanity, like an old bud or an eternal child.

12. After this, the Pharisees being well pleased, not that Jesus spake so excellently, but that the Sadducees were confuted, came to him, asking, "which was the great commandment?" and some other things, more out of curiosity than pious desires of satisfaction. But at last Jesus was pleased to ask them concerning Christ, "whose son he was?" They answered, "The Son of David:" but he replying, "How then doth David call him Lord? (The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand," &c.) they had nothing to answer. But Jesus then gave his disciples caution against the pride, the hypocrisy, and the oppression of the scribes and Pharisees: and commended the "poor widow's" oblation of her "two mites into the treasury," it being a great love in a little print, for it was "all her living." All this was spoken in the temple, the goodly stones of which when the apostles beheld with wonder, they being white and firm, twenty cubits in length, twelve in breadth,

[f] Isidor. ad Theopomp. lib. i. ep. 51.

eight in depth, as Josephus reports,[g] Jesus prophesies the destruction of the place: concerning which prediction, when the apostles, being with him at the mount of Olives, asked him privately concerning the time and the signs of so sad event, he discoursed largely "of his coming to judgment against that city, and interweaved predictions of the universal judgment of all the world; of which this, though very sad, was but a small adumbration: adding precepts of watchfulness, and standing in preparation with hearts filled with grace, our lamps always shining, that, when the bridegroom shall come, we may be ready to enter in: which was intended in the parable of the five wise virgins:" and concluded his sermon with a narrative of his passion, foretelling that, within two days, he should be crucified.

13. Jesus descended from the mount, and came to Bethany, and, turning into the house of Simon the leper, Mary Magdalen having been reproved by Judas for spending ointment upon Jesus's feet, it being so unaccustomed and large a profusion, thought now to speak her love once more, and trouble nobody, and therefore she "poured ointment on his sacred head," believing that, being a pompousness of a more accustomed festivity, would be indulged to the expressions of her affection: but now all the disciples murmured, wondering at the prodigiousness of the woman's religion, great enough to consume a province in the overflowings of her thankfulness and duty. But Jesus now also entertained the sincerity of her miraculous love, adding this prophecy, that "where the gospel should be preached," there also a record of this act should be kept, as a perpetual monument of her piety, and an attestation of his divinity, who could foretell future contingencies; christianity receiving the greatest argument from that, which St. Peter calls "the surer word of prophecy," meaning it to be greater than the testimony of miracles, not easy to be dissembled by impure spirits, and whose efficacy should descend to all ages: for this prophecy shall for ever be fulfilling, and, being every day verified, does every day preach the divinity of Christ's person and of his institution.

14. "Two days before the passover," the scribes and Pharisees called a council, to contrive crafty ways of destroying Jesus, they not daring to do it by open violence. Of which meeting when Judas Iscariot had notice, (for those assemblies were public and notorious,) he ran from Bethany, and offered himself to betray his master to them, if they would give him a considerable reward. "They agreed for thirty pieces of silver." Of what value each piece was, is uncertain; but their own nation hath given a rule, that when a piece of silver is named in the pentateuch, it signifies a sicle; if it be named in the prophets, it signifies a pound; if in the other writings of the Old Testament, it signifies a talent.[h] This, therefore, being alleged out of the prophet Jeremiah by one of the evangelists,[i] it is probable the price, at which Judas sold his Lord, was thirty pound weight of silver; "a goodly price" for the Saviour of the world to be prized at by his undiscerning and unworthy countrymen.

15. The next day was "the first day of unleavened bread," on which it was necessary "they should kill the passover:" therefore "Jesus sent Peter and John to the city to a certain man," whom they should find "carrying a pitcher of water" to his house; him they should follow, and there "prepare the passover." They went, and found the man in the same circumstances, and prepared for Jesus and his family, who at the even came to celebrate the passover. It was the house of John, surnamed Mark, which had always been open to this blessed family, where he was pleased to finish his last supper and the mysteriousness of the vespers of his passion.[k]

16. When evening was come, Jesus stood with his disciples, and ate the paschal lamb; after which he "girt himself with a towel," and, taking "a basin, washed the feet of his disciples," not only by the ceremony, but in his discourses, instructing them in the doctrine of humility, which the Master, by his so great condescension to his disciples, had made sacred, and imprinted the lesson in lasting characters by making it symbolical. But Peter was unwilling to be washed by his Lord, until he was told he must renounce his part in him, unless he were washed; which option being given to Peter, he cried out, "Not my feet only, but my hands and my head." But Jesus said the ablution of the feet was sufficient for the purification of the whole man; relating to the custom of those countries, who used to go to supper immediately from the baths, who therefore were sufficiently clean, save only on their feet by reason of the dust contracted in their passage from the baths to the dining-rooms; from which when, by the hospitable master of the house, they were caused to be cleansed, they need no more ablution: and by it Jesus, passing from the letter to the spirit, meant, that the body of sin was washed in the baths of baptism; and afterwards, if we remained in the same state of purity, it was only necessary to purge away the filth contracted in our passage from the font to the altar; and then we are clean all over, when the baptismal state is unaltered, and the little adherencies of imperfection and passions are also washed off.

17. But, after the manducation of the paschal lamb, it was the custom of the nation to sit down to a second supper, in which they ate herbs and unleavened bread, the major-domo first dipping his morsel, and then the family; after which the father brake bread into pieces, and distributed a part to

[g] Antiq. lib. xiv. cap. 14.

[h] Elias Levita Jud. in Tisbi. Arias Montanus in diction. Syro-Chaldaic.

[i] Matt. xxvii. 9, ubi citatur Jeremias pro Zechariâ, per errorem illapsum in codices. Nam tempore S. Augustini in nonnullis codicibus [Zecharias] legebatur; atque hodie in Syriac. T. Sed fortassis ex traditione hoc descendit à Jeremiâ dictum, sicut multa alia in Vet. Testam. non descripta, et in N. T. repetita: quod eò magis est credibile, quia proverbialiter dictum apud Judæos, spiritum Jeremiæ resedisse in Zecharia.

[k] Alexand. Mon. apud Metaphrasten die 11 Junii. Vide Adrichom. in descript. Jerus. n. 6.

every of the guests, and first drinking himself, gave to the rest the chalice filled with wine, according to the age and dignity of the person, adding to each distribution a form of benediction proper to the mystery, which was eucharistical and commemorative of their deliverance from Egypt. This supper Jesus being to celebrate, changed the forms of benediction, turned the ceremony into mystery, and gave his body and blood in sacrament and religious configuration; so instituting the venerable sacrament, which, from the time of its institution, is called the "Lord's Supper:" which rite Jesus commanded the apostles to perpetuate in commemoration of him, their Lord, until his second coming. And this was the first delegation of a perpetual ministry, which Jesus made to his apostles, in which they were to be succeeded to in all the generations of the church.

18. But Jesus being "troubled in spirit," told his apostles, that "one of them should betray him;" which prediction he made, that they might not be scandalized at the sadness of objection of the passion, but be confirmed in their belief, seeing so great demonstration of his wisdom and spirit of prophecy. The disciples were all troubled at this sad arrest, "looking one on another, and doubting of whom he spake;" but they "beckoned to the beloved disciple, leaning on Jesus's breast, that he might ask:" for they, who knew their own innocency and infirmity, were desirous to satisfy their curiosity, and to be rid of their indetermination and their fear. But Jesus, being asked, gave them a sign, and "a sop" to Judas, commanding him to "do what he list speedily;" for Jesus was extremely "straitened," till he had drunk the chalice off, and accomplished his mysterious and afflictive baptism. After "Judas received the sop, the devil entered into him; and Judas went forth immediately, it being now night."

19. When he was gone out, Jesus began his farewell sermon, rarely mixed of sadness and joys, and studded with mysteries as with emeralds, discoursing "of the glorification of God in his Son, and of those glories which the Father had prepared for him; of his sudden departure, and his migration to a place whither they could not come yet, but afterwards they should; meaning, first to death, and then to glory: commanding them to love one another; and foretelling to Peter, (who made confident protests that he would die with his Master,) that 'before the cock should crow twice, he should deny him thrice.' But lest he should afflict them with too sad representments of his present condition, he comforts them with the comforts of faith, with the intendments of his departure 'to prepare places' in heaven 'for them,' whither they might come by him, who is 'the way, the truth, and the life;' adding a promise in order to their present support and future felicities, that, 'if they should ask of God any thing in his name, they should receive it;' and, upon condition they would love him, and keep his commandments, he would pray for the Holy Ghost to come upon them, to supply his room, to furnish them with proportionable comforts, to enable them with great gifts, to 'lead them into all truth,' and to abide with them for ever." Then arming them against future persecutions, giving them divers holy precepts, discoursing of his emanation from the Father, and of the necessity of his departure, he gave them his blessing, and prayed for them; and then, "having sung a hymn," which was part of the great Allelujah beginning at the 114th Psalm, "When Israel came out of Egypt," and ending at the 118th inclusively, "went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, unto the mount of Olives, to a village called Gethsemane, where there was a garden, into which he entered to pray together with his disciples."

20. But "taking Peter, James, and John, apart with him about a stone's cast" from the rest, "he began to be exceeding sorrowful," and sad "even unto death." For now he saw the ingredients of his bitter draught pouring into the chalice, and the sight was full of horror and amazement; he therefore "fell on his face, and prayed, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." In this prayer he fell into so sad "an agony," that the pains, inflicted by his Father's wrath, and made active by his own apprehension, were so great, that a "sweat" distilled from his sacred body as great and conglobated "as drops of blood;"[1] and God, who heard his prayer, but would not answer him in kind, sent "an angel to comfort him" in the sadness, which he was pleased not to take away. But, knowing that the drinking this cup was the great "end of his coming into the world," he laid aside all his own interests, and divested himself of the affections of flesh and blood, "willing his Father's will;" and because his Father commanded, he, in defiance of sense and passion, was desirous to suffer all our pains. But as, when two seas meet, the billows contest in ungentle embraces, and make violent noises, till, having wearied themselves into smaller waves and disunited drops, they run quietly into one stream: so did the spirit and nature of Jesus assault each other with disagreeing interests and distinguishing disputations, till the earnestness of the contention was diminished by the demonstrations of the Spirit, and the prevailings of grace, which the sooner got the victory, because they were not to contest with an unsanctified or a rebellious nature, but a body of affections which had no strong desires, but of its own preservation: and therefore "Jesus went thrice," and prayed the same prayer, that, "if it were possible, the cup might pass from him," and thrice made an act of resignation, and in the intervals "came and found his apostles asleep," gently chiding their incuriousness, and warning them to "watch and pray, that they enter not into temptation;" till the time that the traitor "came with a multitude, armed with swords and staves, from the priests and elders of the people," to apprehend him.

21. Judas gave them the opportunity of "the

[1] Quidam ex Hegesippo notant, ex irroratione sanguinis Christi natam arborem. Sic Philippus Bosquius et alii. Sed hæ sunt meræ nugæ.

night;" that was all the advantage they had by him, because they durst not seize him by day for fear of the people; and he signified the person of his Master to the soldiers by "a kiss," and an address of seeming civility. But when they came towards him, "Jesus said, Whom seek ye? They said, Jesus of Nazareth. He said, I am he." But there was a divinity upon him, that they could not seize him at first: but as a wave climbing of a rock is beaten back and scattered into members, till, falling down, it creeps with gentle waftings, and kisses the feet of the stony mountain, and so encircles it: so the soldiers, coming at first with a rude attempt, were twice repelled by the glory of his person, till they, falling at his feet, were at last admitted to the seizure of his body, having, by those involuntary prostrations, confessed his power greater than theirs, and that the lustre and influence of a God are greater than the violences and rudenesses of soldiers.[m] And still they, like weak eyes, durst not behold the glory of this sun, till a cloud, like a dark veil, did interrupt the emissions of his glories; they could not seize upon him, till they had thrown a veil upon his holy face: which, although it was a custom of the Easterlings, and of the Roman empire generally;[n] yet in this case was violence and necessity, because a certain impetuosity, and vigorousness of spirit, and divinity, issuing from his holy face, made them to take sanctuary in darkness, and to throw a veil over him in that dead time of a sad and dismal night. But Peter, a stout Galilean,[o] bold and zealous, attempted a rescue, and "smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear;" but Jesus rebuked the intemperance of his passion, and commanded him to "put up his sword," saying, "All they that strike with the sword shall perish with the sword;" so putting a bridle upon the illegal inflictions and expresses of anger or revenge from an incompetent authority. But "Jesus touched Malchus's ear, and cured it."

22. When Jesus had yielded himself into their power, and was now "led away by the chief priests, captains of the temple, elders of the people, and soldiers," who all came in combination and covenant to surprise him, "his disciples fled;" and John, the evangelist, who, with grief and an overrunning fancy, had forgot to lay aside his upper garment, which in festivals they are used to put on, began to make escape, but, being arrested by his linen upon his bare body, was forced to leave that behind him, that himself might escape his Master's danger: for now was verified the prophetical saying, "I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. But Peter followed afar off;" and the greatness of John's love, when he had mastered the first inconsiderations of his fear, made him to return a while after into the high priest's hall.

23. Jesus was "first led to Annas," who was the prince of the sanhedrim, and had cognizance of prophets and public doctrines; who therefore "inquired of Jesus concerning his disciples and his discipline:" but he answered, that his doctrine had been public or popular, that he never taught in conventicles; and therefore referred him to the testimony of all the people. For which free answer, "a servant standing by smote him on the face;" and Jesus meekly asked him what evil he had done. But Annas, without the seventy assessors, could judge nothing, and therefore "sent him bound to Caiaphas, who was high priest that year," president of the rites of the temple, as the other high priest was of the great council. Thither Peter came, and had admission by the means of another disciple, supposed to be John, who, having sold his possessions in Galilee to Caiaphas, came and dwelt near mount Sion, but was, by intervention of that bargain, made "known to the high priest," and "brought Peter into the house:" where, when Peter was challenged three times by the servants to be a Galilean, and of Jesus's family, he "denied" and "forswore" it; till "Jesus, looking back," reminded him of his prediction, and the foulness of the crime, "and the cock crew;" for it was now the second cock-crowing after ten of the clock in the fourth watch. "And Peter went out, and wept bitterly," that he might cleanse his soul, washing off the foul stains he had contracted in his shameful perjury and denying of his Lord. And it is reported of the same holy person,[p] that ever after, when he heard the cock crow, he wept, remembering the old instrument of his conversion, and his own unworthiness, for which he never ceased to do actions of sorrow and sharp repentance.

24. On the morning the council was to assemble; and whilst Jesus was detained in expectation of it, the servants "mocked him," and did all actions of affront and ignoble despite to his sacred head: and because the question was, whether he were a prophet, "they covered his eyes, and smote him" in derision, calling on him to "prophesy who smote him." But "in the morning, when the high priests and rulers of the people were assembled, they sought false witness against Jesus, but found none" to purpose; they railed boldly, and could prove nothing; they accused vehemently, and the allegations were of such things as were no crimes; and the greatest article, which the united diligence of all their malice could pretend, was, that "he said he would destroy the temple, and in three days build it up again." But Jesus neither answered this, nor any other of their vainer allegations; for the witnesses destroyed each other's testimony by their disagreeing; till at last Caiaphas, who, to verify his prophecy, and to satisfy his ambition, and to bait his envy, was furiously determined Jesus should die, "adjures him by the living God to say, whether he were the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus knew his design to be an inquisition of death, not of piety or curiosity; yet, because "his hour was now come," openly affirmed it, without any expedient to elude the high priest's malice, or to decline the question.

25. When Caiaphas heard the saying, he accused Jesus of "blasphemy," and pretended an apprehension so tragical, that he over-acted his wonder, and

[m] S. Hieron. in Matt. c. 9.
[n] I, lictor, obnube caput liberatoris urbis hujus.—LIV.
[o] Ὄπα θρασύστομε Σίμων.—NONN.
[p] Arsenius in Vitis Pp.

feigned detestation; for "he rent his garments," (which was the interjection of the country, and custom of the nation, but forbidden to the high priest,) and called presently to sentence: and, as it was agreed beforehand, "they all condemned him as guilty of death," and, as far as they had power, inflicted it; for they "beat him with their fists, smote him with the palms of their hands, spit upon him," and abused him beyond the license of enraged tyrants. When Judas heard that they had passed the final and decretory sentence of death upon his Lord, he, who thought not it would have gone so far, "repented him" to have been the instrument of so damnable a machination, and came and "brought the silver," which they gave him for hire, "threw it in amongst them, and said, I have sinned in betraying the innocent blood." But they, incurious of those hell-torments Judas felt within him, because their own fires burnt not yet, dismissed him, and, upon consultation, bought with the money "a field to bury strangers in." And "Judas went and hanged himself:" and the judgment was made more notorious and eminent by an unusual accident at such deaths, for he so swelled, that "he burst, and his bowels gushed out." But the Greek scholiast, and some others,[q] report out of Papias, St. John's scholar, that Judas fell from the fig-tree on which he hanged, before he was quite dead, and survived his attempt some while, being so sad a spectacle of deformity, and pain, and a prodigious tumour, that his plague was deplorable, and highly miserable, till at last he burst in the very substance of his trunk, as being extended beyond the possibilities and capacities of nature.

26. But the high priests had given Jesus over to the secular power, and carried him to Pilate, to be put to death by his sentence and military power; but coming thither, they "would not enter into the judgment-hall" because of the feast; but Pilate met them, and, willing to decline the business, bade them "judge him according to their own law." They replied, "It was not lawful to put any man to death;" meaning, during the seven days of unleavened bread (as appears in the instance of Herod, who detained Peter in prison, intending, after Easter, to bring him out to the people). And their malice was restless, till the sentence they had passed were put into execution. Others thinking,[r] that all the right of inflicting capital punishments was taken from the nation by the Romans; and Josephus writes,[s] that when Ananias, their high priest, had, by a council of the Jews, condemned St. James, the brother of our Lord, and put him to death, without the consent of the Roman president, he was deprived of his priesthood. But because Pilate, who, either by common right, or at that time, was the judge of capital inflictions, was averse from intermeddling in the condemnation of an innocent person, they attempted him with excellent craft; for, knowing that Pilate was a great servant of the Roman greatness, and a hater of the sect of the Galileans, the high priest accused Jesus, that he was of that sect, that he "denied paying tribute to Cæsar," that he "called himself king." Concerning which, when Pilate interrogated Jesus, he answered, that "his kingdom was not of this world;" and Pilate, thinking he had nothing to do with the other, came forth again, and gave testimony, that "he found nothing worthy of death in Jesus." But hearing that he was "a Galilean," and of "Herod's jurisdiction, Pilate sent him to Herod, who was at Jerusalem" at the feast. "And Herod was glad, because he had heard much of him," and, since his return from Rome, "had desired to see him," but could not, by reason of his own avocations, and the ambulatory life of Christ; and now "he hoped to see a miracle done by him," of whom he had heard so many. But the event of this was, that Jesus did there no miracle; "Herod's soldiers set him at nought, and mocked him. And that day Herod was reconciled to Pilate." And "Jesus was sent back," arrayed in a white and splendid garment:[t] which though possibly it might be intended for derision, yet was a symbol of innocence, condemned persons usually being arrayed in black. And when Pilate had again examined him, "Jesus, meek as a lamb, and as a sheep before the shearers, opened not his mouth; insomuch that Pilate wondered," perceiving the greatest innocence of the man, by not offering to excuse or lessen any thing: for, though "Pilate had power to release him, or crucify him," yet his contempt of death was in just proportion to his innocence; which also Pilate concealed not, but published Jesus's innocence, by Herod's and his own sentence; to the great regret of the rulers, who, like ravening wolves, thirsted for a draught of blood, and to devour the morning prey.

27. But Pilate hoped to prevail upon the rulers, by making it a favour from them to Jesus, and an indulgence from him to the nation, to set him free: for, oftentimes, even malice itself is driven out by the devil of self-love; and, so we may be acknowledged the authors of a safety, we are content to rescue a man even from our own selves. Pilate, therefore, offered, that, according to the "custom" of the nation, Jesus should be "released" for the honour of the present festival, and as a donative to the people. But the spirit of malice was here the more prevalent, and they desired, that "Barabbas, a murderer, a thief, and a seditious person," should be exchanged for him. Then Pilate, casting about all ways to acquit Jesus of punishment, and himself of guilt, offered to "scourge him, and let him go," hoping that a lesser draught of blood might stop the furies and rabidness of their passion, without their bursting with a river of his best and vital liquor. But these leeches would not so let go; "they cry out, Crucify him;" and to engage him finally, they told him, "if he did let this man go, he was no friend to Cæsar."

[q] Euthym. in 26 Matt. Cedren. in Compend. Œcumen. in c. 1. Act. Juvencus Hist. Evang. lib. iv. Beda de Locis Sanct. c. 4.

[r] S. Aug. Tract. 114. in Joan. Cyrill. in Joan. lib. xii. c. 6. Chrysost. Hom. 12. in Joan. Ambros. Serm. de Calend. Januar. lib. xx.

[s] Antiq. c. 8.

[t] Joseph. lib. xvi. c. 14. Idem in Vita sua.

28. But Pilate called for "water and washed his hands," to demonstrate his own unwillingness, and to reject and transmit the guilt upon them, who took it on them as greedily as they sucked the blood; "they cried out, His blood be on us and our children." As Pilate was going to give sentence, "his wife, being troubled in her dreams, sent," with the earnestness and passion of a woman, that he should "have nothing to do with that just person:" but he was engaged: Cæsar and Jesus, God and the king, did seem to have different interests; or, at least, he was threatened into that opinion; and Pilate, though he was satisfied it was but calumny and malice, yet he was loath to venture upon his answer at Rome, in case the high priest should have accused him. For no man knows whether the interest or the mistake of his judge may cast the sentence; and whoever is accused strongly, is never thought entirely innocent. And, therefore, not only against the Divine laws, but against the Roman too, he condemned an innocent person, upon objections notoriously malicious; he adjudged him to a death, which was only due to public thieves and homicides, (crimes with which he was not charged,) upon a pretence of blasphemy, of which he stood accused, but not convicted, and for which, by the Jewish law, he should have been stoned, if found guilty. And this he did put into present execution, against the Tiberian law, which, about twelve years before, decreed in favour of condemned persons, that, after sentence, execution should be deferred ten days.[u]

29. And now was the holy Lamb to bleed. First, therefore, Pilate's soldiers "array him in a kingly robe, put a reed in his hand" for a sceptre, "plait a crown of thorns, and put it on his head; they bow the knee, and mock him; they smite him" with his fantastic sceptre, and, instead of tribute, pay him with "blows and spittings upon his holy head:" and, when they had emptied the whole stock of poisonous contempt, "they divest him of the robes" of mockery, "and put on him his own;" they lead him to a pillar, and bind him fast, and scourge him" with whips, a punishment that slaves only did use to suffer,[x] (free persons being, in certain cases, beaten with rods and clubs,) that they might add a new scorn to his afflictions, and make his sorrows, like their own guilt, vast and mountainous. After which, Barabbas being "set free, Pilate delivered Jesus to be crucified."

30. The soldiers, therefore, having framed a "cross," sad and heavy, laid it upon Jesus's shoulders, (who, like Isaac, bore the wood with which he was to be sacrificed himself,) and they drove him out to "crucifixion," who was scarce able to stand under that load. It is generally supposed that Jesus bore the whole tree, that is, both the parts of his cross; but to him that considers it, it will seem impossible; and, therefore, it is more likely, and agreeable to the old manner of crucifying malefactors, that Jesus only carried the cross part;[y] the body of it being upon the place either already fixed, or prepared for its station. Even that lesser part was grievous and intolerable to his tender, virginal, and weakened body; and when he fainted, "they compel Simon, a Cyrenian," to help him. "A great" and a mixed "multitude followed Jesus to Golgotha," the charnel house of the city, and the place of execution. But the "women wept" with bitter exclamations, and their sadness was increased by the sad prediction Jesus then made of their future misery, saying, "Ye daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children; for the time shall come that men shall say, Blessed are the barren that never bare, and the paps that never gave suck; for they shall call on the hills to cover them, and on the mountains to fall upon them," that, by a sudden ruin, they may escape the lingering calamities of famine and fear, and the horror of a thousand deaths.

31. "When Jesus was come to Golgotha,"[z] a place in the mount Calvary, (where, according to the tradition of the ancients, Adam was buried,[a] and where Abraham made an altar, for the sacrifice of his son,[b]) by the piety of his disciples, and, it is probable, of those good women, which did use to minister to him, there was provided "wine mingled with myrrh," which, among the Levantines, is an excellent and pleasant mixture, and such as the piety and indulgence of the nations used to administer to condemned persons.[c] But Jesus, who, by voluntary susception, did choose to suffer our pains, refused that refreshment, which the piety of the women presented to him. The soldiers, having stripped him, nailed him to the cross with four nails,[d] and "divided his mantle into four parts," giving "to each soldier a part;" but for "his coat," because it would be spoiled if parted, "it being" weaved "without seam, they cast lots for it."

32. Now Pilate had caused "a title," containing the cause of his death, to be "superscribed" on a

[u] Sueton. in Tiberio, c. 75. Dio Rom. Hist. lib. 57. Sub Tiberio et Druso Coss. Corruptus autem est codex Epist. Sidonii, qui ait, Nunc ex vetere S. C. Tiberiano triginta dierum vitam post sententiam trahit.

[x] Lib. in servorum, D. de pœnis. Lib. Levia, D. de Accus.

[y] Lignum transversum solùm portavit Jesus, scil. Patibulum, ad locum ubi crux, scil. lignum oblongum, terrâ defixum stetit. Sic Plautus, Patibulum ferant per urbem, et cruci affigantur. Malè ergo pictores hodierni pingunt Jesum, bajulantem utrumque lignum scil.—LIPSIUS Tract. de Supplicio Crucis.

[z] Εἰσόκε χῶρον ἵκανε φατιζομένοιο Κρανίου,
Ἀδὰμ πρωτογόνοιο φερώνυμον ἄντυγι κόρσης.
NONNUS in Joan.
Golgotha locus est capitis, Calvaria quondam,
Lingua paterna prior sic illum nomine dixit.
Hîc hominem primum suscepimus esse sepultum:
Hîc medium terræ est ———.

[a] Tertul. lib. ii. contra Marcion. Origen. Tract. 35. in Matth. Basil. in Levit. c. 5. Athan. de Pass. et Cruce, et ferè omnes Pp. unico excepto, Hieronymo, in Epist. ad Ephes. c. 5. et in c. 27 Matt.

[b] S. Aug. Serm. 71. de Tempore.

[c] Plin. Nat. Hist. lib xiv. c. 13. Athenæus, lib. xi. c. 30.
Si calidum potas, ardenti myrrha Falerno
Convenit, et melior fit sapor indè mero.
MARTIAL. lib. xiv.

[d] Ego dabo ei talentum, primus qui in crucem excurrerit: Sed eâ lege, ut affigantur bis pedes, bis brachia.—PLAUT. Mostel.

table, " in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew; the Hebrew being first, the Greek next, and the Latin nearest to the holy body; but all written after the Jewish manner, from the right hand to the left; for so the title is shown in the church of Santa Croce, in Rome, the Latin letters being to be read as if it were Hebrew; the reason of which I could never find sufficiently discovered, unless it were to make it more legible to the Jews, who, by conversing with the Romans, began to understand a little Latin. The title was, " JESUS OF NAZARETH, KING OF THE JEWS:" but the Pharisees would have it altered, and " that he said he was king of the Jews." But Pilate, out of wilfulness, or to do despite to the nation, or in honour to Jesus whom he knew to be a " just person," or being overruled by Divine providence, refused to alter it.[e] " And there were crucified with Jesus two thieves, Jesus being in the midst," according to the prophecy, " He was reckoned with the transgressors." Then Jesus prayed for his persecutors; " Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." But while Jesus was full of pain and charity, and was praying and dying for his enemies, " the rulers" of the Jews " mocked him," upbraiding him with the good works he did, and the expresses of his power, " saying, He saved others, himself he cannot save;" others saying, " Let him come down from the cross, if he be the King of the Jews, and we will believe in him:" and others, according as their malice was determined, by fancy and occasion, added weight and scorn to his pains; and of the two malefactors that were crucified with him, " one reviled him, saying, If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us." And thus far the devil prevailed, undoing himself in riddle, provoking men to do despite to Christ, and to heighten his passion out of hatred to him; and yet doing and promoting that, which was the ruin of all his own kingdom and potent mischiefs: like the Jew, who, in indignation against Mercury, threw stones at his image, and yet was by his superior judged idolatrous, that being the manner of doing honour to the idol among the gentiles.[f] But then Christ, who had, upon the cross, prayed for his enemies, and was heard of God in all that he desired, felt now the beginnings of success. For the other thief, whom the present pains and circumstances of Jesus's passion had softened and made believing, " reproved" his fellow for " not fearing God," confessed that this death happened " to them deservedly, but to Jesus causelessly:" and then prayed to Jesus, " Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Which combination of pious acts and miraculous conversion, Jesus entertained with a speedy promise of a very great felicity, promising, that upon " that very day he should be with him in paradise."

33. " Now, there were standing by the cross the mother of Jesus, and her sister, and Mary Magdalen, and John." And Jesus, being upon his deathbed, although he had no temporal estate to bestow, yet he would make provision for his mother, who being a widow, and now childless, was likely to be exposed to necessity and want; and, therefore, he did arrogate John, the beloved disciple, into Mary's kindred, making him to be her adopted son and her to be his mother, by fiction of law: " Woman, behold thy son;" and, " Man, behold thy mother. And from that time forward John took her home to his own house," which he had near mount Sion, after he had sold his inheritance in Galilee to the high priest.

34. While these things were doing, the whole frame of nature seemed to be dissolved, and out of order, while their Lord and Creator suffered. For " the sun was so darkened" that the stars appeared; and the eclipse was prodigious in the manner as well as in degree, because the moon was not then in conjunction, but full: and it was noted by Phlegon, the freed man of the emperor Hadrian, by Lucian out of the acts of the Gauls, and Dionysius, while he was yet a heathen, excellent scholars all, great historians and philosophers; who also noted the day of the week, and hour of the day, agreeing with the circumstances of the cross.[g] For the sun hid his head from beholding such a prodigy of sin and sadness, and provided a veil for the nakedness of Jesus, that the women might be present, and himself die, with modesty.

35. The eclipse and the passion began " at the sixth hour," and endured " till the ninth," about which time Jesus, being tormented with the unsufferable load of his Father's wrath, due for our sins, and wearied with pains and heaviness, " cried out, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and, as it is thought, repeated the whole two and twentieth psalm, which is an admirable narrative of the passion, full of prayer and sadness, and description of his pains at first, and of eucharist, and joy, and prophecy at the last. But these first words, which it is certain and recorded that he spake, were in a language of itself, or else, by reason of distance, not understood, for they thought he had " called for Elias," to take him down from the cross. Then Jesus, being in the agonies of a high fever, " said, I thirst. And one ran, and filled a sponge with vinegar, wrapping it with hyssop, and put it on a reed," that he might drink. The vinegar and the sponge were, in executions of condemned persons, set to stop the too violent issues of blood, and to prolong the death;[h] but were exhibited to him in scorn, " mingled with gall," to make the mixture more horrid and ungentle. But " Jesus tasted it" only, and " refused the draught." And now, knowing that the prophecies were fulfilled, his Father's wrath appeased, and his torments satisfactory, he

[e] Proconsulis tabella sententia est, quæ semel lecta, neque augeri literâ unâ, neque minui potest: sed utcunque recitata, ita provinciæ instrumento refertur.—Apul. Flor. lib. i.

[f] R. Manasses. Vide Dionys. Vossium in Annot. ad Rab. R. Maimon.

[g] Origen. cont. Cels. lib. ii. Tertul. Apolog. Lucian in actis sui Mart. August. Ep. 80 ad Hesychium. Suidas in Vitâ Dionys. ait eum dixisse, Aut Deus patitur, aut patienti compatitur: et hac de causâ Athenienses erexisse aram ἀγνώστῳ Θεῷ aiunt quidam.

[h] Veteres spongiæ conglutinant vulnera.—Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. xxxi. c. 11. Poterit et de misericordiâ moveri defixus in morsus uncorum, et spongias retiariorum.—Tertul. de Spect. c. 25.

said, "It is finished, and crying with a loud voice, Father into thy hands I commend my spirit, he bowed his head, and yielded up his spirit" into the hands of God, and died, hastening to his Father's glories. Thus did this glorious Sun set in a sad and clouded west, running speedily to shine in the other world.

36. Then "was the veil of the temple," which separated the secret Mosaic rites from the eyes of the people, "rent in the midst, from the top to the bottom; and the angels, presidents of the temple, called to each other to depart from their seats;[i] and so great "an earthquake" happened, that "the rocks did rend," the mountains trembled, "the graves opened, and the bodies of dead persons arose, walking," from their cemeteries, "to the holy city, and appeared unto many:" and so great apprehensions and amazements happened to them all that stood by, that they "departed, smiting their breasts with sorrow and fear:" and "the centurion," that ministered at the execution, "said, Certainly this was the Son of God;" and he became a disciple, renouncing his military employment, and died a martyr.[k]

37. But because the next day was the "Jews' sabbath," and a paschal festival besides, the Jews hastened that the bodies should be taken from the cross; and, therefore, sent to Pilate to hasten their death by "breaking their legs,[l] that," before sunset,[m] "they might be taken away," according to the commandment, and "be buried. The soldiers, therefore, came, and brake the legs of the two thieves; but espying," and wondering, "that Jesus was already dead, they brake not his legs; for the scripture foretold, that a bone of him should not be broken: but a soldier, with his lance, pierced his side, and immediately there streamed out" two rivulets of "water and blood." But the holy Virgin-mother, (whose soul, during this whole passion, "was pierced with a sword," and sharper sorrows, though she was supported by the comforts of faith, and those holy predictions of his resurrection and future glories, which Mary had laid up in store, against this great day of expense,) now that she saw her holy Son had suffered all that our necessities, and their malice, could require or inflict, caused certain ministers, with whom she joined, to take her dead Son from the cross; whose body when she once got free from the nails, she kissed, and embraced with entertainments of the nearest vicinity, that could be expressed by a person that was holy and sad, and a mother weeping for her dead Son.

38. But she was highly satisfied with her own meditations, that now that great mystery, determined, by Divine predestination, before the beginning of all ages, was fulfilled in her Son; and the passion, that must needs be, was accomplished:[n] she, therefore, first bathes his cold body with her warm tears, and makes clean the surface of the wounds, and, delivering a winding napkin to Joseph of Arimathæa, gave to him in charge to enwrap the body, and embalm it, to compose it to the grave, and to do it all the rites of funeral, having first exhorted him to a public confession of what he was privately, till now: and he obeyed the counsel of so excellent a person, and ventured upon the displeasure of the Jewish rulers, and "went confidently to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus." And "Pilate gave him" the power of it.

39. "Joseph, therefore, takes the body, binds his face with a napkin," washes the body, anoints it with ointment, enwraps it in a composition of "myrrh and aloes, and puts it into a new tomb, which he, for himself, had hewn out of a rock" (it not being lawful, among the Jews, to inter a condemned person in the common cemeteries): for all these circumstances were in "the Jews' manner of burying." But when the sun was set, "the chief priests and Pharisees went to Pilate, telling him that Jesus, whilst he was living, foretold his own resurrection upon the third day: and, lest his disciples should come and steal the body, and say he was risen from the dead, desired that "the sepulchre might be secured" against the danger of any such imposture. Pilate gave them leave to do their pleasure, even to the satisfaction of their smallest scruples. They, therefore, "sealed the grave, rolled a great stone at the mouth of it," and, as an ancient tradition says,[o] bound it about with labels of iron, and "set a watch" of soldiers, as if they had intended to have made it surer than the decrees of fate, or the never-failing laws of nature.

Ad SECTION XV.

Considerations of some preparatory Accidents before the Entrance of Jesus into his Passion.

1. He that hath observed the story of the life of Jesus, cannot but see it, all the way, to be strewed with thorns and sharp-pointed stones; and although by the kisses of his feet they became precious and salutary, yet they procured to him sorrow and disease: it was "meat and drink to him to do his Father's will," but it was "bread of affliction, and rivers of tears to drink;" and for these he thirsted like the earth after the cool stream. For so great was his perfection, so exact the conformity of his will, so absolute the subordination of his inferior faculties to the infinite love of God, which sat regent in the court of his will and understanding, that, in this election of accidents, he never considered the taste but the goodness, never distinguished sweet from bitter, but duty and piety always prepared his table. And, therefore, now knowing that his time, determined by the Father, was nigh, he hastened

[i] S. Hieron. Ep. 150. q. 8.
[k] Apud Metaph. die 16 Octob.
[l] In hac ipsâ genuum commissurâ quædam buccarum inanitas est, quâ perfossâ, ceu jugulo, spiritus aufugit.—Plin. lib. xi. c. 45. Vide Lactant. lib. i. c. 26. Cic. pro Rosc.
[m] Philo de Leg. Special. Deut. xxi.
[n] Metaphr. August. 15.
[o] Beda de Locis Sanctis, c. 2. Niceph. lib. i. c. 32.

up to Jerusalem; "he went before" his disciples, saith St. Mark, "and they followed him trembling and amazed;" and yet, before that, even then when his brethren observed he had a design of publication of himself, he suffered them "to go before him, and went up, as it were, in secret." For so we are invited to martyrdom, and suffering in a christian cause, by so great an example: the holy Jesus is gone before us, and it were a holy contention, to strive whose zeal were forwardest in the designs of humiliation and self-denial; but it were also well, if, in doing ourselves secular advantage, and promoting our worldly interest, we should follow him, who was ever more distant from receiving honours than from receiving a painful death. Those affections, which dwell in sadness, and are married to grief, and lie at the foot of the cross, and trace the sad steps of Jesus, have the wisdom of recollection, the tempers of sobriety, and are the best imitations of Jesus, and securities against the levity of a dispersed and a vain spirit. This was intimated by many of the disciples of Jesus, in the days of the Spirit, and, when they had "tasted of the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come;" for then we find many ambitious of martyrdom, and that have laid stratagems and designs, by unusual deaths, to get a crown. The soul of St. Lawrence was so scorched with ardent desires of dying for his Lord, that he accounted the coals of his gridiron but as a julep, or the aspersion of cold water, to refresh his soul; they were chill as the Alpine snows, in respect of the heats of his diviner flames. And if these lesser stars shine so brightly, and burn so warmly, what heat of love may we suppose to have been in the Sun of righteousness? If they went fast toward the crown of martyrdom, yet we know that the holy Jesus went before them all: no wonder that "he cometh forth as a bridegroom from his chamber, and rejoiceth as a giant to run his course."

2. When the disciples had overtaken Jesus, he begins to them a sad homily upon the old text of suffering, which he had, well nigh for a year together, preached upon; but because it was an unpleasing lesson, so contradictory to those interests, upon the hopes of which they had entertained themselves, and spent all their desires, they could by no means understand it: for an understanding, prepossessed with a fancy, or an unhandsome principle, construes all other notions to the sense of the first: and whatsoever contradicts it, we think it an objection, and that we are bound to answer it. But now that it concerned Christ to speak so plainly, that his disciples, by what was to happen within five or six days, might not be scandalized, or believe it happened to Jesus without his knowledge and voluntary entertainment, he tells them of his sufferings, to be accomplished in this journey to Jerusalem. And here the disciples showed themselves to be but men, full of passion and indiscreet affection; and the bold Galilean, St. Peter, took the boldness to dehort his Master from so great an infelicity; and met with a reprehension so great, that neither the scribes, nor the Pharisees, nor Herod himself, ever met with its parallel: Jesus called him Satan; meaning, that no greater contradictions can be offered to the designs of God and his holy Son, than to dissuade us from suffering. And if we understood how great are the advantages of a suffering condition, we should think all our daggers gilt, and our pavements strewed with roses, and our halters silken, and the rack an instrument of pleasure, and be most impatient of those temptations which seduce us into ease, and divorce us from the cross, as being opposite to our greatest hopes and most perfect desires. But still this humour of St. Peter's imperfection abides amongst us: he that breaks off the yoke of obedience, and unties the bands of discipline, and preaches a cheap religion, and presents heaven in the midst of flowers, and strews carpets softer than the Asian luxury in the way, and sets the songs of Sion to the tunes of Persian and lighter airs, and offers great liberty of living, and bondage under affection and sins, and reconciles eternity with the present enjoyment, he shall have his schools filled with disciples; but he that preaches the cross and the severities of christianity, and the strictnesses of a holy life, shall have the lot of his blessed Lord; he shall be thought ill of, and deserted.

3. Our blessed Lord, five days before his passion, sent his disciples to a village to borrow an ass, that he might ride in triumph to Jerusalem; he had none of his own; but yet he, who was so dear to God, could not want what was to supply his needs. It may be, God hath laid up our portion in the repositories of other men, and means to furnish us from their tables, to feed us from their granaries, and that their wardrobe shall clothe us; for it is all one to him to make a fish bring us money, or a crow to bring us meat, or the stable of our neighbour to furnish our needs of beasts. If he brings it to thy need as thou wantest it, thou hast all the good in the use of the creature which the owners can receive; and the horse which is lent me in charity does me as much ease, and the bread which is given me in alms feeds me as well, as the other part of it, which the good man, that gave me a portion, reserved for his own eating, could do to him. And if we would give God leave to make provisions for us in the ways of his own choosing, and not estimate our wants by our manner of receiving, being contented that God, by any of his own ways, will minister it to us, we should find our cares eased, and our content increased, and our thankfulness engaged, and all our moderate desires contented, by the satisfaction of our needs. For if God is pleased to feed me by my neighbour's charity, there is no other difference, but that God makes me an occasion of his ghostly good, as he is made the occasion of my temporal; and if we think it disparagement, we may remember, that God conveys more good to him by me, than to me by him: and it is a proud impatience to refuse or to be angry with God's provisions, because he hath not observed my circumstances and ceremonies of election.

4. And now begins that great triumph, in which the holy Jesus was pleased to exalt his office, and to abase his person. He rode, like a poor man,

upon an ass, a beast of burden and the lowest value, and yet it was not his own; and in that equipage he received the acclamations due to a mighty prince, to the Son of the eternal King; telling us, that the smallness of fortune, and the rudeness of exterior habiliments, and a rough wall, are sometimes the outsides of a great glory; and that when God means to glorify or do honour to a person, he needs no help from secular advantages. He hides great riches in renunciation of the world, and makes great honour break forth from the clouds of humility; and victory to arise from yielding, and the modesty of departing from our interest; and peace to be the reward of him that suffers all the hostilities of men and devils. For Jesus, in this great humility of his, gives a great probation that he was the Messias, and the King of Sion; because no other king entered into those gates riding upon an ass, and received the honour of "Hosannah," in that unlikelihood and contradiction of unequal circumstances.

5. The blessed Jesus had never but two days of triumph in his life; the one was on his transfiguration upon mount Tabor; the other, this his riding into the holy city. But, that it may appear how little were his joys and present exterior complacencies; in the day of his transfiguration, Moses and Elias appeared to him, telling him what great things he was to suffer; and in this day of his riding to Jerusalem, he wet the palms with a dew sweeter than the moistures upon mount Hermon, or the drops of manna; for, to allay the little warmth of a springing joy he let down a shower of tears, weeping over undone Jerusalem in the day of his triumph, leaving it disputable whether he felt more joy or sorrow in the acts of love; for he triumphed to consider that the redemption of the world was so near, and wept bitterly that men would not be redeemed; his joy was great, to consider that himself was to suffer so great sadness for our good; and his sorrow was very great, to consider that we would not entertain that good, that he brought and laid before us by his passion. He was in figure, as his servant, St. Paphnutius, was afterwards in letter and true story, "crucified upon palms:" which, indeed, was the emblem of a victory;[a] but yet such as had leaves sharp, poignant, and vexatious. However, he entered into Jerusalem dressed in gaieties, which yet he placed under his feet; but with such pomps and solemnities, each family, according to its proportion, was accustomed to bring the paschal lamb to be slain for the passover; and it was not an indecent ceremony, that "the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world" should be brought to his slaughter with the acknowledgments of a religious solemnity; because now that real good was to be exhibited to the world, which those little paschal lambs did but signify and represent in shadow: and that was the true cause of all the little joy he had.

6. And if we consider what followed, it might seem also to be a design to heighten the dolorousness of his passion; for to descend from the greatest of worldly honours, from the adoration of a God, and the acclamations to a king, to the death of a slave, and the torments of a cross, and the dishonours of a condemned criminal, were so great stoopings and vast changes, that they gave height, and sense, and excellency to each other. This, then, seemed an excellent glory: but, indeed, was but an art and instrument of grief; for such is the nature of all our felicities, they end in sadness, and increase the sting of sorrows, and add moment to them, and cause impatience and uncomfortable remembrances; but the griefs of a christian, whether they be instances of repentance, or parts of persecution, or exercises of patience, end in joy and endless comfort. Thus, Jesus, like a rainbow, half made of the glories of light, and half of the moisture of a cloud; half triumph, and half sorrow; entered into that town where he had done much good to others, and to himself received nothing but affronts; yet his tenderness increased upon him; and that very journey, which was Christ's last solemn visit for their recovery, he doubled all the instruments of his mercy and their conversion. He rode in triumph; the children sang hosannah to him; he cured many diseased persons; he wept for them, and pitied them, and sighed out the intimations of a prayer, and did penance for their ingratitude, and staid all day there, looking about him towards evening; and no man would invite him home, but he was forced to go to Bethany, where he was sure of a hospitable entertainment. I think no christian that reads this, but will be full of indignation at the whole city; who, for malice or for fear, would not, or durst not, receive their Saviour into their houses; and yet we do worse; for now that he is become our Lord, with mightier demonstrations of his eternal power, we suffer him to look round about upon us for months and years together, and possibly never entertain him, till our house is ready to rush upon our heads, and we are going to unusual and stranger habitations. And yet, in the midst of a populous and mutinous city, this great King had some good subjects; persons that threw away their own garments, and laid them at the feet of our Lord; that being divested of their own, they might be re-invested with a robe of his righteousness, wearing that till it were changed into a stole of glory; the very ceremony of their reception of the Lord became symbolical to them, and expressive of all our duties.

7. But I consider that the blessed Jesus had affections no less than infinite, towards all mankind; and he who wept upon Jerusalem, who had done so great despite to him, and within five days were to fill up the measure of their iniquities, and do an act, which all ages of the world could never repeat in the same instance, did also, in the number of his tears, reckon our sins, as sad considerations and incentives of his sorrow. And it would well become us to consider what great evil we do, when our actions are such as for which our blessed Lord did weep. He who was seated in the bosom of felicity, yet he moistened his fresh laurels upon the day of his triumph with tears of love and bitter allay. His

[a] Palma est victorum, palmæ tu affixus es; ergò Lætus obi, quoniam non nisi victor obis.

day of triumph was a day of sorrow; and if we would weep for our sins, that instance of sorrow would be a day of triumph and jubilee.

8. From hence the holy Jesus went to Bethany, where he had another manner of reception than at the holy city. There he supped; for his goodly day of triumph had been with him a fasting-day. And Mary Magdalen, who had spent one box of nard pistic upon our Lord's feet, as a sacrifice of eucharist for her conversion, now bestowed another, in thankfulness for the restitution of her brother Lazarus to life, and consigned her Lord unto his burial. And here she met with an evil interpreter. Judas, an apostle, one of the Lord's own family, pretended it had been a better religion to have given it to the poor; but it was malice, and the spirit either of envy or avarice in him that passed that sentence; for he that sees a pious action well done, and seeks to undervalue it by telling how it might have been better, reproves nothing but his own spirit. For a man may do very well, and God would accept it; though to say he might have done better, is to say only, that action was not the most perfect and absolute in its kind: but to be angry at a religious person, and without any other pretence but that he might have done better, is spiritual envy; for a pious person would have nourished up that infant action by love and praise, till it had grown to the most perfect and intelligent piety. But the event of that man gave the interpretation of his present purpose; and at the best it could be no other than a rash judgment of the action and intention of a religious, thankful, and holy person. But she found her Lord, who was her beneficiary in this, become her patron and her advocate. And hereafter, when we shall find the devil, the great accuser of God's saints, object against the piety and religion of holy persons; a cup of cold water shall be accepted unto reward, and a good intention heightened to the value of an exterior expression, and a piece of gum to the quality of a holocaust; and an action, done with great zeal and an intense love, be acquitted from all its adherent imperfections; Christ receiving them into himself, and being like the altar of incense, hallowing the very smoke, and raising it into a flame, and entertaining it into the embraces of the firmament and the bosom of heaven. Christ himself, who is the judge of our actions, is also the entertainer and object of our charity and duty, and the advocate of our persons.

9. Judas, who declaimed against the woman, made tacit reflections upon his Lord for suffering it: and, indeed, every obloquy against any of Christ's servants, is looked on as an arrow shot into the heart of Christ himself. And now, a persecution being begun against the Lord within his own family, another was raised against him from without. For the chief priests "took crafty counsel against Jesus," and called a consistory, to contrive "how they might destroy him:" and here was the greatest representment of the goodness of God and the ingratitude of man, that could be practised or understood. How often had Jesus poured forth tears for them! How many sleepless nights had he awaked, to do them advantage! How many days had he spent in homilies, and admirable visitations of mercy and charity; in casting out devils, in curing their sick, in correcting their delinquencies, in reducing them to the ways of security and peace; and, that we may use the greatest expression in the world, that is, his own, "in gathering them as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings," to give them strength, and warmth, and life, and ghostly nourishment! And the chief priests, together with their faction, use all arts, and watch all opportunities to get Christ; not that they might possess him, but to destroy him; little considering that they extinguish their own eyes, and destroy that spring of life, which was intended to them for a blissful immortality.

10. And here it was that the devil showed his promptness, to furnish every evil-intended person with apt instruments, to act the very worst of his intentions. The devil knew their purposes, and the aptness and proclivity of Judas; and, by bringing these together, he served their present design, and his own great intendment. The devil never fails to promote every evil purpose; and, except where God's restraining grace does intervene and interrupt the opportunity, by interposition of different and cross accidents to serve other ends of Providence, no man easily is fond of wickedness, but he shall receive enough to ruin him. Indeed, Nero and Julian, both witty men and powerful, desired to have been magicians, and could not: and although, possibly, the devil would have corresponded with them, who yet were already his own, in all degrees of security; yet God permitted not that, lest they might have understood new ways of doing despite to martyrs and afflicted christians. And it concerns us not to tempt God, or invite a forward enemy; for as we are sure the devil is ready to promote all vicious desires, and bring them out to execution; so we are not sure, that God will not permit him: and he that desires to be undone, and cares not to be prevented by God's restraining grace, shall find his ruin in the folly of his own desires, and become wretched by his own election. Judas, hearing of this congregation of the priests, went and offered to betray his Lord, and made a covenant, the price of which was "thirty pieces of silver;" and he returned.

11. It is not intimated in the history of the life of Jesus, that Judas had any malice against the person of Christ; for when, afterwards, he saw the matter was to end in the death of his Lord, he repented: but a base and unworthy spirit of covetousness possessed him; and the relics of indignation, for missing the price of the ointment which the holy Magdalen had poured upon his feet, burnt in his bowels, with a secret, dark, melancholic fire, and made an eruption into an act, which all ages of the world could never parallel. They appointed him for hire thirty pieces, and some say, that every piece did in value equal ten ordinary current deniers; and so Judas was satisfied, by receiving the worth of the three hundred pence, at which he valued the nard pistic. But hereafter, let no christian be ashamed to be despised and undervalued; for he will hardly meet so great reproach, as to have so

disproportioned a price set upon his life, as was upon the holy Jesus. St. Mary Magdalen thought it not good enough to anneal his sacred feet; Judas thought it a sufficient price for his head: for covetousness aims at base and low purchases, whilst holy love is great and comprehensive as the bosom of heaven, and aims at nothing that is less than infinite. The love of God is a holy fountain, limpid and pure, sweet and salutary, lasting and eternal: the love of money is a vertiginous pool, sucking all into it to destroy it; it is troubled and uneven, giddy and unsafe, serving no end but its own, and that, also, in a restless and uneasy motion. The love of God spends itself upon him, to receive again the reflections of grace and benediction: the love of money spends all its desires upon itself, to purchase nothing but unsatisfying instruments of exchange, or supernumerary provisions, and ends in dissatisfaction, and emptiness of spirit, and a bitter curse. St. Mary Magdalen was defended by her Lord against calumny, and rewarded with an honourable mention to all ages of the church: besides the "unction from above," which she shortly after received, to consign her to crowns and sceptres: but Judas was described in the Scripture, the book of life, with the black character of death; he was disgraced to eternal ages, and presently after acted his own tragedy with a sad and ignoble death.

12. Now, all things being fitted, our blessed Lord sends two disciples to prepare the passover, that he might fulfil the law of Moses, and pass from thence to institutions evangelical, and then fulfil his sufferings. Christ gave them a sign to guide them to the house, "a man bearing a pitcher of water:" by which some, that delight in mystical significations, say was typified the sacrament of baptism: meaning, that although, by occasion of the paschal solemnity, the holy eucharist was first instituted, yet it was afterwards to be applied to practice according to the sense of this accident: only baptized persons were apt suscipients of the other more perfective rite, as the taking nutriment supposes persons born into the world, and within the common conditions of human nature. But, in the letter, it was an instance of the Divine omniscience, who could pronounce concerning accidents at distance, as if they were present: and yet also, like the provision of the colt to ride on, it was an instance of Providence, and security of all God's sons for their portion of temporals. Jesus had not a lamb of his own, and possibly no money in the bags to buy one: and yet Providence was his guide, and the charity of a good man was his *proveditore*, and he found excellent conveniences in the entertainments of a hospitable good man, as if he had dwelt in Ahab's ivory house, and had had the riches of Solomon, and the meat of his household.

THE PRAYER.

I.

O holy King of Sion, eternal Jesus, who, with great humility and infinite love, didst enter into the holy city, riding upon an ass, that thou mightest verify the predictions of the prophets, and give example of meekness, and of the gentle and paternal government which the eternal Father laid upon thy shoulders; be pleased, dearest Lord, to enter into my soul with triumph, trampling over all thine enemies: and give me grace to entertain thee with joy and adoration, with abjection of my own desires, with lopping off all my superfluous branches of a temporal condition, and spending them in the offices of charity and religion, and divesting myself of all my desires, laying them at thy holy feet, that I may bear the yoke and burden of the Lord with alacrity, with love, and the wonders of a satisfied and triumphant spirit. Lord, enter in, and take possession; and thou, to whose honour the very stones would give testimony, make my stony heart an instrument of thy praises; let me strew thy way with flowers of virtue, and the holy rosary of christian graces: and, by thy aid and example, let us also triumph over all our infirmities and hostilities, and then lay our victories at thy feet, and at last follow thee into thy heavenly Jerusalem with palms in our hands, and joy in our hearts, and eternal acclamations on our lips, rejoicing in thee, and singing hallelujahs in a happy eternity to thee, O holy King of Sion, eternal Jesus. Amen.

II.

O blessed and dear Lord, who wert pleased to permit thyself to be sold to the assemblies of evil persons for a vile price by one of thy own servants, for whom thou hadst done so great favours, and hadst designed a crown and a throne to him, and he turned himself into a sooty coal, and entered into the portion of evil angels; teach us to value thee above all the joys of men, to prize thee at an estimate beyond all the wealth of nature, to buy wisdom, and not to sell it, to part with all, that we may enjoy thee: and let no temptation abuse our understandings, no loss vex us into impatience, no frustration of hope fill us with indignation, no pressure of calamitous accidents make us angry at thee, the fountain of love and blessing, no covetousness transport us into the suburbs of hell, and the regions of sin; but make us to love thee as well as ever any creature loved thee, that we may never burn in any fires but of a holy love, nor sink in any inundation but what proceeds from penitential showers, and suffer no violence but of implacable desires to live with thee, and, when thou callest us, to suffer with thee, and for thee.

III.

Lord, let me never be betrayed by myself, or any violent accident and importunate temptation; let me never be sold for the vile price of temporal gain, or transient pleasure, or a pleasant dream; but, since thou hast bought me with a price, even then when thou wert sold thyself, let me never be separated from thy possession. I am thine,

bought with a price; Lord, save me; and in the day when thou bindest up thy jewels, remember, Lord, that I cost thee as dear as any, and therefore cast me not into the portion of Judas; but let me walk, and dwell, and bathe in the field of thy blood, and pass from hence, pure and sanctified, into the society of the elect apostles, receiving my part with them, and my lot in the communications of thy inheritance, O gracious Lord and dearest Saviour, Jesus. Amen.

Considerations upon the Washing of the Disciples' Feet by Jesus, and his Sermon of Humility.[a]

1. THE holy Jesus went now to eat his last paschal supper, and to finish the work of his legation, and to fulfil that part of the law of Moses in every of its smallest and most minute particularities, in which also the actions were significant of spiritual duties: which we may transfer from the letter to the spirit in our own instances, that as Jesus ate the paschal lamb with a staff in his hand, with his loins girt, with sandals on his feet, in great haste, with unleavened bread, and with bitter herbs: so we also should do all our services according to the signification of these symbols, leaning upon the cross of Jesus for a staff, and bearing the rod of his government, with loins girt with angelical chastity, with shoes on our feet, that so we may guard and have custody over our affections, and "be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace," eating in haste, as becomes persons "hungering and thirsting after righteousness," doing the work of the Lord zealously and fervently, without the leaven of malice and secular interest, with bitter herbs of self-denial and mortification of our sensual and inordinate desires. The sense and mystery of the whole act, with all its circumstances, is, That we obey all the sanctions of the Divine law, and that every part of our religion be pure and peaceable, chaste and obedient, confident in God and diffident in ourselves, frequent and zealous, humble and resigned, just and charitable; and there will not easily be wanting any just circumstance to hallow and consecrate the action.

2. When the holy Jesus had finished his last Mosaic rite, he descends to give example of the first fruit of evangelical graces; "he rises from supper, lays aside his garment" like a servant, and, with all the circumstances of an humble ministry, "washes the feet of his disciples,"[b] beginning at the first, St. Peter, until he came to Judas, the traitor; that we might, in one scheme, see a rare conjunction of charity and humility, of self-denial and indifferency, represented by a person glorious and great, their Lord and Master, sad and troubled. And he chose to wash their feet[c] rather than their head, that he might have the opportunity of a more humble posture, and a more apt signification of his charity. Thus God lays every thing aside, that he may serve his servants: heaven stoops to earth, and one abyss calls upon another, and the miseries of man, which were next to infinite, are excelled by a mercy equal to the immensity of God. And this washing of their feet, which was an accustomed civility and entertainment of honoured strangers at the beginning of their meal, Christ deferred to the end of the paschal supper, that it might be the preparatory to the second, which he intended should be festival to all the world. St. Peter was troubled that the hands of his Lord should wash his servants' feet, those hands which had opened the eyes of the blind, and cured lepers, and healed all diseases, and, when lift up to heaven, were omnipotent, and could restore life to dead and buried persons; he counted it a great indecency for him to suffer it; but it was no more than was necessary, for they had but lately been earnest in dispute for precedency; and it was of itself so apt to swell into tumour and inconvenience, that it was not to be cured but by some prodigy of example and miracle of humility, which the holy Jesus offered to them in this express, calling them to learn some great lesson; a lesson which God descended from heaven to earth, from riches to poverty, from essential innocence to the disreputation of a sinner, from a master to a servant, to learn us, that is, that we should esteem ourselves but just as we are, low, sinful, miserable, needy, and unworthy. It seems it is a great thing that man should come to have just and equal thoughts of himself, that God used such powerful arts to transmit this lesson, and engrave it in the spirits of men; and if the receipt fails, we are eternally lost in the mists of vanity, and enter into the condition of those angels, whom pride transformed and spoiled into the condition of devils; and upon consideration of this great example, Guericus, a good man, cried out, "Thou hast overcome, O Lord, thou hast overcome my pride; this example hath mastered me; I deliver myself up into thy hands, never to receive liberty or exaltation but in the condition of thy humblest servant."[d]

3. And to this purpose St. Bernard hath an affectionate and devout consideration, saying, "That some of the angels, as soon as they were created, had an ambition to become like God, and to aspire into the throne which God had appointed to the holy Jesus in eternal ages. When God created man, presently the devil rubbed his leprosy upon him, and he would needs be like God too, and Satan promised him that he should. As the evil angels would have been like to God in power and majesty, so man would have been like him in knowledge, and have imitated the wisdom of the eternal Father. But man had the fate of Gehazi; he would needs have the talent and garments of Lucifer, and he had also his plague; he lost paradise for his pride. And now, what might befit the Son of God to do, seeing man so lost, and God so zealous of his honour? I see (saith he) that, by occasion of me, the Father loses his creatures, for they have all aspired to be

[a] Ad Num. 16.

[b] Λοίσθιον ἐκ πρώτου μετανεύμενος ἄλλον ἀπ' ἄλλου,
Ἀρχόμενος Σίμωνος, ἕως ἰδίοιο φονῆος.—NONN.

[c] Idcirco pedes potiùs quàm manus et caput: quia in lavandis pedibus, et affectuosior est gestus humilitatis, et propinquior significatio charitatis, quâ nos lavat sanguine suo à peccatis nostris.—RUPERT.

[d] Quomodo non humiliabitur homo sub tam humili Deo?—S. BERNARD.

like me, and are fallen into the greatest infelicities. Behold, I will go towards man in such a form, that whosoever from henceforth would become like me, shall be so, and be a gainer by it. And for this cause the Son of God came from heaven, and made himself a poor humble person, and by all the actions of his life commented upon the present discourse: 'Learn of me, for I am meek and humble of heart.'"[e] Blessed be that mercy and bounty which moved Almighty God to condescend to that so great appetite we had of being like him; for now we may be like unto God, but it must be by humility, of which he hath given us an example powerful as miracles, and great as our own pride and misery.

4. And, indeed, our blessed Lord, knowing that examples are like maps and perfect schemes, in which the whole continent may at once be represented to the eye to all the purposes of art and benefit, did, in the latter end of his life, draw up the dispersions and larger harvest of his precepts, binding them in the bundle of great examples, and casting them into actions as into sums total: for so this act of washing the feet of his own ministers, and then dying for them, and for all his enemies, did preach the three great sums of evangelical perfection with an admirable energy and abbreviature; humility, and charity, and sufferings, being to christianity as the body, and the soul, and the spirit, are to the whole man. For no man brings a sad funeral into the theatre to make his spectators merry, nor can well preach chastity in the impurity of the bordelli, or persuade temperance when himself is full of wine and luxury,[f] and enters into the baths to boil his undigested meat, that he may return to his second supper, and breathes forth impure belchings together with his homily: a poor eremite, or a severely-living philosopher, into whose life his own precepts have descended, and his doctrine is mingled with his soul, mingles also effect and virtue with homilies, and incorporates his doctrine in the hearts of his disciples. And this the holy Jesus did in his own person, bearing the burden first upon his own shoulders, that we may, with better alacrity, undergo what our blessed Lord bears with us, and for us. But that we may the better understand what our blessed Lord designed to us in this lecture, let us consider the proper acts of humility which integrate the virtue.

5. The first is, "Christ's humble man thinks meanly of himself:" and there is great reason every man should. For his body is but rottenness and infirmity covered with a fair mantle, a dunghill overcast with snow: and if we consider sadly, that from trees and plants come oil, balsam, wine, spices, and aromatic odours, and that from the sinks of our body no such sweet or salutary emanations are observed, we may at least think it unreasonable to boast our beauty, which is nothing but a clear and well-coloured skin, which every thing in the world can spoil; or our strength, which an ague tames into the infirmities of a child, and in which we are excelled by a bull; or any thing of our body, which is nothing but an unruly servant of the soul, marked with characters of want and dependence, and begging help from all the elements, and, upon a little disturbance, growing troublesome to itself by its own impurities. And yet there is no reason in respect of the soul for any man to exalt himself above his brother; because all reasonable souls are equal; and that one is wise, and another is foolish or less learned, is by accident and extrinsic causes: God at first makes all alike; but an indisposed body, or an inopportune education, or evil customs, superinduce variety and difference. And if God discerns a man from his brother by distinction of gifts, it alters not the case; still the man hath nothing of himself that can call him excellent: it is as if a wall, upon which the sun reflects, should boast itself against another that stands in the shadow. Greater glory is to be paid to God for the discerning gifts; but to take any of it to ourselves, and rise higher than our brother, or advance our own opinion, is as if a man should be proud of being in debt, and think it the greater excellency that he is charged with heavier and more severe accounts.

6. This act consists not in declamations and forms of satire[g] against ourselves, saying, I am a miserable, sinful creature; I am proud, or covetous, or ignorant; for many men say so, that are not willing to be thought so. Neither is humility a virtue made up of wearing old clothes, or doing servile and mean employments by voluntary undertaking, or of sullen gestures, or demiss behaviour, and artifice of lowly expressions: for these may become snares to invite and catch at honour; and then they are collateral designs of pride, and direct actions of hypocrisy. But it consists in a true understanding of our own condition, and a separating our own nothing from the good we have received, and giving to God all the glory, taking to ourselves all the shame and dishonour due to our sinful condition. He that thinks himself truly miserable and vilified by sin, hates it perfectly; and he that knows himself to be nothing, cannot be exalted in himself: and whatsoever is besides these two extremes of a natural nothing and a superadded sin, must be those good things we have received, which, because they derive from God, must make all their returns thither. But this act is of greater difficulty in persons pious, full of gifts, and eminent in graces, who, being fellow-workers together with God, sometimes grow tacitly, and without notice, given to confide in themselves, and with some freer fancy ascribe too much of the good action to their own choice and diligence, and take up their crowns, which lie at the foot of the throne, and set them upon their own heads. For a sinner to desire to be esteemed a sinner, is no more humility, than it is for the son of a ploughman to confess his father; but, indeed, it is hard for a man to be cried up for a saint, to

[e] Matt. xi. 29.

[f] Turgidus hic epulis, atque albo ventre lavatur,
Gutture sulphureas lentè exhalante Mephites.
PERS. Sat. 3.

[g] Auferantur omnia figmenta verborum, cessent simulati gestus verum humilem patientia ostendit.—S. HIER.

walk upon the spire of glory, and to have no adherence or impure mixtures of vanity grow upon the outside of his heart. All men have not such heads as to walk in great heights, without giddiness and unsettled eyes: Lucifer, and many angels, walking upon the battlements of heaven, grew top-heavy, and fell into the state of devils; and the father of the christian eremites, St. Antony,[h] was frequently attempted by the devil, and solicited to vanity, the devil usually making fantastic noises to be heard before him, "Make room for the saint and servant of God;" but the good man knew Christ's voice to be a low base of humility, and that it was the noise of hell that invited to complacencies and vanity; and therefore took the example of the apostles, who, in the midst of the greatest reputation and spiritual advancements, were dead unto the world, and seemed to live in a state of separation. For, the true stating our own question, and knowing ourselves, must needs represent us set in the midst of infinite imperfections, laden with sins, choked with the noises of a polluted conscience, persons fond of trifles, neglecting objects fit for wise men, full of ingratitude, and all such things, which in every man else we look upon as scars and deformities, and which use to single out, and take one alone as sufficient to disgrace and disrepute all the excellencies of our neighbour; but, if we would esteem them with the same severity in ourselves, and remember with how many such objections our little felicities are covered, it would make us charitable in our censures, compassionate and gentle to others, apt to excuse, and as ready to support their weaknesses, and in all accidents and chances to ourselves to be content and thankful, as knowing the worst of poverty and inconvenience to be a mercy, and a splendid fortune, in respect of our demerits. I have read, that "when the duke of Candia had voluntarily entered into the incommodities of a religious poverty and retirement, he was one day spied and pitied by a lord of Italy, who, out of tenderness, wished him to be more careful and nutritive of his person. The good duke answered, 'Sir, be not troubled, and think not that I am ill provided of conveniences; for I send a harbinger before, who makes my lodgings ready, and takes care that I be royally entertained.' The lord asked him, who was his harbinger? He answered, 'The knowledge of myself, and the consideration of what I deserve for my sins, which is eternal torments; and when, with this knowledge, I arrive at my lodging, how unprovided soever I find it, methinks it is ever better than I deserve.'" The sum of this meditation consists in believing, and considering, and reducing to practice those thoughts, that we are nothing of ourselves, that we have nothing of our own, that we have received more than ever we can discharge, that we have added innumerable sins, that we can call nothing our own but such things which we are ashamed to own, and such things which are apt to ruin us. If we do nothing contrary to the purpose and hearty persuasion of such thoughts, then we think meanly of ourselves; and, in order to it, we may make use of this advice, to let no day pass without some sad recollection and memory of somewhat which may put us to confusion, and mean opinion of ourselves; either call to mind the worst of our sins, or the indiscreetest of our actions, or the greatest of our shame, or the uncivilest of our affronts—any thing to make us descend lower, and kiss the foot of the mountain. And this consideration, applied also to every tumour of spirit as soon as it rises, may possibly allay it.

7. Secondly, "Christ's humble man bears contumelies evenly and sweetly, and desires not to be honoured by others;"[i] he chooses to do those things that deserve honour and a fair name; but then eats not of those fruits himself, but transmits them to the use of others and the glories of God. This is a certain consequence of the other; for he that truly disesteems himself, is content that others should do so too; and he who, with some regret and impatience, hears himself scorned or undervalued, hath not acquired the grace of humility: which Serapion, in Cassian, noted to a young person, who perpetually accused himself with the greatest semblances of humility, but was impatient when Serapion reproved him.[k] "Did you hope that I would have praised your humility, and have reputed you for a saint? It is a strange perverseness, to desire others to esteem highly of you for that in which to yourself you seem most unworthy." He that inquires into the faults of his own actions, requiring them that saw them to tell him in what he did amiss, not to learn the fault, but to engage them to praise it, cozens himself into pride, and makes humility the instrument. And a man would be ashamed, if he were told that he used stratagems for praise; but so glorious a thing is humility, that pride, to hide her own shame, puts on the other's vizor; it being more to a proud man's purposes to seem humble, than to be so. And such was the cynic whom Lucian derided, because that one searching his scrip, in expectation to have found in it mouldy bread, or old rags, he discovered a bale of dice, a box of perfumes, and the picture of his fair mistress. Carisianus walked in his gown in the feast of Saturn, and, when all Rome was let loose in wantonness, he put on the long robe of a senator, and a severe person; and yet nothing was more lascivious than he.[l] But the devil, pride, prevails sometimes upon the spirit of lust. Humility neither directly, nor by consequence, seeks for praise, and suffers it not to rest upon its own pavement, but it reflects it all upon God, and receives all lessenings and instruments of affront and disgrace, that mingle not with sin or indecencies, more willingly than panegyrics. When others have

[h] S. Hier. in Vita S. Anton.

[i] Ama nesciri et pro nihilo reputari.—Gerson.

[k] Appetere de humilitate laudem humilitatis non est virtus, sed subversio. Quid enim perversum magis aut indignius, quam ut indè velis haberi melior, unde tibi videris deterior.—S. Bernard.

Est qui nequiter humiliat se, et interiora ejus sunt plena dolo.—Ecclus. xii. 11.

[l] Nil lascivius est Carisiano;
In Saturnalibus ambulat togatus.—Mart.

their desires, thou not thine; the sayings of another are esteemed, thine slighted; others ask and obtain, thou beggest and art refused; they are cried up, thou disgraced and hissed at; and, while they are employed, thou art laid by, as fit for nothing; or an unworthy person commands thee, and rules thee like a tyrant; he reproves thee, suspects thee, reviles thee; canst thou bear this sweetly, and entertain the usage as thy just portion, and as an accident most fit and proper to thy person and condition? Dost thou not raise theatres to thyself, and take delight in the suppletories of thy own good opinion, and the flatteries of such whom thou endearest to thee, that their praising thee should heal the wounds of thine honour by an imaginary and fantastic restitution? He that is not content and patient in affronts, hath not yet learned humility of the holy Jesus.

8. Thirdly, As Christ's humble man is content in affronts, and not greedy of praise; so, when it is presented to him, he takes no contentment in it; and, if it be easy to want praise when it is denied, yet it is harder not to be delighted with it when it is offered. But there is much reason that we should put restraints upon ourselves, lest, if we be praised without desert, we find a greater judgment of God;[m] or, if we have done well, and received praise for it, we lose all our reward, which God hath deposited for them that "receive" not "their good things in this life." For "as silver is tried in the melter, and gold in the crucible, so is a man tried in the mouth of him that praises him:" that is, he is either clarified from his dross, by looking upon the praise as a homily to teach, and an instrument to invite his duty; or else, if he be already pure, he is consolidated, strengthened in the sobriety of his spirit, and retires himself closer into the strengths and securities of humility. Nay, this step of humility uses, in very holy persons, to be enlarged to a delight in affronts and disreputation in the world. "Now I begin to be Christ's disciple," said Ignatius the martyr, when, in his journey to Rome, he suffered perpetual revilings and abuse. St. Paul "rejoiced in his infirmities and reproach:" and all the apostles at Jerusalem went from the tribunal, "rejoicing that they were esteemed worthy to suffer shame for the name of Jesus."[n] This is an excellent condition and degree of humility. But I choose to add one that is less, but, in all persons, necessary.

9. Fourthly: "Christ's humble man is careful never to speak any thing that may redound to his own praise," unless it be with a design of charity or duty, that either God's glory, or the profit of his neighbour, be concerned in it; but never speaking with a design to be esteemed learned or honourable. St. Arsenius had been tutor to three Cæsars, Theodosius, Arcadius, and Honorius; but afterwards, when he became religious, no word escaped him that might represent and tell of his former greatness: and it is observable, concerning St. Jerome, that although he was of noble extraction, yet, in all his own writings, there is not the smallest intimation of it. This I desire to be understood only to the sense and purposes of humility, and that we have no designs of vanity and fancy in speaking learnedly, or recounting our exterior advantages; but if either the profit of our brother, or the glory of God, if either there be piety or charity in the design, it is lawful to publish all those excellencies with which God hath distinguished us from others. The young marquess of Castilion, being to do public exercise in his course of philosophy, made it a case of conscience whether he were bound to dispute his best, fearing lest vanity might transport him in the midst of those praises, which his collegiates might give him. It was an excellent consideration in the young gentleman: but, in actions civil and humane, since the danger is not so immediate, and a little complacency, becoming the instrument of virtue, and encouragement of studies, may, with like care, be referred to God, as the giver, and celebrate his praises; he might, with more safety, have done his utmost, it being, in some sense, a duty to encourage others, to give account of our graces and our labours, and all the appendant vanity may quickly be suppressed. A good name may give us opportunity of persuading others to the duty, especially in an age in which men choose their doctrines by the men that preach them: and St. Paul used his liberty when he was zealous for his Corinthian disciples, but restrained himself when it began to make reflections upon his own spirit. But although a good name be necessary, and in order to such good ends whither it may serve, it is lawful to desire it; yet a great name, and a pompous honour, and secular greatness, hath more danger in it to ourselves, than, ordinarily, it can have of benefit to others; and although a man may use the greatest honours to the greatest purposes, yet ordinary persons may not safely desire them: because it will be found very hard to have such mysterious and abstracted considerations, as to separate all our proper interest from the public end. To which I add this consideration, That the contempt of honour, and the instant pursuit of humility, is more effective of the ghostly benefit of others, than honours and great dignities can be, unless it be rarely and very accidentally.

10. If we need any new incentives to the practice of this grace, I can say no more, but that humility is truth, and pride is a lie: that the one glorifies God, the other dishonours him; humility makes men like angels, pride makes angels to become devils; that pride is folly, humility is the temper of a holy spirit and excellent wisdom; that humility is the way to glory, pride to ruin and confusion: humility makes saints on earth, pride undoes them: humility beatifies the saints in heaven, and "the elders throw their crowns at the foot of the throne;" pride disgraces a man among all the societies of earth: God loves one, and Satan solicits

[m] Tantâ enim consideratione trepidat (*David,*) nè aut de his in quibus laudatur, et non sunt, majus Dei judicium inveniat: aut de his in quibus laudatur, et sunt, competens præmium perdat.—S. GREG.

[n] Acts v. 41.

the cause of the other, and promotes his own interest in it most of all. And there is no one grace, in which Christ propounded himself imitable so signally as in this of meekness and humility: for the enforcing of which he undertook the condition of a servant, and a life of poverty, and a death of disgrace; and washed the feet of his disciples, and even of Judas himself, that his action might be turned into a sermon to preach this duty, and to make it as eternal as his own story.

THE PRAYER.

O holy and eternal Jesus, who wert pleased to lay aside the glories and incomprehensible majesty, which clothed thy infinity from before the beginning of creatures, and didst put on a cloud upon thy brightness, and wert invested with the impure and imperfect broken robe of human nature, and didst abate those splendours which broke through the veil, commanding devils not to publish thee, and men not to proclaim thy excellencies, and the apostles not to reveal those glories of thine, which they discovered encircling thee, upon mount Tabor, in thy transfiguration, and didst, by perpetual homilies, and symbolical mysterious actions, as with deep characters, engrave humility into the spirits of thy disciples, and the discipline of christianity; teach us to approach near to these, thy glories, which thou hast so covered with a cloud, that we might, without amazement, behold thy excellencies; make us to imitate thy gracious condescensions; take from us all vanity and fantastic complacencies in our own persons or actions; and, when there arises a reputation consequent to the performance of any part of our duty, make us to reflect the glory upon thee, suffering nothing to adhere to our own spirits but shame at our own imperfection, and thankfulness to thee for all thy assistances: let us never seek the praise of men from unhandsome actions, from flatteries and unworthy discourses, nor entertain the praise with delight, though it proceed from better principles; but fear and tremble, lest we deserve punishment, or lose a reward, which thou hast deposited for all them that seek thy glory, and despise their own, that they may imitate the example of their Lord. Thou, O Lord, didst triumph over sin and death; subdue, also, my proud understanding, and my prouder affections, and bring me under thy yoke; that I may do thy work, and obey my superiors, and be a servant of all my brethren in their necessities, and esteem myself inferior to all men by a deep sense of my own unworthiness, and in all things may obey thy laws, and conform to thy precedents, and enter into thine inheritance, O holy and eternal Jesus. Amen.

DISCOURSE XIX.

Of the Institution and Reception of the holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

1. As the sun among the stars, and man among the sublunary creatures, is the most eminent and noble, the prince of the inferiors, and their measure, or their guide; so is this action among all the instances of religion: it is the most perfect and consummate, it is an union of mysteries, and a consolidation of duties; it joins God and man, and confederates all the societies of men in mutual complexions, and the entertainments of an excellent charity; it actually performs all that could be necessary for man, and it presents to man as great a thing as God could give; for it is impossible any thing should be greater than himself. And when God gave his Son to the world, it could not be but he should give us all things else: and, therefore, this blessed sacrament is a consigning us to all felicities, because, after a mysterious and ineffable manner, we receive him, who is light and life, the fountain of grace, and the sanctifier of our secular comforts, and the author of holiness and glory. But as it was at first, so it hath been ever since; "Christ came into the world, and the world knew him not:" so Christ hath remained in the world, by the communication of this sacrament, and yet he is not rightly understood, and less truly valued. But Christ may say to us, as once to the woman of Samaria, "Woman, if thou didst know the gift of God, and who it is that speaks to thee, thou wouldst ask him:" so, if we were so wise, or so fortunate, to know the excellency of this gift of the Lord, it would fill us full of wonder and adoration, joy and thankfulness, great hopes and actual felicities, making us heirs of glory, by the great additions and present increment of grace.

2. "After supper Jesus took bread, and blessed it," and made it to be a heavenly gift: he gave them "bread," and told them it was "his body;" that body, which was broken for the redemption of man, for the salvation of the world. St. Paul calls it "bread," even after consecration; "the bread which we break, is it not the communication of the body of Christ?"[a] So that, by Divine faith, we are taught to express our belief of this mystery, in these words: The bread, when it is consecrated and made sacramental, is the body of our Lord; and the fraction and distribution of it is the communication of that body, which died for us upon the cross. He that doubts of either of the parts of this proposition, must either think Christ was not able to verify his word, and to make "bread," by his benediction, to become to us to be "his body;" or that St. Paul did not well interpret and understand this mystery, when he called it "bread." Christ reconciles them both, calling himself "the bread of life:" and if we be offended at it, because it is "alive," and therefore less apt to become food, we are invited to it because it is "bread;" and if the sacrament, to others, seem

[a] 1 Cor. x. 16.

less mysterious, because it is "bread," we are heightened in our faith and reverence, because it is "life:" the bread of the sacrament is the life of our soul, and the body of our Lord is now conveyed to us, by being the bread of the sacrament. And if we consider how easy it is to faith, and how impossible it seems to curiosity, we shall be taught confidence and modesty; a resigning our understanding to the voice of Christ and his apostles, and yet expressing our own articles, as Christ did, in indefinite significations. And, possibly, it may not well consist with our duty to be inquisitive into the secrets of the kingdom, which we see, by plain event, hath divided the church almost as much as the sacrament hath united it, and which can only serve the purposes of the school, and of evil men, to make questions for that, and factions for these, but promote not the ends of a holy life, obedience, or charity.

3. Some so observe the literal sense of the words, that they understand them also in a natural: some so alter them, by metaphors and preternatural significations, that they will not understand them at all in a proper. We see it, we feel it, we taste it, and we smell it to be bread; and, by philosophy, we are led into a belief of that substance, whose accidents these are, as we are to believe that to be fire, which burns, and flames, and shines: but Christ also affirmed, concerning it, "This is my body;" and if faith can create an assent as strong as its object is infallible, or can be as certain in its conclusion, as sense is certain in its apprehensions, we must, at no hand, doubt but that it is Christ's body. Let the sense of that be what it will, so that we believe those words, and (whatsoever that sense is which Christ intended) that we no more doubt in our faith than we do in our sense; then our faith is not reprovable. It is hard to do so much violence to our sense, as not to think it "bread;" but it is more unsafe to do so much violence to our faith, as not to believe it to be "Christ's body." But it would be considered, that no interest of religion, no saying of Christ, no reverence of opinion, no sacredness of the mystery, is disavowed, if we believe both what we hear and what we see. He that believes it to be "bread," and yet verily to be "Christ's body," is only tied also, by implication, to believe God's omnipotence, that he, who affirmed it, can also verify it. And they, that are forward to believe the change of substance, can intend no more, but that it be believed verily to be the body of our Lord. And if they think it impossible to reconcile its being bread with the verity of being Christ's body, let them remember that themselves are put to more difficulties, and to admit of more miracles, and to contradict more sciences, and to refuse the testimony of sense, in affirming the special manner of transubstantiation. And, therefore, it were safer to admit the words in their first sense, in which we shall no more be at war with reason, nor so much with sense, and not at all with faith.[b] And, for persons of the contradictory persuasion, who, to avoid the natural sense, affirm it only to be figurative, since their design is only to make this sacrament to be Christ's body in the sense of faith, and not of philosophy, they may remember, that its being really present does not hinder but that all that reality may be spiritual; and if it be Christ's body, so it be not affirmed such in a natural sense and manner, it is still only the object of faith and spirit; and if it be affirmed only to be spiritual, there is then no danger to faith in admitting the words of Christ's institution, "This is my body." I suppose it to be a mistake, to think whatsoever is real must be natural; and it is no less to think spiritual to be only figurative: that is too much, and this is too little. Philosophy and faith may well be reconciled; and whatsoever objection can invade this union may be cured by modesty. And if we profess we understand not the manner of this mystery, we say no

[b] Acceptum panem et distributum discipulis corpus suum illum fecit, Hoc est corpus meum, dicendo, id est, figura corporis mei. Figura autem non fuisset, nisi veritatis esset corpus.—TERTUL. lib. iv. contr. Marcion. c. 40.

Quòd si quicquid ingreditur in os, in ventrem abit, et in secessum ejicitur, et ille cibus qui sanctificatur per verbum Dei perque obsecrationem, juxta id quod habet materiale, in ventrem abit, et in secessum ejicitur, &c. et hæc quidem de typico symbolicoque corpore.—ORIGEN. in c. 15. S. Matt.

Τὰ σύμβολα τοῦ σώματος τοῦ δεσποτικοῦ καὶ τοῦ αἵματος μετὰ τὴν ἐπίκλησιν ἐπιβάλλεται, καὶ ἕτερα γίνεται, ἀλλ' οὐκ οἰκείας ἐξίσταται φύσεως· μένει γὰρ ἐπὶ τῆς προτέρας οὐσίας, καὶ τοῦ σχήματος, καὶ τοῦ εἴδους, καὶ ὁρατά ἐστι, καὶ ἁπτά, οἷα καὶ πρότερον ἦν.—THEOD. Dial. 2.

Idem disputando contra Eutychianos, docentes humanam Christi naturam conversum iri in divinam, eodem scil. modo quo panis in corpus Christi, ait, Certè eodem scil. modo, hoc est, nullo.

Ὁ δὲ σωτὴρ ὁ ἡμέτερος, &c. Our blessed Saviour, who hath called himself the living Bread and a Vine, hath also honoured the visible signs with the title and appellation of his Body and Blood, not changing their nature, but adding to nature, grace.—See the Dialog. called "The Immovable."

Sacramenta quæ sumimus corporis et sanguinis Christi, divina res est. Propter quod per eadem Divinæ efficimur consortes naturæ, et tamen non desinit esse substantia vel natura panis et vini; et certè imago et similitudo corporis et sanguinis Christi in actione mysteriorum celebrantur.—P. GELASIUS. libr contr. Nestorium et Eutychetem.

Non quòd propriè corpus ejus sit panis, et poculum sanguis; sed quòd mysterium corporis ejus sanguinisque contineant.—FACUNDUS.

Si nam sacramenta quandam similitudinem non haberent earum rerum, quarum sunt sacramenta, omnino sacramenta non essent: ex hac autem similitudine plerumque ipsarum rerum nomina accipiunt.—S. AUG. Epist. 23.

Quod ab omnibus appellatur sacrificium, signum est veri sacrificii, in quo caro Christi post assumptionem per sacramentum memoriæ celebratur.—Idem contr. Faustum Manich. lib. x. c. 2.

Apud Gratianum de Consecrat. dist. 2. c. 48, citatur Augustinus in libro Sententiarum Prosperi in hæc verba: "Sicut ergò cœlestis panis, qui Christi caro est, suo modo vocatur corpus Christi, cùm reverâ sit sacramentum corporis Christi, illius, viz. quod visibile, quod palpabile, mortale in cruce positum est; vocaturque ipsa immolatio carnis, quæ sacerdotis manibus fit Christi passio, mors, crucifixio, non rei veritate, sed significante mysterio: sic sacramentum fidei quod baptismus intelligitur, fides est."

Si ergò hæc vasa sanctificata ad privatos usus transferre sic periculosum est, in quibus non est verum corpus Christi, sed mysterium corporis ejus continetur; quantò magis vasa corporis nostri, &c.—S. CHRYSOST. Opere Imperf. in Matt.

Sicut nam antequam sanctificetur panis, panem nominamus, divinâ autem illum sanctificante gratiâ, mediante sacerdote, liberatus quidem est ab appellatione panis, dignus autem habitus est Dominici corporis appellatione, etiamsi natura panis in eo permansit, &c.—Idem in Epist. ad Cæsarium, in Biblioth. Pp. Colon. 1618.

more but that it is a mystery; and if it had been necessary we should have construed it into the most latent sense, Christ himself would have given a clavis, and taught the church to unlock so great a secret. Christ said, "This is my body, this is my blood:" St. Paul said, "The bread of blessing that we break is the communication of the body of Christ, and the chalice which we bless is the communication of the blood of Christ;"[c] and "We are all one body, because we eat of one bread."[d] One proposition, as well as the other, is the matter of faith, and the latter of them is also of sense; one is as literal as the other: and he that distinguishes in his belief, as he may place the impropriety upon which part he please, and either say it is improperly called "bread," or improperly called "Christ's body;" so he can have nothing to secure his proposition from error, or himself from boldness, in decreeing, concerning mysteries, against the testimonies of sense, or beyond the modesty and simplicity of christian faith. Let us love and adore the abyss of Divine wisdom and goodness, and entertain the sacrament with just and holy receptions; and then we shall receive all those fruits of it, which an earnest disputer, or a peremptory dogmatizer, whether he happen right or wrong, hath no warrant to expect upon the interest of his opinion.

4. In the institution of this sacrament, Christ manifested, first, his almighty power; secondly, his infinite wisdom; and, thirdly, his unspeakable charity. First, his power is manifest, in making the symbols to be the instruments of conveying himself to the spirit of the receiver: he nourishes the soul with bread, and feeds the body with a sacrament; he makes the body spiritual, by his graces there ministered, and makes the spirit to be united to his body, by a participation of the Divine nature. In the sacrament, that body which is reigning in heaven, is exposed upon the table of blessing; and his body, which was broken for us, is now broken again, and yet remains impassible. Every consecrated portion of bread and wine does exhibit Christ entirely to the faithful receiver; and yet Christ remains one, while he is wholly ministered in ten thousand portions. So long as we call these mysterious, and make them intricate, to exercise our faith, and to represent the wonder of the mystery, and to increase our charity; our being inquisitive into the abyss can have no evil purposes. God hath instituted the rite in visible symbols, to make the secret grace as presential and discernible as it might; that, by an instrument of sense, our spirits might be accommodated, as with an exterior object, to produce an internal act. But it is the prodigy of a miraculous power, by instruments so easy, to produce effects so glorious. This, then, is the object of wonder and adoration.

5. Secondly: And this effect of power does also remark the Divine wisdom, who hath ordained such symbols; which not only, like spittle and clay toward the curing blind eyes, proclaim an almighty power, but they are apposite and proper to signify a duty, and become to us like the word of life; and from bread they turn into a homily. For, therefore, our wisest Master hath appointed bread and wine, that we may be corporally united to him; that as the symbols, becoming nutriment, are turned into the substance of our bodies; so Christ, being the food of our souls, should assimilate us, making us partakers of the Divine nature. It also tells us, that from hence we derive life and holy motion; "for in him we live, and move, and have our being." He is the staff of our life, and the light of our eyes, and the strength of our spirit; he is the viand for our journey, and the antepast of heaven. And because this holy mystery was intended to be a sacrament of union, that lesson is morally represented in the symbols; that as the salutary juice is expressed from many clusters running into one chalice, and the bread is a mass made of many grains of wheat; so we also (as the apostle infers from hence, himself observing the analogy) should "be one bread and one body, because we partake of that one bread." And it were to be wished, that from hence, also, all christians would understand a signification of another duty, and that they would often communicate; as remembering that the soul may need a frequent ministration, as well as the body its daily proportion. This consideration of the Divine wisdom is apt to produce reverence, humility, and submission of our understanding, to the immensity of God's unsearchable abysses.

6. Thirdly: But the story of the love of our dearest Lord is written in largest characters; who not only was at that instant busy in doing man the greatest good, even then when man was contriving his death and his dishonour; but contrived to represent his bitter passion to us, without any circumstances of horror, in symbols of pleasure and delight; that "we may taste and see how gracious our Lord is," who would not transmit the record of his passion to us in any thing that might trouble us. No love can be greater than that, which is so beatifical as to bestow the greatest good; and no love can be better expressed than that which, although it is productive of the greatest blessings, yet is curious also to observe the smallest circumstances. And not only both these, but many other circumstances and arguments of love, concur in the holy sacrament. 1. It is a tenderness of affection that ministers wholesome physic, with arts and instruments of pleasure: and such was the charity of our Lord, who brings health to us in a golden chalice; life, not in the bitter drugs of Egypt, but in spirits and quintessences; giving us apples of paradise, at the same time yielding food, and health, and pleasure. 2. Love desires to do all good to its beloved object; and that is the greatest love, which gives us the greatest blessings: and the sacrament, therefore, is the argument of his greatest love; for in it we receive the honey, and the honey-comb; the paschal lamb, with his bitter herbs; Christ,

[c] 1 Cor. x. 16, 17.

[d] Chrysost. notat Apostolum non dixisse panem esse μετοχὴν, sed κοινωνίαν τοῦ σώματος Χριστοῦ, ut indicaret ita participari corpus Domini, ut fiant unum participans et res participata, sicut verbum et Dei caro. Ὁ μετέχων partem aliquam sibi vindicat, ὁ κοινωνῶν totius particeps est.

with all his griefs, and his passion, with all the salutary effects of it. 3. Love desires to be remembered, and to have his object in perpetual representment: and this sacrament Christ designed to that purpose, that he, who is not present to our eyes, might always be present to our spirits. 4. Love demands love again; and to desire to be beloved, is, of itself, a great argument of love: and as God cannot give us a greater blessing than his love, which is himself, with an excellency of relation to us superadded; so what greater demonstration of it can he make to us, than to desire us to love him, with as much earnestness and vehemency of desire, as if we were that to him which he is essentially to us, the Author of our being and our blessing? 5. And yet, to consummate this love, and represent it to be the greatest and most excellent, the holy Jesus hath in this sacrament designed, that we should be united in our spirits with him, incorporated to his body, partake of his Divine nature, and communicate in all his graces; and love hath no expression beyond this, that it desires to be united unto its object. So that what Moses said to the men of Israel, "What nation is so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is, in all things for which we call upon him?" we can enlarge in the meditation of this holy sacrament: for now the Lord our God calls upon us, not only to be nigh unto him, but to be all one with him; not only as he was, in the incarnation, flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone, but also to communicate, in spirit, in grace, in nature, in Divinity itself.

7. Upon the strength of the premises, we may sooner take an estimate of the graces which are conveyed to us, in the reception and celebration of this holy sacrament and sacrifice. For, as it is a commemoration and representment of Christ's death, so it is a commemorative sacrifice: as we receive the symbols and the mystery, so it is a sacrament. In both capacities, the benefit is next to infinite. First: for whatsoever Christ did at the institution, the same he commanded the church to do, in remembrance and repeated rites; and himself also does the same thing in heaven for us, making perpetual intercession for his church, the body of his redeemed ones, by representing to his Father his death and sacrifice. There he sits, a High Priest continually, and offers still the same one perfect sacrifice; that is, still represents it as having been once finished and consummate, in order to perpetual and never-failing events. And this, also, his ministers do on earth; they offer up the same sacrifice to God, the sacrifice of the cross, by prayers, and a commemorating rite and representment, according to his holy institution. And as all the effects of grace and the titles of glory were purchased for us on the cross, and the actual mysteries of redemption perfected on earth, but are applied to us, and made effectual to single persons and communities of men, by Christ's intercession in heaven; so also they are promoted by acts of duty and religion here on earth, that we may be "workers together with God," (as St. Paul expresses it,[e]) and, in virtue of the eternal and all-sufficient sacrifice, may offer up our prayers and our duty; and by representing that sacrifice, may send up, together with our prayers, an instrument of their graciousness and acceptation. The funerals of a deceased friend are not only performed at his first interring, but in the monthly minds and anniversary commemorations; and our grief returns upon the sight of a picture, or upon any instance which our dead friend desired us to preserve as his memorial: we "celebrate and exhibit the Lord's death," in sacrament and symbol; and this is that great express, which, when the church offers to God the Father, it obtains all those blessings which that sacrifice purchased. Themistocles snatched up the son of king Admetus, and held him between himself and death, to mitigate the rage of the king, and prevailed accordingly. Our very holding up the Son of God, and representing him to his Father, is the doing an act of mediation and advantage to ourselves, in the virtue and efficacy of the Mediator. As Christ is a priest in heaven for ever, and yet does not sacrifice himself afresh, nor yet without a sacrifice could he be a priest; but, by a daily ministration and intercession, represents his sacrifice to God, and offers himself as sacrificed: so he does upon earth, by the ministry of his servants; he is offered to God, that is, he is, by prayers and the sacrament, represented or "offered up to God, as sacrificed;" which, in effect, is a celebration of his death, and the applying it to the present and future necessities of the church, as we are capable, by a ministry like to his in heaven. It follows, then, that the celebration of this sacrifice be, in its proportion,[f] an instrument of applying the proper sacrifice to all the purposes which it first designed. It is ministerially, and by application, an instrument propitiatory; it is eucharistical, it is an homage, and an act of adoration; and it is impetratory, and obtains for us, and for the whole church, all the benefits of the sacrifice, which is now celebrated and applied; that is, as this rite is the remembrance and ministerial celebration of Christ's sacrifice, so it is destined to do honour to God, to express the homage and duty of his servants, to acknowledge his supreme dominion, to give him thanks and worship, to beg pardon, blessings, and supply of all our needs. And its profit is enlarged, not only to the persons celebrating, but to all to whom they design it, according to the nature of sacrifices and prayers, and all such solemn actions of religion.

8. Secondly: If we consider this, not as the act and ministry of ecclesiastical persons, but as the duty of the whole church communicating; that is, as it is a sacrament, so it is like the springs of Eden, from whence issue many rivers, or the trees of celestial Jerusalem, bearing various kinds of fruit. For whatsoever was offered in the sacrifice, is given in the sacrament; and whatsoever the testament bequeaths, the holy mysteries dispense. 1. "He

[e] 2 Cor. vi. 1.

[f] Iste calix, benedictione solenni sacratus, ad totius hominis vitam salutemque proficit; simul medicamentum et holocaustum, ad sanandas infirmitates et purgandas iniquitates, existens.—S. CYP. de Cœnâ Dom.

that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him;"[g] Christ in his temple and his resting-place, and the worthy communicant in sanctuary and a place of protection: and every holy soul having feasted at his table, may say, as St. Paul, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."[h] So that, "to live is Christ:"[i] "Christ is our life,"[k] and he dwells in the body and the spirit of every one that eats Christ's flesh and drinks his blood. Happy is that man that sits at the table of angels, that puts his hand into the dish with the King of all the creatures, and feeds upon the eternal Son of God; joining things below with things above, heaven with earth, life with death; "that mortality might be swallowed up of life," and sin be destroyed by the inhabitation of its greatest conqueror. And now I need not enumerate any particulars: since the Spirit of God hath ascertained us, that Christ enters into our hearts, and takes possession, and abides there; that we are made temples and celestial mansions; that we are all one with our Judge, and with our Redeemer; that our Creator is bound unto his creature with bonds of charity, which nothing can dissolve, unless our own hands break them; that man is united with God, and our weakness is fortified by his strength, and our miseries wrapped up in the golden leaves of glory. 2. Hence it follows, that the sacrament is an instrument of reconciling us to God, and taking off the remanent guilt and stain, and obligations of our sins. "This is the blood that was shed for you, for the remission of sins. For there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." And such are all they who worthily eat the flesh of Christ; by receiving him, they more and more receive remission of sins, redemption, sanctification, wisdom, and certain hopes of glory. For as the soul, touching and united to the flesh of Adam, contracts the stain of original misery and imperfection; so much the rather shall the soul, united to the flesh of Christ, receive pardon and purity, and all those blessed emanations, from our union with the second Adam. But this is not to be understood, as if the first beginnings of our pardon were in the holy communion; for then a man might come, with his impurities along with him, and lay them on the holy table, to stain and pollute so bright a presence. No; first, repentance must "prepare the ways of the Lord:" and, in this holy rite, those words of our Lord are verified, "He that is justified, let him be justified still;" that is, here he may receive the increase of grace; and as it grows, so sin dies, and we are reconciled by nearer unions and approximations to God.

9. Thirdly: The holy sacrament is the pledge of glory and the earnest of immortality;[l] for when we have received him who hath "overcome death, and henceforth dies no more," he becomes to us like the tree of life in paradise; and the consecrated symbols are like the seeds of an eternal duration, springing up in us to eternal life, nourishing our spirits with grace, which is but the prologue and the infancy of glory, and differs from it only as a child from a man. But God first raised up his Son to life, and by giving him to us, hath also consigned us to the same state; for "our life is hid with Christ, in God."[m] "When we lay down, and cast aside the impurer robes of flesh, they are then but preparing for glory; and if, by the only touch of Christ, bodies were redintegrate and restored to natural perfections; how shall not we live for ever, who eat his flesh and drink his blood?" It is the discourse of St. Cyril.[n] Whatsoever the Spirit can convey to the body of the church, we may expect from this sacrament; for as the Spirit is the instrument of life and action, so the blood of Christ is the conveyance of his Spirit. And let all the mysterious places of holy Scripture, concerning the effects Christ communicated in the blessed sacrament, be drawn together in one scheme, we cannot but observe, that, although they are so expressed as that their meaning may seem intricate and involved, yet they cannot be drawn to any meaning at all, but it is as glorious in its sense as it is mysterious in the expression: and the more intricate they are, the greater is their purpose; no words being apt and proportionate to signify this spiritual secret, and excellent effects of the Spirit. A veil is drawn before all these testimonies, because the people were not able to behold the glory which they cover with their curtain; and "Christ dwelling in us," and "giving us his flesh to eat, and his blood to drink;" and "the hiding of our life with God," and "the communion of the body of Christ," and "Christ being our life," are such secret glories, that, as the fruition of them is the portion of the other world, so also is the full perception and understanding of them: for, therefore, God appears to us in a cloud, and his glories in a veil; that we, understanding more of it by its concealment than we can by its open face, which is too bright for our weak eyes, may, with more piety, also entertain the greatness, by these indefinite and mysterious significations, than we can by plain and direct intuitions; which, like the sun in a direct ray, enlightens the object, but confounds the organ.

10. I should but in other words describe the same glories, if I should add, That this holy sacrament does enlighten the spirit of man, and clarify it with spiritual discernings; and as he was to the two disciples at Emmaus, so also to other faithful people, "Christ is known in the breaking of bread;" that it is a great defence against the hostilities of our ghostly enemies,[o] this holy bread being, like the

[g] John vi. 56.
[h] Gal. ii. 20.
[i] Phil. i. 21.
[k] Col. iii. 4.
[l] Ἀθανασίας φάρμακον.—S. IGNAT. Ep. ad Ephes.
Spes resurrectionis.—Optat. Milevit. lib. vi. contra Parmen.
Qui manducat carnem meam, habet vitam æternam, et resuscitabo eum in novissimo die.—S. John vi. 54.
[m] Colos iii. 3.
[n] S. Cyril. Alex. lib. iv. in Joh. c. 14.
Sic et corpora nostra percipientia Eucharistiam jam non sunt corruptibilia, spem resurrectionis habentia.—IRENÆ. lib. iv. c. 34.
[o] Tanquam leones ignem spirantes recedamus ex illâ mensâ, dæmonibus facti terribiles. S. CHRYS.
Poculum quo inebriatur affectus fidelium.—S. AMBROS. Ser. xv. in Psal. 118.

cake in Gideon's camp, overturning the tents of Midian; that it is the relief of our sorrows, the antidote and preservative of souls, the viand of our journey, the guard and passport of our death, the wine of angels; that it is more healthful than rhubarb, more pleasant than cassia; that the betel and lareca of the Indians, the moly[p] or nepenthe of Pliny, the lirinon of the Persians, the balsam of Judea, the manna of Israel, the honey of Jonathan, are but weak expressions, to tell us that this is excellent above art and nature, and that nothing is good enough in philosophy to become its emblem. All these must needs fall very short of those plain words of Christ, "This is my body." The other may become the ecstasies of piety, the transportation of joy and wonder; and are like the discourse of St. Peter upon mount Tabor, he was resolved to say some great thing, but he knew not what: but when we remember, that the body of our Lord and his blood is communicated to us in the bread and the chalice of blessing, we must sit down and rest ourselves, for this is, "the mountain of the Lord," and we can go no farther.

11. In the next place it will concern our inquiry, to consider how we are to prepare ourselves: for at the gate of life a man may meet with death: and, although this holy sacrament be like manna, in which the obedient find the relishes of obedience; the chaste, of purity; the meek persons, of content and humility; yet vicious and corrupted palates find also the gust of death and coloquintida. The Sybarites invited their women to their solemn sacrifices a full year before the solemnity; that they might, by previous dispositions and a long foresight, attend, with gravity and fairer order, the celebration of the rites.[q] And it was a reasonable answer of Pericles, to one that asked him, why he, being a philosophical and severe person, came to a wedding trimmed and adorned like a paranymph: "I come adorned to an adorned person;" trimmed, to a bridegroom. And we, also, if we come to the marriage of the Son with the soul, (which marriage is celebrated in this sacred mystery,) and have not on a wedding-garment, shall be cast into outer darkness, the portion of undressed and unprepared souls.

12. For from this sacrament are excluded all unbaptized persons, and such who lie in a known sin, of which they have not purged themselves by the apt and proper instruments of repentance. For if the paschal lamb was not to be eaten but by persons pure and clean, according to the sanctifications of the law; the Son of God can less endure the impurities of the spirit, than God could suffer the uncleannesses of the law. St. Paul hath given us instruction in this: "First, let a man examine himself, and so let him eat: for he that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body."[r] That is, although, in the church of Corinth, by reason of the present schism, the public discipline of the church was neglected, and every man permitted to himself; yet, even then, no man was disobliged from his duty of private repentance, and holy preparations, to the perception of so great a mystery; that "the Lord's body" may be discerned from common nutriment. Now, nothing can so unhallow and desecrate the rite, as the remanent affection to a sin, or a crime unrepented of. And self-examination is prescribed, not for itself, but in order to abolition of sin and death; for itself is a relative term and an imperfect duty, whose very nature is in order to something beyond it. And this was, in the primitive church, understood to so much severity, that if a man had relapsed, after one public repentance, into a foul crime, he was never again readmitted to the holy communion; and the fathers of the council of Eliberis call it a mocking and jesting at the communion of our Lord, to give it once again, after a repentance and a relapse, and a second or third postulation.[s] And, indeed, we use to make a sport of the greatest instruments of religion, when we come to them after an habitual vice, whose face we have, it may be, wetted with a tear, and breathed upon it with a sigh, and abstained from the worst of crimes for two or three days, and come to the sacrament to be purged, and to take our rise by going a little back from our sin, that afterwards we may leap into it with more violence, and enter into its utmost angle; this is dishonouring the body of our Lord, and deceiving ourselves. Christ and Belial cannot cohabit: but if we have left all our sins, and have no fondness of affection towards them, if we hate them, (which then we shall best know when we leave them, and with complacency entertain their contraries,) then Christ hath washed our feet, and then he invites us to his holy supper. Hands dipped in blood, or polluted with unlawful gains, or stained with the spots of flesh, are most unfit to handle the holy body of our Lord, and minister nourishment to the soul. Christ loves not to enter into the mouth full of cursings, oaths, blasphemies, revilings, or evil speakings; and a heart full of vain and vicious thoughts, stinks like the lake of Sodom; he finds no rest there, and when he enters, he is vexed with the unclean conversation of the impure inhabitants, and flies from thence with the wings of a dove, that he may retire to pure and whiter habitations. St. Justin Martyr, reckoning the predispositions required of every faithful soul for the entertainment of his Lord, says, that "it is not lawful for any to eat the eucharist, but to him that is washed in the laver of regeneration for the remission of sins, that believes Christ's doctrine to be true, and that lives according to the discipline of the holy Jesus."[t] And therefore, St. Ambrose refused to minister the holy communion to the emperor Theodosius,[u] till, by public repent-

[p] Μῶλυ δέ μιν καλέουσι θεοί· χαλεπὸν δέ τ' ὀρύσσειν
Ἀνδράσι γε θνητοῖσι· θεοὶ δέ τε πάντα δύνανται.—HOMER.
[q] Plutarch. Sympos.
[r] 1 Cor. xi. 28, 29.
[s] Concil. Eliber. c. 3.
[t] S. Basil. de Bapt. lib. ii. c. 3. Legatur totum caput. S. Ambros. lib. vi. c. 37. in Luc. 9.
Ubique mysterii ordo servatur, ut priùs per remissionem peccatorum vulneribus medicina tribuatur, postea alimonia mensæ cœlestis exuberet.—PAULIN. in Vitâ S. Ambros.
[u] Si dux quispiam, si consul ipse, si qui diademate ornatur indignè adeat, cohibe et coërce. Quòd si ipse pellere non audes, mihi dicas, non permittam ista fieri; animam potiùs tradam meam, quàm Dominicum alicui corpus indignè.—S. CHRYSOST. hom. 83. in Matt.

ance, he had reconciled himself to God and the society of faithful people, after the furious and choleric rage and slaughter committed at Thessalonica: and as this act was like to cancellating and a circumvallation of the holy mysteries, and in that sense, and so far, was a proper duty for a prelate, to whose dispensation the rites are committed; so it was an act of duty to the emperor, of paternal and tender care, not of proper authority or jurisdiction, which he could not have over his prince, but yet had a care and the supravision of a teacher over him; whose soul St. Ambrose had betrayed, unless he had represented his indisposition to communicate in expressions of magisterial or doctoral authority and truth. For this holy sacrament is a nourishment of spiritual life, and, therefore, cannot with effect be ministered to them who are in the state of spiritual death; it is giving a cordial to a dead man; and, although the outward rite be ministered, yet the grace of the sacrament is not communicated; and, therefore, it were well that they also abstained from the rite itself. For a fly can boast of as much privilege, as a wicked person can receive from this holy feast,[x] and oftentimes pays his life for his access to forbidden delicacies, as certainly as they.

13. It is more generally thought by the doctors of the church, that our blessed Lord administered the sacrament to Judas, although he knew he sold him to the Jews. Some others deny it, and suppose Judas departed presently after the sop given him, before he communicated.[y] However it was, Christ, who was Lord of the sacraments, might dispense it as he pleased; but we must minister and receive it according to the rules he hath since described; but it becomes a precedent to the church in all succeeding ages, although it might also have in it something extraordinary, and apter to the first institution; for, because the fact of Judas was secret, not yet made notorious, Christ chose rather to admit him into the rites of external communion than to separate him, with an open shame, for a fault not yet made open. For our blessed Lord did not reveal the man and his crime, till the very time of ministration, if Judas did communicate. But if Judas did not communicate, and that our blessed Lord gave him the sop at the paschal supper, or at the interval between it and the institution of his own, it is certain that Judas went out as soon as he was discovered, and left this part of discipline upon record, That when a crime is made public and notorious, the governors of the church, according to their power, are to deny to give the blessed sacrament, till by repentance such persons be restored.[z] In private sins, or sins not known by solemnities of law, or evidence of fact, good and bad are entertained in public communion; and it is not to be accounted a crime in them that minister it, because they cannot avoid it, or have not competent authority to separate persons, whom the public act of the church hath not separated: but if once a public separation be made, or that the fact is notorious, and the sentence of law is in such cases already declared; they that come, and he that rejects them not, both pollute the blood of the everlasting covenant. And here it is applicable, what God spake by the prophet: "If thou wilt separate the precious thing from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth."[a]

But this is wholly a matter of discipline, arbitrary, and in the power of the church; nothing in it of Divine commandment, but what belongs to the communicants themselves: for St. Paul reproves them that receive disorderly, but gives no orders to the Corinthian presbyters to reject any that present themselves. Neither did our blessed Lord leave any commandment concerning it, nor hath the holy Scripture given rules or measures, concerning its actual reduction to practice; neither who are to be separated, nor for what offences, nor by what authority, nor who is to be the judge. And, indeed, it is a judgment that can only belong to God, who knows the secrets of hearts, the degrees of every sin, the beginnings and portions of repentance, the sincerity of purposes, by what thoughts and designs men begin to be accepted, who are hypocrites, and who are true men. But when many and common men come to judge, they are angry upon trifling mistakes and weak disputes; they call that sin, that angers their party, or grieves their interest; they turn charity into pride, and admonition into tyranny; they set up a tribunal, that themselves may sit higher, not that their brethren may walk more securely: and then concerning sins, in most cases, they are most incompetent judges; they do not know all their kinds; they miscall many; they are ignorant of the ingredient and constituent parts and circumstances; they themselves make false measures, and give out according to them, when they please; and when they list not, they can change the balance. When the matter is public, evident, and notorious, the man is to be admonished of his danger by the minister, but not, by him, to be forced from it: for the power of the minister of holy things is but the power of a preacher and a counsellor, of a physician and a guide; it hath in it no coercion or violence, but what is indulged to it by human laws, and by consent, which may vary as its principle.

Add to this, that the grace of God can begin the work of repentance in an instant, and in what period or degree of repentance the holy communion is to be administered, no law of God declares; which, therefore, plainly allows it to every period, and leaves no difference, except where the discipline of the church, and the authority of the supreme power, doth intervene. For since we do not find in Scripture that the apostles did drive from the communion of holy things, even those whom they delivered

[x] Exta prægusto Deûm, Moror inter aras, templa perlustro omnia;
In capite regis sedeo, cùm visum est mihi,
Et matronarum casta delibo oscula.—PHÆDR. Fab. 80.

[y] Negatur à Clemente Rom. v. Const. c. 16. ab Hilario, c. 30. in Matt. Innocentio, lib. iii. de Myster. c. 13. à Ruperto, Hildebrand. Cenoman. et paucis aliis.

[z] Nec à communione prohibere quenquam possumus, nisi aut sponte confessum, aut in aliquo sive seculari sive Ecclesiastico Judicio nominatum atque convictum.—S. AUG. lib. 1. Homil. 50. S. THOM. 3. p. q. 81. a. 2.

[a] Jer. xv. 19.

over to Satan or other censures, we are left to consider that, in the nature of the thing, those who are in the state of weakness and infirmity have more need of the solemn prayers of the church, and, therefore, by presenting themselves to the holy sacrament, approach towards that ministry which is the most effectual cure; especially since the very presenting themselves is an act of religion, and, therefore, supposes an act of repentance and faith, and other little introductions to its fair reception; and if they may be prayed for, and prayed with, why they may not also be communicated, which is the solemnity of the greatest prayer, is not yet clearly revealed.

This discourse relates only to private ministry: for when I affirm, that there is no command from Christ, to all his ministers, to refuse whom they are pleased to call "scandalous" or "sinners," I intend to defend good people from the tyranny and arbitrary power of those great companies of ministers, who, in so many hundred places, would have a judicature supreme in spirituals, which would be more intolerable than if they had, in one province, twenty thousand judges of life and death. But when the power of separation and interdiction is only in some more eminent and authorized persons, who take public cognizance of causes by solemnities of law, and exercise their power but in some rare instances, and then also for the public interest, in which, although they may be deceived, yet they are the most competent and likely judges, much of the inconvenience, which might otherwise follow, is avoided: and then it only remains, that they consider, in what cases it can be a competent and a proper infliction upon sinners, to take from them that, which is the means and ministry of grace and recovery; whether they have any warrant from Christ, or precedent in the apostles' practice, and how far. As for the forms and usages of the primitive church, they were hugely different, sometimes for one cause, sometimes for another. Sometimes whole churches have been excommunicated; sometimes the criminal, and all his household for his offence, as it happened in the excommunication of Andronicus and Thoas, in Synesius, in the year 411:[b] sometimes they were absolved and restored by lay-confessors, sometimes by emperors, as it happened to Eusebius of Nicomedia, and Theognis of Nice, who were absolved by Constantine, from the sentence of excommunication inflicted by the Nicene fathers; and a monk did excommunicate Theodosius the younger.[c] So that in this, there can be no certainty to make a measure and a rule. The surest way, most agreeable to the precedents of Scripture, and the analogy of the gospel, is that, "by the word of their proper ministry," all sinners should be separate from the holy communion, that is, threatened, by the words of God, with damnation, and fearful temporal dangers, if themselves, knowing an unrepented sin, and a remanent affection to sin, to be within them, shall dare to profane that body and blood of our Lord by so impure an address. The evil is to themselves; and if the ministers declare this powerfully, they are acquitted. But concerning other judgments or separations, the supreme power can forbid all assembling, and, therefore, can permit them to all, and, therefore, can deny them, or grant them, to single persons; and, therefore, when he, by laws, makes separations in order to public benefit, they are to be obeyed: but it is not to be endured, that single presbyters should, upon vain pretences, erect so high a tribunal and tyranny over consciences.

14. The duty of preparation, that I here discourse of, is such a preparation as is a disposition to life; it is not a matter of convenience or advantage, to repent of our sins before the communion; but it is of absolute necessity, we perish if we neglect it; for we "eat damnation," and Satan enters into us, not Christ. And this preparation is not the act of a day or a week; but it is a new state of life: no man, that is an habitual sinner, must come to this feast, till he hath wholly changed his course of life. And then, according as the actions of infirmity have made less or greater invasion upon his peace and health, so are the acts of repentance to be proportioned; in which the greatness of the prevarications, their neighbourhood to death, or their frequent repetition, and the conduct of a spiritual man, are to give us counsel and determination. When a ravening and hungry wolf is destitute of prey, he eats the turf, and loads his stomach with the glebe he treads on; but as soon as he finds better food, he vomits up his first load. Our secular and sensual affections are loads of earth upon the conscience; and when we approach the table of the Lord, to eat the bread of the elect, and to drink the wine of angels, we must reject such impure adhesions, that holy persons, being nourished with holy symbols, may be sanctified, and receive the eternal reward of holiness.

15. But as none must come hither but they that are in the state of grace, or charity, and the love of God and their neighbours, and that the abolition of the state of sin is the necessary preparation, and is the action of years, and was not accepted as sufficient till the expiration of divers years by the primitive discipline, and, in some cases, not till the approach of death: so there is another preparation, which is of less necessity, which supposes the state of grace, and that oil is burning in our lamps; but yet it is a preparation of ornament, a trimming up the soul, a dressing the spirit with degrees and instances of piety, and progresses of perfection: and it consists in setting apart some portion of our time, before the communion, that it be spent in prayer, in meditation, in renewing the vows of holy obedience, in examining our consciences, in mortifying our lesser irregularities, in devotions and actions of precise religion, in acts of faith, of hope, of charity, of zeal and holy desires, in acts of eucharist or thanksgiving, of joy at the approach of so blessed an opportunity, and all the acts of virtue whatsoever, which have indefinite relation to this and to other mysteries; but yet are specially to be exercised upon this occasion, because this is the most perfect of external rites, and the most mysterious instru-

[b] Synes. ep. 79.

[c] Theod. Hist. lib. v. 36. Baron. tom. v. A. D. 425. sect. 16.

ment of sanctification and perfection. There is no time or degree to be determined in this preparation; but they "to whom much is forgiven, will love much;" and they,—who understand the excellence and holiness of the mystery, the glory of the guest that comes to inhabit, and the indecency of the closet of their hearts, by reason of the adherences of impurity, the infinite benefit then designed, and the increase of degrees by the excellence of these previous acts of holiness,—will not be too inquisitive into the necessity of circumstances and measures, but do it heartily, and devoutly, and reverently, and, as much as they can, ever esteeming it necessary, that the actions of so great solemnity should by some actions of piety, attending like handmaids, be distinguished from common employments, and remarked for the principal and most solemn of religious actions. The primitive church gave the holy sacrament to infants immediately after baptism,[d] and by that act transmitted this proposition, That nothing was of absolute necessity but innocency and purity from sin, and a being in the state of grace;[e] other actions of religion are excellent additions to the dignity of the person and honour of the mystery; but they were such, of which infants were not capable. The sum is this: After the greatest consociation of religious duties for preparation, no man can be sufficiently worthy to communicate: let us take care that we be not unworthy, by bringing a guilt with us, or the remanent affection to a sin.

> Est gloriosus sanè convictus Dei;
> Sed illi qui invitatur, non qui invisus est.

16. When the happy hour is come, in which the Lord vouchsafes to enter into us, and dwell with us, and be united with his servants, we must then do the same acts over again with greater earnestness and intention; confess the glories of God and thy own unworthiness, praise his mercy with ecstasy of thanksgiving and joy, make oblation of thyself, of all thy faculties and capacities, pray, and read, and meditate, and worship: and that thou mayest more opportunely do all this, rise early to meet the Bridegroom, pray for special assistance, enter into the assembly of faithful people cheerfully, attend there diligently, demean thyself reverently, and, before any other meat or drink, receive the body of thy Saviour with pure hands, with holy intention, with a heart full of joy, and faith, and hope, and wonder, and eucharist. These things I, therefore, set down irregularly and without method, because, in these actions, no rule can be given to all persons; and only such a love, and such a religion, in general, is to be recommended, which will overrun the banks, and not easily stand confined within the margent of rules, and artificial prescriptions. Love and religion are boundless, and all acts of grace, relating to the present mystery, are fit and proportioned entertainments of our Lord. This only remember, that we are, by the mystery of "one bread," confederated into one body, and the communion of saints, and that the sacrifice, which we then commemorate, was designed, by our Lord, for the benefit of all his church: let us be sure to draw all faithful people into the society of the present blessing, joining, with the holy man that ministers, in prayers, and offerings of that mystery, for the benefit of all sorts of men, of Christ's catholic church. And it were also an excellent act of christian communion, and agreeable to the practice of the church in all ages, to make an oblation to God for the poor; that, as we are fed by Christ's body, so we also should feed Christ's body, making such returns as we can, a grain of frankincense in exchange for a province, an act of duty and christian charity as eucharistical for the present grace, that all the body may rejoice and glory in the salvation of the Lord.

17. After thou hast received that pledge of immortality and antepast of glory, even the Lord's body in a mystery, leave not thy Saviour there alone, but attend him with holy thoughts and colloquies of prayer and eucharist. It was sometime counted infamous for a woman to entertain a second love, till the body of her dead husband was dissolved into ashes, and disappeared in the form of a body. And it were well, that so long as the consecrated symbols remain within us, according to common estimate, we should keep the flame bright, and the perfume of an actual devotion burning, that our communion be not a transient act, but a permanent and lasting intercourse with our Lord.[f] But in this every man best knows his own opportunities and necessities of diversion. I only commend earnestly to practice, that every receiver should make a recollection of himself, and the actions of the day, that he improve it to the best advantage, that he show unto our Lord all the defects of his house, all his poverty and weaknesses: and this let every man do, by such actions and devotions which he can best attend, and himself, by the advice of a spiritual man, finds of best advantage. I would not make the practice of religion, especially in such irregular instances, to be an art, or a burden, or a snare, to scrupulous persons: what St. Paul said in the case of charity I say also in this; "He that sows plentifully shall reap plentifully, and he that sows sparingly shall gather" at the same rate; "let every man do as himself purposeth in his heart." Only it were well in this sacrament of love we had some correspondency, and proportionable returns of charity and religious affections.

18. Some religious persons have moved a question, Whether it were better to communicate often or seldom? some thinking it more reverence to those holy mysteries to come but seldom; while others say, it is greater religion or charity to come frequently. But I suppose this question does not differ much from a dispute, Whether it is better to

[d] Clem. Rom. lib. viii. Constit. c. 20. Concil. Tolet. i. c. 11. S. Aug. ep. 23. ad Bonif. et ep. 107. et lib. iv. de Trin. c. 10.

[e] Habentem adhuc voluntatem peccandi gravari magìs dico eucharistiæ perceptione quàm purificari; sed hoc de iis dico quos capitalia et mortalia non gravant.—GENNAD. lib. iii. de Eccl. Dogmat. c. 53.

[f] Malè olim actum est, cùm sacrificia compotationibus finierant.

Ἀπὸ τούτου γέ φασι τὸ μεθύειν ὠνομάσθαι, ὅτι μετὰ τὸ θύειν ἔθος ἦ τοῖς προτέροις οἰνοῦσθαι.

pray often, or to pray seldom? For whatsoever is commonly pretended against a frequent communion, may, in its proportion, object against a solemn prayer; remanent affection to a sin, enmity with neighbours, secular avocations to the height of care and trouble: for these either are great indecencies, in order to a holy prayer; or else, are direct irregularities, and unhallow the prayer. And the celebration of the holy sacrament is, in itself and its own formality, a sacred, solemn, and ritual prayer, in which we invocate God by the merits of Christ, expressing that adjuration, not only in words, but in actual representment and commemoration of his passion. And if the necessities of the church were well considered, we should find that a daily sacrifice of prayer, and a daily prayer of sacrifice, were no more but what her condition requires: and I would to God the governors of churches would take care, that the necessities of kings and kingdoms, of churches and states, were represented to God by the most solemn and efficacious intercessions; and Christ hath taught us none greater than the praying in the virtue and celebration of his sacrifice. And this is the counsel that the church received from Ignatius: "Hasten frequently to approach the eucharist, the glory of God. For when this is daily celebrated, we break the powers of Satan, who turns all his actions into hostilities and darts of fire." But this concerns the ministers of religion, who, living in communities and colleges, must make religion the business of their lives, and support kingdoms, and serve the interest of kings, by the prayer of a daily sacrifice. And yet, in this ministry, the clergy may serve their own necessary affairs, if the ministration be divided into courses, as it was, by the economy and wisdom of Solomon, for the temple.

19. But concerning the communion of secular and lay persons, the consideration is something different. St. Austin gave this answer to it: "To receive the sacrament every day, I neither praise nor reprove; at least, let them receive it every Lord's day."[g] And this he spake to husbandmen and merchants. At the first commencement of christianity, while the fervours apostolical and the calentures of infant christendom did last, the whole assembly of faithful people communicated every day; and this lasted in Rome and Spain until the time of St. Jerome:[h] concerning which diligence he gives the same censure, which I now recited from St. Austin; for it suffered inconvenience by reason of a declining piety, and the intervening of secular interests. But then it came to once a week; and yet that was not every where strictly observed.[i] But that it be received once every fortnight, St. Hierome counsels very strongly to Eustochium, a holy virgin: "Let the virgins confess their sins twice every month, or oftener; and, being fortified with the communion of the Lord's body, let them manfully fight against the devil's forces and attempts." A while after, it came to once a month, then once a year, then it fell from that too: till all the christians in the west were commanded to communicate every Easter by the decree of a great council[k] above five hundred years since. But the church of England, finding that too little, hath commanded all her children to receive thrice every year at least, intending that they should come oftener; but of this she demands an account. For it hath fared with this sacrament as with other actions of religion, which have descended from flames to still fires, from fires to sparks, from sparks to embers, from embers to smoke, from smoke to nothing. And although the public declension of piety is such, that, in this present conjuncture of things, it is impossible men should be reduced to a daily communion; yet that they are to communicate frequently is so a duty, that, as no excuse but impossibility can make the omission innocent, so the loss and consequent want is infinite and invaluable.

20. For the holy communion being a remembrance and sacramental repetition of Christ's passion, and the application of his sacrifice to us and the whole catholic church; as they who seldom communicate, delight not to remember the passion of our Lord, and sin against his very purpose, and one of the designs of institution; so he cares not to receive the benefits of the sacrifice, who so neglects their application, and reducing them to actual profit and reception. "Whence came the sanctimony of the primitive christians? whence came their strict observation of the Divine commandments? whence was it that they persevered in holy actions with hope and an unweary diligence? from whence did their despising worldly things come, and living with common possession, and the distributions of an universal charity? Whence came these, and many other excellencies, but from a constant prayer and a daily eucharist? They who every day represented the death of Christ, every day were ready to die for Christ." It was the discourse of an ancient and excellent person. And if we consider, this sacrament is intended to unite the spirits and affections of the world, and that it is diffusive and powerful to this purpose, ("for we are one body," saith St. Paul, "because we partake of one bread,") possibly we may have reason to say, that the wars of kingdoms, the animosity of families, the infinite multitude of law suits, the personal hatreds, and the universal want of charity, which hath made the world miserable and wicked, may, in a great degree, be attributed to the neglect of this great symbol and instrument of charity. The chalice of the sacrament is called by St. Paul, "the cup of blessing;" and if children need every day to beg blessing of their parents, if we also thirst not after this cup of blessing, blessing may be far from us. It is called "the communication of the blood of Christ;" and it is not imaginable, that man should love heaven, or felicity, or his Lord, that desires not perpetually to bathe in that salutary stream, the blood of the holy Jesus, the immaculate Lamb of God.

21. But I find, that the religious fears of men are pretended a colour to excuse this irreligion. Men

[g] Gennadius, c. 54. de Eccles. Dogmat.
[h] Epist. 80. ad Lucinum.
[i] Itaque sicut nobis licet vel jejunare semper, vel semper orare, et diem Dominicum, accepto corpore Domini, indesinenter celebrare gaudentibus, &c.—Idem.
[k] Concil. Lat.

are wicked, and not prepared, and busy, and full of cares and affairs of the world, and cannot come with due preparation; and therefore better not come at all; nay, men are not ashamed to say, they are at enmity with certain persons, and therefore cannot come. 1. Concerning those persons who are unprepared, because they are in a state of sin or uncharitableness, it is true, they must not come; but this is so far from excusing their not coming, that they increase their sin, and secure misery to themselves, because they do not "lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset them," that they may come to the marriage-supper. It is as if we should excuse ourselves from the duties of charity, by saying we are uncharitable; from giving alms, by saying we are covetous; from chastity, by saying we are lascivious. To such men it is just that they graze with the goats, because they refuse to wash their hands, that they may come to the supper of the Lamb. 2. Concerning those that pretend cares and encumbrances of the world, if their affairs make sin and impure affections to stick upon them, they are in the first consideration; but if their office be necessary, just, or charitable, they imitate Martha, and choose the less perfect part, when they neglect the offices of religion for duties economical. 3. But the other sort have more pretence and fairer virtue in their outside. They suppose, like the Persian princes, the seldomer such mysterious rites are seen, the more reverence we shall have, and they the more majesty: and they are fearful lest the frequent attrectation of them should make us less to value the great earnests of our redemption and immortality. It is a pious consideration, but not becoming them; for it cannot be, that the sacrament be undervalued by frequent reception, without the great unworthiness of the persons, so turning God's grace into lightness, and loathing manna: nay, it cannot be without an unworthy communication; for he that receives worthily, increases in the love of God and religion, and the fires of the altar are apt to kindle our sparks into a flame; and when Christ our Lord enters into us, and we grow weary of him, or less fond of his frequent entrance and perpetual cohabitation, it is an infallible sign we have let his enemy in, or are preparing for it. For this is the difference between secular and spiritual objects: Nothing in this world hath any pleasure in it long beyond the hope of it, for the possession and enjoyment is found so empty that we grow weary of it; but whatsoever is spiritual, and in order to God, is less before we have it, but in the fruition it swells our desires, and enlarges the appetite, and makes us more receptive and forward in the entertainment: and therefore those acts of religion that set us forward in time, and backward in affection, do declare that we have not well done our duty, but have communicated unworthily. So that the mending of our fault will answer the objection. Communicate with more devotion, and repent with greater contrition, and walk with more caution, and pray more earnestly, and meditate diligently, and receive with reverence and godly fear; and we shall find our affections increase together with the spiritual emolument; ever remembering that pious and wise advice of St. Ambrose, "Receive every day that which may profit thee every day. But he that is not disposed to receive it every day, is not fit to receive it every year."[1]

22. And if, after all diligence, it be still feared that a man is not well prepared, I must say that it is a scruple, that is, a trouble beyond a doubt and without reason, next to superstition and the dreams of religion; and it is nourished, by imagining that no duty is accepted, if it be less than perfection, and that God is busied in heaven, not only to destroy the wicked and to dash in pieces vessels of dishonour, but to "break a bruised reed" in pieces, and to cast the "smoking flax" into the flames of hell. In opposition to which, we must know, that nothing makes us unprepared but an evil conscience,[m] a state of sin, or a deadly act: but the lesser infirmities of our life, against which we daily strive, and for which we never have any kindness or affections, are not spots in these feasts of charity, but instruments of humility, and stronger invitations to come to those rites, which are ordained for corroboratives against infirmities of the soul, and for the growth of the spirit in the strengths of God. For those other acts of preparation, which precede and accompany the duty, the better and more religiously they are done, they are indeed of more advantage, and honorary to the sacrament; yet he that comes in the state of grace, though he takes the opportunity upon a sudden offer, sins not: and in such indefinite duties, whose degrees are not described, it is good counsel to do our best; but it is ill to make them instruments of scruple, as if it were essentially necessary to do that in the greatest height, which is only intended for advantage, and the fairer accommodation of the mystery. But these very acts, if they be esteemed necessary preparations to the sacrament, are the greatest arguments in the world that it is best to communicate often; because the doing of that, which must suppose the exercise of so many graces, must needs promote the interest of religion, and dispose strongly to habitual graces by our frequent and solemn repetition of the acts. It is necessary that every communicant be first examined concerning the state of his soul, by himself or his superior; and that very scrutiny is in admirable order towards the reformation of such irregularities which time and temptation, negligence and incuriousness, infirmity or malice, have brought into the secret regions of our will and understanding. Now, although this examination be therefore enjoined, that no man should approach to the holy table in the state of ruin and reprobation, and that therefore it is an act, not of direct preparation, but an inquiry whether we be prepared or no; yet this very examination will find so many little irregularities, and so many great imperfections, that it will appear the more necessary to repair the breaches and lesser ruins by such acts of piety and religion; because

[1] De Sacram. lib. v. c. 4

[m] Tempestivum accessum sola conscientiæ integritas facit. —S. CHRYS.

every communication is intended to be a nearer approach to God, a farther step in grace, a progress towards glory, and an instrument of perfection; and therefore upon the stock of our spiritual interests, for the purchase of a greater hope, and the advantages of a growing charity, ought to be frequently performed. I end with the words of a pious and learned person:[n] "It is a vain fear and an imprudent reverence, that procrastinates and defers going to the Lord that calls them: they deny to go to the fire, pretending they are cold; and refuse physic, because they need it."

THE PRAYER.

O blessed and eternal Jesus, who gavest thyself a sacrifice for our sins, thy body for our spiritual food, thy blood to nourish our spirits, and to quench the flames of hell and lust; who didst so love us, who were thine enemies, that thou desiredst to reconcile us to thee, and becamest all one with us, that we may live the same life, think the same thoughts, love the same love, and be partakers of thy resurrection and immortality; open every window of my soul, that I may be full of light, and may see the excellency of thy love, the merits of thy sacrifice, the bitterness of thy passion, the glories and virtues of the mysterious sacrament. Lord, let me ever hunger and thirst after this instrument of righteousness; let me have no gust or relish of the unsatisfying delights of things below, but let my soul dwell in thee; let me for ever receive thee spiritually, and very frequently communicate with thee sacramentally, and imitate thy virtues piously and strictly, and dwell in the pleasures of thy house eternally. "Lord, thou hast prepared a table for me against them that trouble me:" let that holy sacrament of the eucharist be to me a defence and shield, a nourishment and medicine, life and health, a means of sanctification and spiritual growth; that I, receiving the body of my dearest Lord, may be one with his mystical body, and of the same spirit, united with indissoluble bands of a strong faith, and a holy hope, and a never-failing charity, that from this veil I may pass into the visions of eternal clarity, from eating thy body, to beholding thy face in the glories of thy everlasting kingdom, O blessed and eternal Jesus. Amen.

Considerations upon the Accidents happening on the Vespers of the Passion.

1. WHEN Jesus had supped and sang a hymn, and prayed, and exhorted and comforted his disciples with a farewell sermon, in which he repeated such of his former precepts which were now apposite to the present condition, and reinforced them with proper and pertinent arguments, he went over the brook Cedron, and entered into a garden, and into the prologue of his passion; choosing that place for his agony and satisfactory pains, in which the first scene of human misery was represented, and where he might best attend the offices of devotion preparatory to his death. Besides this, he therefore departed from the house, that he might give opportunity to his enemies' surprise, and yet not incommodate the good man by whose hospitality they had eaten the paschal lamb; so that he went "like a lamb to the slaughter," to the garden as to a prison,[a] as if, by an agreement with his persecutors, he had expected their arrest, and staid there to prevent their further inquiry.[b] For so great was his desire to pay our ransom, that himself did assist, by a forward patience and active opportunity, towards the persecution: teaching us, that, by an active zeal and a ready spirit, we assist the designs of God's glory, though in our own sufferings and secular infelicities.

2. When he entered the garden, he left his disciples at the entrance of it, calling with him only Peter, James, and John: "he withdrew himself from the rest about a stone's cast, and began to be exceeding heavy." He was not sad till he had called them; for his sorrow began when he pleased: which sorrow he also chose to represent to those three who had seen his transfiguration, the earnest of his future glory, that they might see of how great glory for our sakes he disrobed himself; and that they also might, by the confronting those contradictory accidents, observe, that God uses to dispense his comforts, the irradiations and emissions of his glory, to be preparatives to those sorrows, with which our life must be allayed and seasoned; that none should refuse to partake of the sufferings of Christ, if either they have already felt his comforts, or hope hereafter to wear his crown. And it is not ill observed, that St. Peter, being the chief of the apostles and doctor of the circumcision, St. John, being a virgin, and St. James, the first of the apostles that was martyred, were admitted to Christ's greatest retirements and mysterious secrecies, as being persons of so singular and eminent dispositions, to whom, according to the pious opinion of the church, especial coronets are prepared in heaven, besides the great "crown of righteousness," which in common shall beautify the heads of all the saints; meaning this, that doctors, virgins, and martyrs, shall receive, even for their very state of life and accidental graces, more eminent degrees of accidental glory, like as the sun, reflecting upon a limpid fountain, receives its rays doubled, without any increment of its proper and natural light.

3. "Jesus began to be exceeding sorrowful," to be "sore amazed," and "sad even to death." And because he was now to suffer the pains of our sins, there began his passion whence our sins spring. From an evil heart, and a prevaricating spirit, all our sins arise; and in the spirit of Christ began his sorrow, where he truly felt the full value and demerit of sin, which we think not worthy of a tear or a hearty sigh; but he groaned and fell under the burden. But therefore he took upon him this sadness, that our imperfect sorrow and contrition might

[n] Joan. Gerson, in Magnificat.

[a] Etenim in horto tanquam in carcere.—S. CHRYS.

[b] Ut laborem minuat Judæis se quærentibus.—THEOPHYL.

be heightened in his example, and accepted in its union and confederacy with his. And Jesus still designed a further mercy for us; for he sanctified the passion of fear, and hallowed natural sadnesses, that we might not think the infelicities of our nature, and the calamities of our temporal condition, to become criminal, so long as they make us not omit a duty, nor dispose us to the election of a crime, nor force us to swallow a temptation, nor yet to exceed the value of their impulsive cause. He that grieves for the loss of friends, and yet had rather lose all the friends he hath than lose the love of God, hath the sorrow of our Lord for his precedent. And he that fears death, and trembles at its approximation, and yet had rather die again than sin once, hath not sinned in his fear; Christ hath hallowed it, and the necessitous condition of his nature is his excuse. But it were highly to be wished, that, in the midst of our caresses and levities of society, in our festivities and triumphal merriments, when we laugh at folly and rejoice in sin, we would remember, that for those very merriments our blessed Lord felt a bitter sorrow; and not one vain and sinful laughter, but cost the holy Jesus a sharp pang and throe of passion.

4. Now that the holy Jesus began to taste the bitter cup, he betook him to his great antidote, which himself, the great Physician of our souls, prescribed to all the world to cure their calamities, and to make them pass from miseries into virtue, that so they may arrive at glory; he prays to his heavenly Father, he kneels down, and not only so, but "falls flat upon the earth," and would, in humility and fervent adoration, have descended low as the centre; he prays with an intension great as his sorrow, and yet with a dereliction so great, and a conformity to the Divine will so ready, as if it had been the most indifferent thing in the world for him to be delivered to death, or from it: for, though his nature did decline death, as that which hath a natural horror and contradiction to the present interest of its preservation; yet when he looked upon it, as his heavenly Father had put it into the order of redemption of the world, it was that "baptism," which he was "straitened till he had accomplished." And now there is not in the world any condition of prayer which is essential to the duty, or any circumstances of advantage to its performance, but were concentred in this one instance; humility of spirit, lowliness of deportment, importunity of desire, a fervent spirit, a lawful matter, resignation to the will of God, great love, the love of a Son to his Father; which appellative was the form of his address; perseverance; he went thrice, and prayed the same prayer; it was not long, and it was so retired as to have the advantages of a sufficient solitude and opportune recollection; for he was withdrawn from the most of his disciples: and yet not so alone as to lose the benefit of communion; for Peter and the two Boanerges were near him. Christ, in this prayer, which was the most fervent that he ever made on earth, intending to transmit to all the world a precedent of devotion to be transcribed and imitated; that we should cast all our cares, and empty them in the bosom of God, being content to receive such a portion of our trouble back again, which he assigns us for our spiritual emolument.

5. The holy Jesus having in a few words poured out torrents of innocent desires, was pleased still to interrupt his prayer, that he might visit his charge, that "little flock," which was presently after to be "scattered:" he was careful of them in the midst of his agonies; they, in his sufferings, were fast asleep. He awakens them, gives them command to "watch and pray," that is, to be vigilant in the custody of their senses, and observant of all accidents, and to pray that they may be strengthened against all incursions of enemies and temptations; and then returns to prayer; and so a third time; his devotion still increasing with his sorrow.[b] And when his prayer was full, and his sorrow come to a great measure, after the third, God sent his "angel to comfort him;" and, by that act of grace, then only expressed, hath taught us to continue our devotions so long as our needs last. It may be, God will not send a comforter till the third time, that is, after a long expectation, and a patient sufferance, and a lasting hope: in the interim God supports us with a secret hand, and, in his own time, will refresh the spirit with the visitations of his angels, with the emissions of comfort from the Spirit, the Comforter. And know this also, that the holy angel, and the Lord of all the angels, stands by every holy person when he prays; and although he draws before his glories the curtain of a cloud, yet in every instant he takes care we shall not perish, and in a just season dissolves the cloud, and makes it to distil in holy dew, and drops sweet as manna, pleasant as nard, and wholesome as the breath of heaven. And such was the consolation which the holy Jesus received by the ministry of the angel, representing to Christ, the Lord of the angels, how necessary it was that he should die for the glory of God;[c] that, in his passion, his justice, wisdom, goodness, power, and mercy, should shine; that, unless he died, all the world should perish, but his blood should obtain their pardon; and that it should open the gates of heaven, repair the ruin of angels, establish a holy church, be productive of innumerable adoptive children to his Father, whom himself should make heirs of glory: and that his passion should soon pass away, his Father hearing and granting his prayer, that "the cup" should pass speedily, though indeed it should pass through him; that it should be attended and followed with a glorious resurrection, with eternal rest and glory of his humanity, with the exaltation of his name, with a supreme dominion over all the world, and that his Father should make him King of kings, and Prince of the catholic church. These, or whatsoever other comforts the

[b] Καὶ γενόμενος ἐν ἀγωνίᾳ, ἐκτενέστερον προσηύχετο, Luke xxii. 44. *Extensiùs orabat*, sic Latinus interpres reddit: Alii plures reddunt per *intensiùs*.

[c] Confortatus est, sed tali confortatione quæ dolorem non minuit, sed magis auxit: confortatus enim est ex fructûs magnitudine, non subtractâ doloris amaritudine.—Beda, in Lucæ 22.

angel ministered, were such considerations which the holy Jesus knew, and the angel knew not but by communication from that God, to whose assumed humanity the angel spake; yet he was pleased to receive comfort from his servant, just as God receives glory from his creatures,[d] and as he rejoices in his own works, even because he is good and gracious, and is pleased so to do; and because himself had caused a voluntary sadness to be interposed between the habitual knowledge and the actual consideration of these discourses; and we feel a pleasure, when a friendly hand lays upon our wound the plaster, which ourselves have made, and applies such instruments and considerations of comfort, which we have in notion and an ineffective habit, but cannot reduce them to act, because no man is so apt to be his own comforter: which God hath therefore permitted, that our need should be the occasion of a mutual charity.

6. It was a great season for the angel's coming, because it was a great necessity, which was incumbent upon our Lord; for his sadness and his agony was so great, mingled and compounded of sorrow and zeal, fear and desire, innocent nature and perfect grace, that he "sweat drops" as great as if the blood had started through little undiscerned fontinels, and outrun the streams and rivers of his cross. Euthymius[e] and Theophylact[f] say, that the evangelists use this as a tragical expression of the greatest agony, and an unusual sweat, it being usual to call the tears of the greatest sorrow, "tears of blood." But, from the beginning of the church, it hath been more generally apprehended literally, and that some blood, mingled with the serous substance, issued from his veins in so great abundance, that they moistened the ground, and bedecked his garment, which stood like a new firmament studded with stars, portending an approaching storm. Now "he came from Bozrah with his garments red and bloody." And this agony verified, concerning the holy Jesus, those words of David, "I am poured out like water, my bones are dispersed, my heart, in the midst of my body, is like melting wax," saith Justin Martyr.[g] Venerable Bede saith,[h] that the descending of these drops of blood upon the earth, besides the general purpose, had also a particular relation to the present infirmities of the apostles, that our blessed Lord obtained of his Father, by the merits of those holy drops, mercies and special support for them; and that effusion redeemed them from the present participation of death. And St. Austin meditates, that the body of our Lord, all overspread with drops of bloody sweat, did prefigure the future state of martyrs, and that his body mystical should be clad in a red garment, variegated with the symbols of labour and passion, sweat and blood; by which himself was pleased to purify his church, and present her to God holy and spotless. What collateral designs and tacit significations might be designed by this mysterious sweat, I know not; certainly it was a sad beginning of a most dolorous passion: and such griefs, which have so violent, permanent, and sudden effects upon the body, which is not of a nature symbolical to interior and immaterial causes, are proclaimed by such marks to be high and violent. We have read of some persons, that the grief and fear of one night hath put a cover of snow upon their heads, as if the labours of thirty years had been extracted, and the quintessence drank off, in the passion of that night; but if nature had been capable of a greater or more prodigious impress of passion than a bloody sweat, it must needs have happened in this agony of the holy Jesus, in which he undertook a grief great enough to make up the imperfect contrition of all the saints, and to satisfy for the impenitencies of all the world.

7. By this time the traitor, Judas, was arrived at Gethsemane, and being in the vicinage of the garden, Jesus rises from his prayers, and first calls his disciples from their sleep, and, by an irony, seems to give them leave to "sleep on;" but reproves their drowsiness, when danger is so near, and bids them "henceforth take their rest;" meaning, if they could for danger, which now was, indeed, come to the garden doors. But the holy Jesus, that it might appear he undertook the passion with choice and a free election, not only refused to fly, but called his apostles to rise, that they might meet his murderers, who came to him "with swords and staves," as if they were to surprise a prince of armed outlaws, whom without force they could not reduce. So, also, might butchers do well to go armed, when they are pleased to be afraid of lambs, by calling them lions. Judas only discovered his Master's retirements, and betrayed him to the opportunities of an armed band; for he could not accuse his master of any word or private action, that might render him obnoxious to suspicion or the law. For such are the rewards of innocence and prudence, that the one secures against sin, the other against suspicion and appearances.

8. The holy Jesus had accustomed to receive every of his disciples after absence with entertainment of a kiss, which was the endearment of persons, and the expression of the oriental civility: and Judas was confident that his Lord would not reject him, whose feet he had washed at the time when he foretold this event, and therefore had agreed to signify him by this sign;[i] and did so, beginning war with a kiss, and breaking the peace of his Lord by the symbol of kindness; which, because Jesus entertained with much evenness and charitable expressions, calling him "friend,"[k] he gave evidence, that if he retained civilities to his

[d] Cùm tristaris, solamen tristium,
Te solantur cives cœlestium.
Res miranda! solus dans gaudium
Rex à cive sumit solatium.—HONDEMIUS Anglus.

[e] In Matt. xxiv. [f] In Lucam xxii.

[g] Justin Mart. Dial. Tryph. Athanas. lib. vi. de Beat. Filii Dei. Aug. lib. vi. c. 5. de Consecr. Evang. Hier. lib. de Trad. Heb. Iren. lib. iv. c. 31. contra hæres. Idem aiunt Dionys. Alex. Aymonius, Epiphan. et alii.

[h] In Luc. lib. vi.

[i] O signum sacrilegum! O placitum fugiendum! ubi ab osculo incipitur bellum, et per pacis indicium pacis rumpitur sacramentum.—AUG. Serm. 12.

[k] Si honoras, ô dulcis Domine,
Inimicum amici nomine,
Quales erunt, amoris carmine
Qui te canunt et modulamine.—HONDEM. de Passione.

greatest enemies in the very acts of hostility, he hath banquets, and crowns, and sceptres for his friends, that adore him with the kisses of charity, and love him with the sincerity of an affectionate spirit. But our blessed Lord, besides his essential sweetness and serenity of spirit, understood well how great benefits himself and all the world were to receive by occasion of that act of Judas: and our greatest enemy does, by accident, to holy persons, the offices of their dearest friends; telling us our faults, without a cloak to cover their deformities, but, out of malice, laying open the circumstances of aggravation; doing us affronts, from whence we have an instrument of our patience; and restraining us from scandalous crimes, lest we "become a scorn and reproof to them that hate us." And it is none of God's least mercies, that he permits enmities amongst men; that animosities and peevishness may reprove more sharply, and correct with more severity and simplicity than the gentle hand of friends, who are apter to bind our wounds up, than to discover them and make them smart; but they are to us an excellent probation, how friends may best do the offices of friends, if they would take the plainness of enemies in accusing, and still mingle it with the tenderness and good affections of friends. But our blessed Lord called Judas "friend," as being the instrument of bringing him to glory, and all the world to pardon, if they would.

9. Jesus himself begins the inquiry, and leads them into their errand, and tells them he was Jesus of Nazareth, whom they sought. But this also, which was an answer so gentle, had in it a strength greater than the eastern wind or the voice of thunder; for God was in that "still voice," and it struck them down to the ground.[l] And yet they, and so do we, still persist to persecute our Lord, and to provoke the eternal God, who can, with the breath of his mouth, with a word, or a sign, or a thought, reduce us into nothing, or into a worse condition, even an eternal duration of torments, and cohabitation with a never-ending misery. And if we cannot bear a soft answer of the merciful God, how shall we dare to provoke the wrath of the Almighty Judge? But in this instance there was a rare mixture of effects, as there was in Christ of natures; the voice of a man, and the power of God. For it is observed by the doctors of the primitive ages,[m] that, from the nativity of our Lord to the day of his death, the divinity and humanity did so communicate in effects, that no great action passed, but it was like the sun shining through a cloud, or a beauty with a thin veil drawn over it; they gave illustration and testimony to each other. The holy Jesus was born a tender and a crying infant; but is adored by the magi as a king, by the angels as their God. He is circumcised as a man; but a name is given him, to signify him to be the Saviour of the world. He flies into Egypt, like a distressed child, under the conduct of his helpless parents; but as soon as he enters the country, the idols fall down, and confess his true divinity. He is presented in the temple as the son of man; but by Simeon and Anna he is celebrated, with divine praises, for the Messias, the Son of God. He is baptized in Jordan as a sinner; but the Holy Ghost, descending upon him, proclaimed him to be the well-beloved of God. He is hungry in the desert as a man; but sustained his body without meat and drink, for forty days together, by the power of his divinity: there he is tempted of Satan as a weak man, and the angels of light minister unto him as their supreme Lord. And now, a little before his death, when he was to take upon him all the affronts, miseries, and exinanitions of the most miserable, he receives testimonies from above, which are most wonderful; for he was transfigured upon mount Tabor, entered triumphantly into Jerusalem, had the acclamations of the people; when he was dying, he darkened the sun; when he was dead, he opened the sepulchres: when he was fast nailed to the cross, he made the earth to tremble; now, when he suffers himself to be apprehended by a guard of soldiers, he strikes them all to the ground only by replying to their answer: that the words of the prophet might be verified, "Therefore my people shall know my name; therefore they shall know in that day, that I am he that doth speak: behold, it is I."[n]

10. The soldiers and servants of the Jews having recovered from their fall, and risen by the permission of Jesus, still persisted in their inquiry after him, who was present, ready and desirous to be sacrificed. He, therefore, permitted himself to be taken, but not his disciples: for he it was that set them their bounds; and he secured his apostles to be witnesses of his suffering and his glories; and this work was the redemption of the world, in which no man could have an active share;[o] he alone was to tread the wine-press; and time enough they should be called to a fellowship of sufferings. But Jesus went to them, and they bound him with cords; and so began our liberty and redemption from slavery, and sin, and cursings, and death. But he was bound faster by bands of his own; his Father's will and mercy, pity of the world, prophecies, and mysteries,[p] and love held him fast: and these cords were as "strong as death;" and the cords, which the soldiers' malice put upon his holy hands, were but symbols and figures, his own compassion and affection were the morals. But yet he undertook this short restraint and condition of a prisoner, that all sorts of persecution and exterior calamities might be hallowed by his susception; and these pungent sorrows should, like bees, sting him, and leave their sting behind, that all the sweetness should remain for us. Some melancholic devotions have, from uncertain stories, added sad circumstances of the first violence done to our Lord; that

[l] Πάντες ἐπ' ἀλλήλοισι μαχήμονες ἀσπιδιῶται
Αὐτόματοι πίπτοντες ἐπεστόρνυντο κονίῃ,
Πρήνεες, οἰστρηθέντες ἀτευχέϊ λαίλαπι φωνῆς.—NONN.

[m] S. Cyril. S. Athanas. S. Leo, &c.

[n] Isa. lii. 6.

[o] Semovit à periculo discipulos, non ignorans ad se solum certamen illud et opus salutis nostræ pertinere. Regnantis enim, et non servientis, naturæ opus est.—S. CYRIL.

[p] Dominum omnium mysteria, non arma, tenuerunt.—S. AMB. in Lucam.

they bound him with three cords, and that with so much violence, that they caused blood to start from his tender hands; that they spat then, also, upon him, with a violence and incivility like that which their fathers had used towards Hur, the brother of Aaron, whom they choked with impure spittings into his throat, because he refused to consent to the making a golden calf. These particulars are not transmitted by certain records. Certain it is, they wanted no malice, and now no power; for the Lord had given himself into their hands.

11. St. Peter, seeing his master thus ill-used, asked, "Master, shall we strike with the sword?" and before he had his answer, cut off the ear of Malchus. Two swords there were in Christ's family, and St. Peter bore one; either because he was to kill the paschal lamb, or, according to the custom of the country, to secure them against beasts of prey, which in that region were frequent, and dangerous in the night. But now he used it in an unlawful war; he had no competent authority; it was against the ministers of his lawful prince, and against our prince we must not draw a sword for Christ himself, himself having forbidden us; as his "kingdom is not of this world," so neither were his defences secular: he could have called for many legions of angels for his guard, if he had so pleased; and we read that one angel slew 185,000 armed men in one night; and, therefore, it was a vast power which was at the command of our Lord; and he needs not such low auxiliaries as an army of rebels, or a navy of pirates, to defend his cause: he first lays the foundation of our happiness in his sufferings, and hath ever since supported religion by patience and suffering, and in poverty, and all the circumstances and conjectures of improbable causes. Fighting for religion is certain to destroy charity, but not certain to support faith. St. Peter, therefore, may use his keys, but he is commanded to put up his sword; and he did so; and presently he and all his fellows fairly ran away: and yet that course was much the more christian; for though it had in it much infirmity, yet it had no malice. In the mean time, the Lord was pleased to touch the ear of Malchus, and he cured it; adding to the first instance of power, in throwing them to the ground, an act of miraculous mercy, curing the wounds of an enemy made by a friend. But neither did this pierce their callous and obdurate spirits; but they led him in uncouth ways, and through the brook Cedron,[q] in which it is said the ruder soldiers plunged him, and passed upon him all the affronts and rudenesses which an insolent and cruel multitude could think of, to signify their contempt and their rage. And such is the nature of evil men, who, when they are not softened by the instruments and arguments of grace, are much hardened by them; such being the purpose of God, that either grace shall cure sin, or accidentally increase it; that it shall either pardon it, or bring it to greater punishment; for so I have seen healthful medicines, abused by the incapacities of a healthless body, become fuel to a fever, and increase the distemperature, from indisposition to a sharp disease, and from thence to the margin of the grave. But it was otherwise in Saul, whom Jesus threw to the ground with a more angry sound than these persecutors: but Saul rose a saint, and they persisted devils; and the grace of God distinguished the events.

[q] De torrente in viâ bibet.—Ps. cx. ult.

THE PRAYER.

I.

O holy Jesus, make me by thy example to conform to the will of that eternal God, who is our Father, merciful and gracious; that I may choose all those accidents, which his providence hath actually disposed to me; that I may know no desires but his commands, and his will; and that in all afflictions I may fly thither for mercy, pardon, and support; and may wait for deliverance in such times and manners, which the Father hath reserved in his own power, and graciously dispenses, according to his infinite wisdom and compassion. Holy Jesus, give me the gift and spirit of prayer; and do thou, by thy gracious intercession, supply my ignorances, and passionate desires, and imperfect choices; procuring and giving to me such returns of favour, which may support my needs, and serve the ends of religion and the Spirit, which thy wisdom chooses, and thy passion hath purchased, and thy grace loves to bestow upon all thy saints and servants. Amen.

II.

Eternal God, sweetest Jesu, who didst receive Judas with the affection of a Saviour, and sufferedst him to kiss thy cheek with the serenity and tranquillity of God; and didst permit the soldiers to bind thee, with patience exemplary to all ages of martyrs; and didst cure the wound of thy enemy, with the charity of a parent, and the tenderness of an infinite pity; O kiss me with the kisses of thy mouth, embrace me with the entertainments of a gracious Lord, and let my soul dwell and feast in thee, who art the repository of eternal sweetness and refreshments. Bind me, O Lord, with those bands which tied thee fast, the chains of love; that such holy union may dissolve the cords of vanity, and confine the bold pretensions of usurping passions, and imprison all extravagancies of an impertinent spirit, and lead sin captive to the dominion of grace and sanctified reason; that I also may imitate all the parts of thy holy passion; and may, by thy bands, get my liberty; by thy kiss, enkindle charity; by the touch of thy hand and the breath of thy mouth, have all my wounds cured, and restored to the integrity of a holy penitent, and the purities of innocence; that I may love thee, and please thee, and live with thee for ever, O holy and sweetest Jesu. Amen.

Considerations upon the Scourging, and other Accidents, happening from the Apprehension till the Crucifixion of Jesus.

1. THE house of Annas stood in the mount Sion, and in the way to the house of Caiaphas; and thither he was led, as to the first stage of their triumph for their surprise of a person so feared and desired; and there a naughty person smote the holy Jesus upon the face, for saying to Annas, that he had made his doctrine public, and that all the people were able to give account of it: to whom the Lamb of God showed as much meekness and patience in his answer, as in his answer to Annas he had showed prudence and modesty. For, now that they had taken Jesus, they wanted a crime to object against him, and therefore were desirous to snatch occasion from his discourses, to which they resolved to tempt him, by questions and affronts: but his answer was general and indefinite, safe and true, enough to acquit his doctrine from suspicions of secret designs, and yet secure against their present snares; for now himself, who always had the "innocence of doves," was to join with it the prudence and wariness of serpents; not to prevent death, (for that he was resolved to suffer,) but that they might be destitute of all appearance of a just cause on his part. Here it was that Judas received his money; and here that holy face, which was designed to be that object, in the beholding of which much of the celestial glory doth consist; that face which the angels stare upon with wonder, like infants at a bright sunbeam, was smitten extrajudicially by an incompetent person, with circumstances of despite, in the presence of a judge, in a full assembly, and none reproved the insolence and the cruelty of the affront: for they resolved to use him as they use wolves and tigers, with all things that may be destructive, violent, and impious: and in this the injury was heightened, because the blow was said to be given by Malchus, an Idumæan slave, and, therefore, a contemptible person;[a] but far more unworthy by his ingratitude, for so he repaid the holy Jesus for working a miracle and healing his ear. But so the scripture was fulfilled; "He shall give his body to the smiters, and his cheeks to the nipper," saith the prophet Isaiah; and, "They shall smite the cheek of the Judge of Israel," saith Micah. And this very circumstance of the passion, Lactantius affirms to have been foretold by the Erythræan sibyl.[b] But no meekness, or indifference, could engage our Lord not to protest his innocence: and though, following his steps, we must walk in the regions of patience, and tranquillity, and admirable toleration of injuries; yet we may represent such defences of ourselves, which, by not resisting the sentence, may testify that our suffering is undeserved: and if our innocence will not preserve our lives, it will advance our title to a better; and every good cause ill judged shall be brought to another tribunal, to receive a just and unerring sentence.

2. Annas, having suffered this unworthy usage towards a person so excellent,[c] sent him away to Caiaphas, who had formerly, in a full council, resolved he should die; yet now, palliating the design with the scheme of a tribunal, they seek out for witnesses, and the witnesses are to seek for allegations; and when they find them, they are to seek for proof, and those proofs were to seek for unity and consent, and nothing was ready for their purposes; but they were forced to use the semblance of a judicial process, that, because they were to make use of Pilate's authority to put him to death, they might persuade Pilate to accept of their examination and conviction without further inquiry. But such had been the excellency, and exemplar piety, and prudence, of the life of Jesus, that, if they pretended against him questions of their law, they were not capital in a Roman court: if they affirmed, that he had moved the people to sedition and affected the kingdom, they saw that all the world would convince them of false testimony. At last, after many attempts, they accused him for a figurative speech, a trope which they could not understand; which, if it had been spoken in a literal sense, and had been acted too, according to the letter, had been so far from a fault, that it would have been a prodigy of power; and it had been easier to raise the temple of Jerusalem, than to raise the temple of his body. In the mean time, the Lamb of God left his cause to defend itself, under the protection of his heavenly Father; not only because himself was determined to die, but because if he had not, those premises could never have inferred it. But this silence of the holy Jesus fulfilled a prophecy, it made his enemies full of murmur and amazement, it made them to see that he despised the accusations, as certain and apparent calumnies; but that himself was fearless of the issue, and, in the sense of morality and mysteries, taught us not to be too apt to excuse ourselves, when the semblance of a fault lies upon us, unless, by some other duty, we are obliged to our defences; since he, who was most innocent, was most silent: and it was expedient that, as the first Adam increased his sin by a vain apology, the silence and sufferance of the second Adam should expiate and reconcile it.[d]

3. But Caiaphas had a reserve, which he knew should do the business in that assembly; he adjured him, by God, to tell him if he "were the Christ." The holy Jesus, being adjured by so sacred a name, would not now refuse an answer, lest it might not consist with that honour which is due to it, and which he always paid, and that he might neither despise the authority of the high priest, nor, upon so solemn occasion, be wanting to that great truth,

[a] Malchus Idumæis missus captivus ab oris.
Vida, Episc. Cremon. lib. ii. Christeidos. Isa. l. 6. Mic. v. 1.

[b] Εἰς ἀνόμων χεῖρας καὶ ἀπίστων ὕστερον ἥξει,
Δώσουσιν τε Θεῷ ῥαπίσματα χερσὶν ἀνάγνοις.
INSTIT. lib. iv. c. 18.

[c] Victor in S. Marc.

[d] Taciturnitas Christi apologiam Adæ absolvit.—S. HIERON. in Marc.

which he came down to earth to persuade to the world. And, when three such circumstances concur, it is enough to open our mouths, though we let in death. And so did our Lord, confessed himself to be "the Christ, the Son of the living God." And this the high priest was pleased, as the design was laid, to call "blasphemy;" and there they voted him to die. Then it was "the high priest rent his clothes;" the veil of the temple was rent when the passion was finished; the clothes of the priests at the beginning of it: and as that signified the departing of the synagogue, and laying religion open; so did the rending the garments of Caiaphas prophetically signify, that the priesthood should be rent from him, and from the nation.[e] And thus the personated and theatrical admiration at Jesus became the type of his own punishment, and consigned the nation to deletion: and usually God so dispenses his judgments, that when men personate the tragedies of others, they really act their own.

4. Whilst these things were acting concerning the Lord, a sad accident happened to his servant Peter: for, being engaged in strange and evil company, in the midst of danger, surprised with a question without time to deliberate an answer, to find subterfuges, or to fortify himself, he denied his Lord shamefully, with some boldness at first, and this grew to a licentious confidence, and then to impudence, and denying, with perjury, that he knew not his Lord, who yet was known to him as his own heart, and was dearer than his eyes, and for whom he professed, but a little before, he would die; but did not do so till many years after. But thus he became to us a sad example of human infirmity;[f] and if the prince of the apostles fell so foully, it is full of pity, but not to be upbraided, if we see the fall of lesser stars. And yet, that we may prevent so great a ruin, we must not mingle with such company, who will provoke or scorn us into sin; and if we do, yet we must stand upon our guard, that a sudden motion do not surprise us: or if we be arrested, yet let us not enter further into our sin, like wild beasts intricating themselves by their impatience. For there are some, who, being ashamed and impatient to have been engaged, take sanctuary in boldness and a shameless abetting it, so running into the darkness of hell to hide their nakedness. But he also, by returning, and rising instantly, became to us a rare example of penitence; and his not lying long in the crime did facilitate this restitution. For the Spirit of God being extinguished by our works of darkness, is like a taper, which if, as soon as the flame is blown out, it be brought to the fire, it sucks light, and, without trouble, is reenkindled; but if it cools into death and stiffness, it requires a longer stay and trouble. The holy Jesus, in the midst of his own sufferings, forgot not his servant's danger, but was pleased to look upon him when the cock crew; and the cock was the preacher, and the look of Jesus was the grace that made the servant effectual: and because he was but newly fallen, and his habitual love of his Master, though interrupted, yet had suffered no natural abatement, he returned, with the swiftness of an eagle, to the embraces and primitive affections of his Lord.

5. By this time suppose sentence given, Caiaphas prejudging all the sanhedrim; for he first declared Jesus to have spoken blasphemy, and the fact to be notorious, and then asked their votes; which whoso then should have denied, must have contested the judgment of the high priest, who, by the favour of the Romans, was advanced, (Valerius Gratus, who was president of Judea, having been his patron,) and his faction potent, and his malice great, and his heart set upon this business; all which inconveniences none of them durst have suffered, unless he had had the confidence greater than of an apostle at that time. But this sentence was but like strong dispositions to an enraged fever; he was only declared apt and worthy for death, they had no power at that time to inflict it; but yet they let loose all the fury of mad-men, and insolency of wounded smarting soldiers: and although, from the time of his being in the house of Annas, till the council met, they had used him with studied indignities; yet now they renewed and doubled the unmercifulness, and their injustice, to so great a height, that their injuries must needs have been greater than his patience, if his patience had been less than infinite. For thus man's redemption grows up, as the load swells which the holy Jesus bare for us; for these were our portion, and we, having turned the flowers of paradise into thistles, should for ever have felt their infelicity, had not Jesus paid the debt. But he bearing them upon his tender body with an even, and excellent, and dispassionate spirit, offered up these beginnings of sufferings to his Father, to obtain pardon even for them that injured him, and for all the world.

6. Judas now, seeing that this matter went further than he intended it, repented of his fact. For although evil persons are, in the progress of their iniquity, invited on by new arguments, and supported by confidence and a careless spirit: yet, when iniquity is come to the height, or so great a proportion, that it is apt to produce despair, or an intolerable condition, then the devil suffers the conscience to thaw and grow tender; but it is the tenderness of a bile, it is soreness rather and a new disease; and either it comes when the time of repentance is past, or leads to some act which shall make the pardon to be impossible: and so it happened here. For Judas, either impatient of the shame or of the sting, was thrust on to despair of pardon, with a violence as hasty and as great as were his needs. And despair is very often used like the bolts and bars of hell gates; it seizes upon them that had entered into the suburbs of eternal death by an habitual sin, and it secures them against all retreat.

[e] Conscidit vestimenta sua, ostendens turpitudinem suam, et nuditatem animæ, et mysterium manifestans, conscindendum esse sacerdotium vetus.—ORIGEN. Idem ait S. Hier.

[f] "Ὃν τρόπον αἱ σκιαὶ τοῖς σώμασιν ἕπονται, οὕτως αἱ ἁμαρτίαι ταῖς ψυχαῖς ἀκολουθοῦσιν.—AGAPET. Diac. Capit. admonit. 69.

Leo Serm. 9. de Pass. Dom. et Euthym. in hunc locum.

And the devil is forward enough to bring a man to repentance, provided it be too late: and Esau wept bitterly, and repented him; and the five foolish virgins lift up their voice aloud, when the gates were shut; and in hell men shall repent to all eternity. But I consider the very great folly and infelicity of Judas: it was at midnight he received his money in the house of Annas, betimes in that morning he repented his bargain; he threw the money back again, but his sin stuck close, and, it is thought, to a sad eternity. Such is the purchase of treason, and the reward of covetousness; it is cheap in its offers, momentary in its possession, unsatisfying in the fruition, uncertain in the stay, sudden in its departure, horrid in the remembrance, and a ruin, a certain and miserable ruin, is in the event. When Judas came in that sad condition, and told his miserable story to them that set him on work, they let him go away unpitied; he had served their ends in betraying his Lord; and those that hire such servants, use to leave them in the disaster, to shame and to sorrow: and so did the priests, but took the money, and refused to put it into the treasury, because it was "the price of blood;"[g] but they made no scruple to take it from the treasury to buy that blood. Any thing seems lawful, that serves the ends of ambitious and bloody persons, and then they are scrupulous in their cases of conscience, when nothing of interest does intervene: for evil men make religion the servant of interest, and sometimes weak men think, that it is the fault of the religion, and suspect that all of it is a design, because many great politics make it so. The end of the tragedy was, that Judas died with an ignoble death, marked with the circumstances of a horrid judgment,[h] and perished by the most infamous hands in the world, that is, by his own. Which, if it be confronted against the excellent spirit of St. Peter, who did an act as contradictory to his honour, and the grace of God, as could be easily imagined; yet, taking sanctuary in the arms of his Lord, he lodged in his heart for ever, and became an example to all the world, of the excellency of the Divine mercy, and the efficacy of a holy hope, and a hearty, timely, and an operative repentance.

7. But now all things were ready for the purpose, the high priest and all his council go, along with the holy Jesus, to the house of Pilate, hoping he would verify their sentence, and bring it to execution, that they might once be rid of their fears, and enjoy their sin and their reputation quietly. St. Basil affirms, that the high priest caused the holy Jesus to be led with a cord about his neck,[i] and, in memory of that, the priests, for many ages, wore a stole about theirs. But the Jews did it according to the custom of the nation, to signify he was condemned to death: they desired Pilate that he would crucify him, they having found him worthy. And when Pilate inquired into the particulars, they gave him a general and indefinite answer; "If he were not guilty, we would not have brought him unto thee:" they intended not to make Pilate judge of the cause, but executor of their cruelty. But Pilate had not learned to be guided by an implicit faith of such persons, which he knew to be malicious and violent; and, therefore, still called for instances and arguments of their accusation. And that all the world might see with how great unworthiness they prosecuted the Messias, they chiefly there accused him of such crimes, upon which themselves condemned him not, and which they knew to be false, but yet likely to move Pilate, if he had been passionate or inconsiderate in his sentences; "He offered to make himself a king." This discourse happened at the entry of the prætorium; for the Jews, who had no conscience of killing the King of heaven, made a conscience of the external customs and ceremonies of their law, which had in them no interior sanctity, which were apt to separate them from the nations, and remark them with characters of religion and abstraction: it would defile them to go to a Roman forum, where a capital action was to be judged; and yet the effusion of the best blood in the world was not esteemed against their religion: so violent and blind is the spirit of malice, which turns humanity into cruelty, wisdom into craft, diligence into subornation, and religion into superstition.

8. Two other articles they alleged against him: but the first concerned not Pilate, and the second was involved in the third, and, therefore, he chose to examine him upon this only, of his being "a King." To which the holy Jesus answered, that it is true, he was a King indeed, but "not of this world;" his throne is heaven, the angels are his courtiers, and the whole creation are his subjects: his regiment is spiritual, his judicatories are the courts of conscience and church-tribunals, and at dooms-day the clouds: the tribute which he demands are, conformity to his laws, faith, hope, and charity; no other gabels but the duties of a holy spirit, and the expresses of a religious worship, and obedient will, and a consenting understanding. And in all this, Pilate thought the interest of Cæsar was not invaded. For certain it is, the discipline of Jesus confirmed it much, and supported it by the strongest pillars. And here Pilate saw how impertinent and malicious their accusation was: and we, who declaim against the unjust proceedings of the Jews against our dearest Lord, should do well to take care that we, in accusing any of our brethren, either with malicious purpose, or with an uncharitable circumstance, do not commit the same fault which, in them, we so hate and accuse. Let no man speak any thing of his neighbour but what is true: and yet, if the truth be heightened by the biting rhetoric of a satirical spirit, extended and drawn forth in circumstances and arts of aggravation, the truth

[g] Indè sacerdotes, pretium quòd sanguinis esset,
Illicitum fantes adytis jam condere templi,
Quod dare tum licitum, dum sanguis distraheretur,
Credebant ——— ———
JUVENCUS. Hist. Evang. lib. iv.

[h] Non potuit Judas pejore manu perire, et quamvis sceleratum occiderit, non debuit tamen.—S. AUGUST. de Civit. Dei, lib. i. c. 17.

[i] In Mystagog. Eccles. Author. Com. in Marc. apud S. Hieron.

becomes a load to the guilty person, is a prejudice to the sentence of the judge, and hath not so much as the excuse of zeal, much less the charity of christianity. Sufficient to every man is the plain story of his crime; and to excuse as much of it as we can, would better become us, who perish unless we be excused for infinite irregularities. But if we add this also, that we accuse our brethren before them that may amend them, and reform their error; if we pity their persons, and do not hate them; if we seek nothing of their disgrace, and make not their shame public, but when the public is necessarily concerned, or the state of the man's sin requires it; then our accusations are charitable; but if they be not, all such accusations are accepted by Christ with as much displeasure, in proportion to the degree of the malice, and the proper effect, as was this accusation of his own person.

9. But Pilate, having pronounced Jesus innocent, and perceiving he was a Galilean, sent him to Herod, as being a more competent person to determine concerning one of his own jurisdiction. Herod was glad at the honour done to him, and the person brought him, being now desirous to see some miracle done before him. But the holy Jesus spake not one word there, nor did any sign; so to reprove the sottish carelessness of Herod, who, living in the place of Jesus's abode, never had seen his person, nor heard his sermons. And if we neglect the opportunities of grace, and refuse to hear the voice of Christ in the time of mercy and Divine appointment, we may arrive at that state of misery, in which Christ will refuse to speak one word of comfort to us; and the homilies of the gospel shall be dead letters, and the spirit not at all refreshed, nor the understanding instructed, nor the affections moved, nor the will determined; but because we have, during all our time, stopped our ears, in his time God will stop his mouth, and shut up the springs of grace, that we shall receive no refreshment, or instruction, or pardon, or felicity. Jesus suffered not himself to be moved at the pertinacious accusations of the Jews, nor the desires of the tyrant, but persevered in silence, till Herod and his servants despised him, and dismissed him. For so it became our High Priest, who was to sanctify all our sufferings, to consecrate affronts and scorn, that we may learn to endure contempt, and to suffer ourselves, in a religious cause, to be despised; and when it happens in any other, to remember that we have our dearest Lord for a precedent, of bearing it with admirable simplicity and equanimity of deportment: and it is a mighty stock of self-love that dwells in our spirits, which makes us, of all afflictions, most impatient of this. But Jesus endured this despite, and suffered this to be added, that he was exposed in scorn to the boys of the streets. For Herod caused him to be arrayed in white, sent him out to be scorned by the people and hooted at by idle persons, and so remitted him to Pilate. And since that accident to our Lord, the church hath not indecently chosen to clothe her priests with albs, or white garments; and it is a symbolical intimation and representment of that part of the passion and affront, which Herod passed upon the holy Jesus: and this is so far from deserving a reproof, that it were to be wished all the children of the church would imitate all those graces, which Christ exercised when he wore that garment,[k] which she hath taken up in ceremony and thankful memory; that is, in all their actions and sufferings be so estranged from secular arts and mixtures of the world, so intent upon religion, and active in all its interests, so indifferent to all acts of providence, so equal in all chances, so patient of every accident, so charitable to enemies, and so undetermined by exterior events, that nothing may draw us forth from the severities of our religion, or entice us from the retirements of a recollected, and sober, and patient spirit, or make us to depart from the courtesies of piety, though, for such adhesion and pursuit, we be esteemed fools, or ignorant, or contemptible.

10. When Pilate had received the holy Jesus, and found that Herod had sent him back uncondemned, he attempted to rescue him from their malice, by making him a donative and a freed man, at the petition of the people. But they preferred a murderer and a rebel, Barabbas, before him; for themselves being rebels against the King of heaven, loved to acquit persons criminal in the same kind of sin, rather than their Lord, against whom they took up all the arms which they could receive from violence and perfect malice, "desiring to have him crucified, who raised the dead, and to have the other released, who destroyed the living."[l] And when Pilate saw they were set upon it, he consented, and delivered him first to be scourged;[m] which the soldiers executed with violence and unrelenting hands, opening his virginal body to nakedness, and tearing his tender flesh till the pavement was purpled with a shower of holy blood. It is reported in the ecclesiastical story, that when St. Agnes and St. Barbara, holy virgins and martyrs, were stripped naked to execution, God, pitying their great shame and trouble to have their nakedness discovered, made for them a veil of light, and sent them to a modest and desired death. But the holy Jesus, who chose all sorts of shame and confusion, that, by a fulness of suffering, he might expiate his Father's anger, and that he might consecrate to our sufferance all kind of affront and passion, endured even the shame of nakedness at the time of his scourging, suffering himself to be divested of his robes, that we might be clothed with that stole he put off: for therefore he took on him the state of sinning Adam, and became naked, that we might first be clothed with righteousness, and then with immortality.

[k] Θεῷ δὲ ζῆν διὰ τέλους δίκαιος ὢν,
Μὴ λαμπρὸς ὢν ταῖς χλαμύσιν, ὡς τῇ καρδίᾳ.—MENAND.

[l] S. Aug. Tract. 15. in Joann.

[m] Vinctus in his Dominus stetit ædibus, atque columnis
Annexus tergum dedit ut servile flagellis:
Perstat adhuc templumque gerit veneranda columna.
Nosque decet cunctis immunes vivere flagris.
PRUDENT.

Cernitur in toto corpore sculptus amor.
NAZ. in Chr. Patien.

11. After they had scourged him without remorse, they "clothed him with purple, and crowned him with thorns," and "put a cane in his hand for a sceptre," and "bowed their knees before him," and "saluted him" with mockery, with a "Hail, King of the Jews!" and they "beat him," and "spat upon him;" and then Pilate brought him forth, and showed this sad spectacle to the people, hoping this might move them to compassion, who never loved to see a man prosperous, and are always troubled to see the same man in misery. But the earth which was cursed for Adam's sake, and was sowed with thorns and thistles, produced the full harvest of them, and the second Adam gathered them all, and made garlands of them, as ensigns of his victory, which he was now in pursuit of, against sin, the grave, and hell. And we also may make our thorns, which are in themselves pungent and dolorous, to be a crown, if we bear them patiently, and unite them to Christ's passion, and offer them to his honour, and bear them in his cause, and rejoice in them for his sake. And indeed, after such a grove of thorns growing upon the head of our Lord, to see one of Christ's members soft, delicate, and effeminate, is a great indecency, next to this of seeing the Jews use the King of glory with the greatest reproach and infamy.

12. But nothing prevailing, nor the innocence of Jesus, nor his immunity from the sentence of Herod, nor the industry and diligence of Pilate, nor the misery, nor the sight of the afflicted Lamb of God, at last (for so God decreed to permit it, and Christ to suffer it) Pilate gave sentence of death upon him, having first washed his hands; of which God served his end, to declare the innocence of his Son, of which, in this whole process, he was most curious, and suffered not the least probability to adhere to him; yet Pilate served no end of his, nor preserved any thing of his innocence. He that rails upon a prince, and cries, Saving your honour, you are a tyrant; and he that strikes a man upon the face, and cries him mercy, and undoes him, and says it was in jest, does just like that person that sins against God, and thinks to be excused by saying it was against his conscience; that is washing our hands when they are stained in blood, as if a ceremony of purification were enough to cleanse a soul from the stains of a spiritual impurity. So some refuse not to take any oath in times of persecution, and say it obliges not, because it was forced, and done against their wills; as if the doing of it were washed off by protesting against it, whereas the protesting against it declares me criminal, if I rather choose not death than that which I profess to be a sin. But all the persons which co-operated in this death were in this life consigned to a fearful judgment after it. The Jews took the blood (which Pilate seemed to wash off) "upon themselves and their children," and the blood of this Paschal Lamb stuck upon their forehead, and marked them, not to escape, but to fall under the sword of the destroying angel, and they perished either by a more hasty death, or shortly after, in the extirpation and miserable ruin of their nation. And Pilate, who had a less share in the crime, yet had a black character of a secular judgment; for, not long after, he was, by Vitellius, the president of Syria, sent to Rome, to answer to the crimes objected against him by the Jews, whom to please he had done so much violence to his conscience; and, by Cæsar's sentence, he was banished to Vienna, deprived of all his honours, where he lived ingloriously, till, by impatience of his calamity, he killed himself with his own hand. And thus the blood of Jesus, shed for the salvation of the world, became to them a curse; and that which purifies the saints stuck to them that shed it, and mingled it not with the tears of repentance, to be a leprosy loathsome and incurable. So manna turns to worms, and the wine of angels to vinegar and lees, when it is received into impure vessels, or tasted by wanton palates; and the sun himself produces rats and serpents, when it reflects upon the dirt of Nilus.

THE PRAYER.

O holy and immaculate Lamb of God, who wert pleased to suffer shame and sorrow, to be brought before tribunals, to be accused maliciously, betrayed treacherously, condemned unjustly, and scourged most rudely, suffering the most severe and most unhandsome inflictions which could be procured by potent, subtle, and extremest malice, and didst choose this out of love greater than the love of mothers, more affectionate than the tears of joy and pity dropped from the eyes of most passionate women, by these fontinels of blood issuing forth life, and health, and pardon upon all thine enemies; teach me to apprehend the baseness of sin, in proportion to the greatest of those calamities which my sin made it necessary for thee to suffer, that I may hate the cause of thy sufferings, and adore thy mercy, and imitate thy charity, and copy out thy patience and humility, and love thy person to the uttermost extent and degrees of my affections. Lord, what am I, that the eternal Son of God should suffer one stripe for me? But thy love is infinite; and how great a misery is it to provoke by sin so great a mercy, and despise so miraculous a goodness, and to do fresh despite to the Son of God! But our sins are innumerable, and our infirmities are mighty. Dearest Jesu, pity me, for I am accused by my own conscience, and am found guilty; I am stripped naked of my innocence, and bound fast by lust, and tormented with stripes and wounds of enraged appetites. But let thy innocence excuse me, the robes of thy righteousness clothe me, thy bondage set me free, and thy stripes heal me; that thou being my Advocate, my Physician, my Patron, and my Lord, I may be adopted into the union of thy merits, and partake of the efficacy of thy sufferings, and be crowned as thou art, having my sins changed to virtues, and my thorns to rays of glory under thee, our Head, in the participations of eternity, O holy and immaculate Lamb of God. Amen.

DISCOURSE XX.

Of Death, and the due Manner of Preparation to it.

1. The Holy Spirit of God hath in Scripture revealed to us but one way of preparing to death, and that is, by a holy life; and there is nothing in all the book of life concerning this exercise of address to death, but such advices which suppose the dying person in a state of grace. St. James indeed counsels,[a] that in sickness we should send for the ministers ecclesiastical, and that "they pray over us," and that we "confess our sins," and "they shall be forgiven;" that is, those prayers are of great efficacy for the removing the sickness, and taking off that punishment of sin, and healing them in a certain degree, according to the efficacy of the ministry, and the dispositions or capacities of the sick person. But we must know, that oftentimes universal effects are attributed to partial causes; because, by the analogy of Scripture, we are taught, that all the body of holy actions and ministries are to unite in production of the event, and that, without that adunation, one thing alone cannot operate; but because no one alone does the work, but by an united power, therefore indefinitely the effect is ascribed sometimes to one, sometimes to another, meaning, that one as much as the other, that is, all together, are to work the pardon and the grace. But the doctrine of preparation to death, we are clearest taught in the parable of the ten virgins.[b] Those who were wise stood waiting for the coming of the bridegroom, their lamps burning; only when the lord was at hand, at the notice of his coming published, they trimmed their lamps, and they, so disposed, went forth and met him, and entered with him into his interior and eternal joys. They whose lamps did not stand ready beforehand, expecting the uncertain hour, were shut forth, and bound in darkness. "Watch, therefore," so our Lord applies and expounds the parable, "for ye know not the day, nor the hour, of the coming of the Son of man."[c] Whenever the arrest of death seizes us, unless before that notice we had oil in our vessels, that is, grace in our hearts, habitual grace, (for nothing else can reside or dwell there, an act cannot inhabit or be in a vessel,) it is too late to make preparation. But they who have it may and must prepare, that is, they must stir the fire, trim the vessel, make it more actual in its exercise and productions, full of ornament, advantages, and degrees. And that is all we know from Scripture concerning preparation.

2. And indeed, since all our life we are dying, and this minute in which I now write, death divides with me, and hath got the surer part and more certain possession, it is but reasonable, that we should always be doing the offices of preparation.[d] If to-day we were not dying and passing on to our grave, then we might with more safety defer our work till the morrow: but as fuel in a furnace, in every degree of its heat and reception of the flame, is converting into fire and ashes, and the disposing it to the last mutation is the same work with the last instance of its change; so is the age of every day a beginning of death, and the night composing us to sleep bids us to go to our lesser rest; because that night, which is the end of the preceding day, is but a lesser death; and whereas now we have died so many days, the last day of our life is but the dying so many more, and when that last day of dying will come we know not. There is nothing then added but the circumstance of sickness, which also happens many times before; only men are pleased to call that death which is the end of dying, when we cease to die any more: and, therefore, to put off our preparation till that which we call death, is to put off the work of all our life, till the time comes in which it is to cease and determine.

3. But to accelerate our early endeavour, (besides what hath been formerly considered upon the proper grounds of repentance,) I here re-enforce the consideration of death in such circumstances which are apt to engage us upon an early industry. 1. I consider that no man is sure that he shall not die suddenly;[e] and therefore, if heaven be worth securing, it were fit that we should reckon every day the vespers of death, and therefore that, according to the usual rites of religion, it be begun and spent with religious offices: and let us consider, that those many persons who are remarked in history to have died suddenly, either were happy by an early piety, or miserable by a sudden death. And if uncertainty of condition be an abatement of felicity, and spoils the good we possess, no man can be happy but he that hath lived well, that is, who hath secured his condition by an habitual and living piety. For since God hath not told us we shall not die suddenly, is it not certain he intended we should prepare for sudden death, as well as against death clothed in any other circumstances? Fabius, surnamed Pictor,[f] was choked with a hair in a mess of milk, Anacreon with a raisin, Cardinal

[a] James v. 14, &c.

[b] Matt. xxv. Ἀλλ' εὐκλεῶς τοι κατθανεῖν χάρις βροτῷ. —Æschyl. Agamemn.

[c] Matt. xxv. 13.

[d] ——— festinat decurrere velox
Flosculus angustæ, miseræque brevissima vitæ
Portio ———
——— Τίς δὲ πλὴν θεῶν
Ἅπαντ' ἀπήμων τὸν δι' αἰῶνος χρόνον;
Τὸ μόρσιμον γὰρ τὸν τ' ἐλεύθερον μένει,
Καὶ τὸν πρὸς ἄλλης δεσποτούμενον χερός.
Æschyl. Agam.

Cras hoc fiet, idem cras fiet. Quid quasi magnum
Nempe diem donas? Sed cùm lux altera venit,
Jam cras hesternum consumpsimus; ecce aliud cras
Egerit hos annos, et semper paulum erit ultrà.
Pers. Sat. 5.

[e] Quid quisque vitet, nunquam homini satis
Cautum est in horas. Navita Bosporum
Pœnus perhorrescit, neque ultrà
Cæca timet aliunde fata:
Miles sagittas et celerem fugam
Parthi; catenas Parthus et Italum
Robur. Sed improvisa lethi
Vis rapuit, rapietque gentes.—Hor. lib. ii. Od. 13

[f] Cicero in Brut.

Colonna with figs crusted with ice, Adrian the Fourth with a fly, Drusus Pompeius with a pear, Domitius Afer, Quintilian's tutor, with a full cup, Casimire the Second, king of Polonia,[g] with a little draught of wine, Amurath with a full goblet, Tarquinius Priscus with a fish-bone. For as soon as a man is born, that which in nature only remains to him, is to die;[h] and if we differ in the way or time of our abode, or the manner of our exit, yet we are even at last: and since it is not determined by a natural cause which way we shall go, or at what age a wise man will suppose himself always upon his death-bed; and such supposition is like making of his will, he is not the nearer death for doing it, but he is the readier for it when it comes.

4. St. Jerome said well, "He deserves not the name of a christian, who will live in that state of life in which he will not die." And indeed it is a great venture to be in an evil state of life, because every minute of it hath a danger; and therefore a succession of actions, in every one of which he may as well perish as escape, is a boldness that hath no mixture of wisdom or probable venture. How many persons have died in the midst of an act of sport, or at a merry meeting! Grimoaldus, a Lombard king, died with shooting of a pigeon; Thales, the Milesian, in the theatre; Lucia, the sister of Aurelius the emperor, playing with her little son, was wounded in her breast with a needle, and died; Benno, bishop of Adelburg, with great ceremony and joy consecrating St. Michael's church, was crowded to death by the people; so was the duke of Saxony, at the inauguration of Albert the First.[i] The great lawyer, Baldus, playing with a little dog, was bitten upon the lip, instantly grew mad, and perished; Charles the Eighth of France, seeing certain gentlemen playing at tenniscourt, swooned, and recovered not; Henry the Second was killed running at tilt; Ludovicus Borgia with riding the great horse; and the old Syracusan, Archimedes, was slain by a rude soldier as he was making diagrams in the sand, which was his greatest pleasure. How many men have died laughing, or in the ecstasies of a great joy! Philippides the comedian, and Dionysius the tyrant of Sicily, died with joy at the news of a victory.[k] Diagoras of Rhodes, and Chilo the philosopher, expired in the embraces of their sons crowned with an Olympic laurel.[l] Polycrita Naxia, being saluted the saviouress of her country;[m] Marcus Juventius, when the senate decreed him honours; the emperor Conrad the Second, when he triumphed after the conquest of Italy; had a joy bigger than their heart, and their fancy swelled it, till they burst, and died.[n] Death can enter in at any door: Philistion of Nice died with excessive laughter; so did the poet Philemon, being provoked to it only by seeing an ass eat figs.

[g] Mart. Crom. lib. vi. Volaterran. lib. iv. c. 22.

[h] Cui nasci contigit, mori restat; intervallis distinguimur, exitu æquamur.—QUINTIL.

Divesne, prisco natus ab Inacho,
Nil interest, an pauper et infimâ
De gente, sub dio morêris,
Victima nil miserantis Orci.
Omnes eodem cogimur —— HOR. lib. ii. Od. 3.

And the number of persons who have been found suddenly dead in their beds is so great,[o] that, as it engages many to a more certain and regular devotion for their compline, so it were well it were pursued to the utmost intention of God; that is, that all the parts of religion should, with zeal and assiduity, be entertained and finished, that, as it becomes wise men, we never be surprised with that we are sure will some time or other happen. A great general in Italy, at the sudden death of Alfonsus of Ferrara, and Ludovico Corbinelli, at the sight of the sad accident upon Henry the Second of France now mentioned, turned religious, and they did what God intended in those deaths. It concerns us to be curious of single actions, because, even in those shorter periods, we may expire and find our graves. But if the state of life be contradictory to our hopes of heaven, it is like affronting of a cannon before a beleaguered town a month together; it is a contempt of safety, and a rendering all reason useless and unprofitable: but he only is wise, who, having made death familiar to him by expectation and daily apprehension, does at all instants go forth to meet it. The wise virgins "went forth to meet the bridegroom," for they "were ready." Excellent, therefore, is the counsel of the son of Sirach: "Use physic or ever thou be sick. Before judgment examine thyself, and in the day of visitation thou shalt find mercy. Humble thyself before thou be sick, and in the time of sins show repentance. Let nothing hinder thee to pay thy vows in due time, and defer not until death to be justified."[p]

5. Secondly: I consider, that it often happens, that, in those few days of our last visitation, which many men design for their preparation and repentance, God hath expressed by an exterior accident, that those persons have deceived themselves and neglected their own salvation. St. Gregory[q] reports of Chrysaurius, a gentleman in the province of Valeria, rich, vicious, and witty, lascivious, covetous, and proud, that, being cast upon his death-bed, he fancied he saw evil spirits coming to arrest him and drag him to hell. He fell into great agony and trouble, shrieked out, called for his son, who was a very religious person, flattered him, as willing to have been rescued by any thing: but perceiving his danger increase, and grown desperate, he called loud with repeated clamours, "Give me respite but till the morrow;" and with those words he died, there being "no place left for his repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears" and groans. The same was the case of a drunken monk, whom Venerable Bede mentions.[r] Upon his death-bed he seemed to see hell opened, and a place assigned him near to Caiaphas, and those who crucified our dearest Lord. The religious persons that stood about his bed called on him to repent of his sins, to

Βιότης μὲν γὰρ χρόνος ἐστὶ βραχύς· Κρυφθεὶς δὲ ὑπὸ γῆς κεῖται ἄϋπνος τὸν πάντα χρόνον.

[i] Crantzius, lib. iii. c. 51. Matthiol. in Dioscor.
[k] Plin. lib. vii. c. 53. [l] Cicer. l. Tusc.
[m] Plut. et Gel. de Illust. Mulier. [n] Cuspin.
[o] Lotus nobiscum est, hilaris cœnavit, et idem inventus manè est mortuus Andragoras.—MART. lib. vi.
[p] Ecclus. xviii. 19, &c. [q] Homil. xii. in Evang
[r] Hist. Gent. Anglor. lib. v. c. 15.

implore the mercies of God, and to trust in Christ: but he answered, with reason enough, "This is no time to change my life; the sentence is passed upon me, and it is too late." And it is very considerable and sad which Petrus Damianus tells of Gunizo,[s] a factious and ambitious person, to whom, it is said, the tempter gave notice of his approaching death: but when any man preached repentance to him, out of a strange incuriousness, or the spirit of reprobation, he seemed like a dead and unconcerned person; in all other discourses he was awake, and apt to answer. For God hath shut up the gates of mercy, that no streams should issue forth to quench the flames of hell; or else had shut up the gates of reception and entertainment, that it should not enter: either God denies to give them pardon when they call, or denies to them a power to call; they either cannot pray, or God will not answer. Now, since these stories are related by men, learned, pious, and eminent in their generations, and because they served no design but the ends of piety, and have in them nothing dissonant from revelation or the frequent events of Providence, we may upon their stock consider, that God's judgments and visible marks being set upon a state of life, although they happen but seldom in the instances, yet they are of universal purpose and signification. Upon all murderers God hath not thrown a thunderbolt, nor broken all sacrilegious persons upon the wheel of an inconstant and ebbing estate, nor spoken to every oppressor from heaven in a voice of thunder, nor cut off all rebels in the first attempts of insurrection: but because he hath done so to some, we are to look upon those judgments as Divine accents, and voices of God; threatening all the same crimes with the like events, and with the ruins of eternity. For though God does not always make the same prologues to death, yet by these few accidents happening to single persons, we are to understand his purposes concerning all in the same condition; it was not the person, so much as the estate, which God then remarked with so visible characters of his displeasure.

6. And it seems to me a wonder, that since, from all the records of Scripture,[t] urging the uncertainty of the day of death, the horror of the day of judgment, the severity of God, the dissolution of the world, the certainty of our account; still, from all these premises, the Spirit of God makes no other inference, but that we "watch," and "stand in a readiness;" that we "live in all holy conversation and godliness;" and that there is no one word concerning any other manner of an essentially necessary preparation, none but this; yet that there are doctrines commenced, and rules prescribed, and offices set down, and suppletories invented by curates of souls, how to prepare a vicious person, and, upon his death-bed, to reconcile him to the hopes and promises of heaven. Concerning which, I desire that every person would but inquire,[u] where any one promise is recorded in Scripture concerning such addresses, and what articles Christ hath drawn up between his Father and us, concerning a preparation begun upon our death-bed: and if he shall find none, (as, most certainly, from Genesis to the Revelation, there is not a word concerning it, but very much against it,) let him first build his hopes upon this proposition, that "a holy life is the only preparation to a happy death;" and then we can, without danger, proceed to some other considerations.

7. When a good man, or a person concerning whom it is not certain he hath lived in habitual vices, comes to die, there are but two general ways of intercourse with him; the one to keep him from new sins, the other to make some emendations of the old; the one to fortify him against special weaknesses and proper temptations of that estate, and the other to trim his lamp; that by excellent actions he may adorn his spirit, making up the omissions of his life, and supplying the imperfections of his estate; that his soul may return into the hands of its Creator as pure as it can, every degree of perfection being an advantage so great, as that the loss of every the least portion of it cannot be recompensed with all the good of this world. Concerning the first; the temptations proper to this estate are, either weakness in faith, despair, or presumption: for whatsoever is besides these, as it is the common infelicity of all the several states of life, so they are oftentimes arguments of an ill condition, of immortification of vicious habits, and that he comes not to this combat well prepared; such as are, covetousness, unwillingness to make restitution, remanent affections to his former vices, an unresigned spirit, and the like.

8. In the ecclesiastical story, we find many dying persons mentioned, who have been very much afflicted with some doubts concerning an article of faith. St. Gregory,[x] in an epistle he wrote to St. Austin, instances, in the temptation which Eusebius suffered upon his death-bed. And, although sometimes the devil chooses an article that is not proper to that state, knowing that every such doubt is well enough for his purpose, because of the incapacity of the person to suffer long disputes, and of the jealousy and suspicion of a dying and weak man, fearing lest every thing should cozen him; yet it is commonly instanced in the article of the resurrection, or the state of separation or reunion. And it seems to some persons incredible, that, from a bed of sickness, a state of misery, a cloud of ignorance, a load of passions, a man should enter into the condition of a perfect understanding, great joy, and an intellectual life, a conversation with angels, a fruition of God; the change is greater than his reason; and his faith being, in conclusion, tottering like the ark, and ready to fall, seems a pillar as unsafe and unable to rely on as a bank of turf in an earthquake. Against this, a general remedy is prescribed by spiritual persons; that the sick man should apprehend all changes of persuasion, which happened to

[s] Biblioth. Ss. Pp. tom. iii.

[t] Matt. xxv. 13. and xxiv. 42. Mark xiii. 33. 2 Pet. iii. 10.

[u] ——— tecum priùs ergò voluta
Hæc animo ante tubas: galeatum serò duelli
Pœnitet ——— ——— Juvenal. Sat. 1.

[x] De Præconio S. Hieron.

him in his sickness, contradictory to those assents, which in his clearest use of reason he had, to be temptations and arts of the devil. And he hath reason so to think, when he remembers how many comforts of the Spirit of God, what joys of religion, what support, what assistances, what strengths he had, in the whole course of his former life, upon the stock of faith, and interest of the doctrine of christianity. And since the disbelieving the promises evangelical, at that time, can have no end of advantage, and that all wise men tell him it may have an end to make him lose the title to them, and do him infinite disadvantage;[y] upon the stock of interest and prudence, he must reject such fears, which cannot help him, but may ruin him. For all the works of grace which he did, upon the hopes of God, and the stock of the Divine revelations, (if he fails in his hold upon them,) are all rendered unprofitable. And it is certain, if there be no such thing as immortality and resurrection, he shall lose nothing for believing there is; but if there be, they are lost to him for not believing it.

9. But this is also to be cured by proper arguments. And there is no christian man but hath within him, and carries about him, demonstrations of the possibility and great instances of the credibility of those great changes, which these tempted persons have no reason to distrust, but because they think them too great and too good to be true. And here, not only the consideration of the Divine power, and his eternal goodness, is a proper antidote, but also the observation of what we have already received from God. To be raised from nothing to something, is a mutation not less than infinite; and from that which we were, in our first conception, to pass into so perfect and curious bodies, and to become discursive, sensible, passionate, and reasonable, and next to angels, is a greater change, than from this state to pass into that excellency and perfection of it, which we expect as the melioration and improvement of the present: for this is but a mutation of degrees, that of substance: this is more sensible, because we have perception in both states; that is of greater distance, because in the first term we were so far distant from what we are, that we could not perceive what then we were, much less desire to be what we now perceive: and yet God did that for us, unasked, without any obligation on his part, or merit on ours; much rather, then, may we be confident of this alteration of accidents and degrees, because God hath obliged himself by promise; he hath disposed us to it by qualities, actions, and habits, which are to the state of glory as infancy is to manhood, as elements are to excellent discourses, as blossoms are to ripe fruits. And he that hath wrought miracles for us, preserved us in dangers, done strange acts of providence, sent his Son to take our nature, made a Virgin to bear a son, and God to become man, and two natures to be one individual person, and all in order to this end, of which we doubt, hath given us so many arguments of credibility, that, if he had done any more, it would not have been left in our choice to believe or not believe; and then, much of the excellency of our faith would have been lost. Add to this, that we are not tempted to disbelieve the Roman story, or that Virgil's Æneids were writ by him, or that we ourselves are descended of such parents; because these things are not only transmitted to us by such testimony, which we have no reason to distrust, but because the tempter cannot serve any end upon us by producing such doubts in us: and, therefore, since we have greater testimony for every article of faith, and to believe it is of so much concernment to us, we may well suspect it to be an artifice of the devil to rob us of our reward; this proceeding of his being of the same nature with all his other temptations, which in our lifetime, like fiery darts, he threw into our face, to despoil us of our glory, and blot out the image of God imprinted on us.

10. Secondly:[z] If the devil tempts the sick person to despair, he who is by God appointed to minister a word of comfort, must fortify his spirit with consideration and representment of the Divine goodness, manifest in all the expresses of nature and grace, of providence and revelation; that God never "extinguishes the smoking flax, nor breaks the bruised reed;" that a constant and a hearty endeavour is the sacrifice which God delights in; that in the firmament of heaven there are little stars, and they are most in number, and there are but few of the greatest magnitude; that there are "children" and "babes in Christ," as well as strong men; and amongst these there are great differences; that the interruptions of the state of grace by intervening crimes, if they were rescinded by repentance, there were great danger in the interval, but served as increment of the Divine glory and arguments of care and diligence to us at the restitution. These and many more are then to be urged, when the sick person is in danger of being swallowed up with overmuch sorrow; and, therefore, to be insisted on in all like cases, as the physician gives him cordials: that we may do charity to him and minister comfort, not because they are always necessary, even in the midst of great sadnesses and discomforts. For we are to secure his love to God; that he acknowledge the Divine mercy; that he believe the article of remission of sins; that he be thankful to God for the blessings which already he hath received; and that he lay all the load of his discomfort upon himself, and his own incapacities of mercy: and then the sadness may be very great, and his tears clamorous, and his heart broken all in pieces, and his humility lower than the earth, and his hope indiscernible; and yet no danger to his

[y] In hunc ferè modum moribundus disseruit Socrates, apud Platonem in Phædone suo: Ἐι μὲν τυγχάνει ἀληθῆ ὄντα ἃ ἐγὼ λέγω, καλῶς δὴ ἔχει τὸ πεισθῆναι· εἰ δὲ μηδέν ἐστι τελευτήσαντι, ἀλλ' οὖν τοῦτόν γε τὸν χρόνον αὐτὸν πρὸ τοῦ θανάτου ἧττον τοῖς παροῦσιν ἀηδὴς ἔσομαι ὀδυρόμενος. ἡ δὲ ἄγνοιά μοι αὕτη οὐ ξυνδιατελεῖ, (κακὸν γὰρ ἦν) ἀλλ' ὀλίγον ὕστερον ἀπολεῖται. Non abs re ergò erit ut moribundus, si non de articulis fidei disserat et sentiat *de fiducia compertæ veritatis*, at saltem (quod de Socrate dixit Tertullianus) *de industria consultæ æquanimitatis*.

[z] Θαῤῥεῖν χρὴ, φίλε Βάττε, τάχ' ἄυριον ἔσσετ' ἄμεινον.
Ἐλπίδες ἐν ζωοῖσιν, ἀνέλπιστοι δὲ θανόντες.—THEOCR.
Ἐν ἐλπίσιν χρὴ τοὺς σοφοὺς ἔχειν βίον·
Ἄνθρωπος ἀτυχῶν σώζεται ὑπ' ἐλπίδος.—MENAND.

final condition. Despair reflects upon God, and dishonours the infinity of his mercy. And if the sick person do but confess, that God is not at all wanting in his promises, but ever abounding in his mercies; and that it is want of the condition, on his own part, that makes the misery; and that, if he had done his duty, God would save him; let him be assisted with perpetual prayers, with examples of lapsed and returning sinners, whom the church celebrates for saints, such as Mary Magdalen, Mary of Egypt, Afra, Thasis, Pelagia; let it be often inculcated to him, that as God's mercy is of itself infinite, so its demonstration to us is not determined to any certain period; but hath such latitudes in it, and reservations, which, as they are apt to restrain too great boldness, so also to become sanctuaries to disconsolate persons; let him be invited to throw himself upon God, upon these grounds; that he, who is our Judge, is also our Advocate and Redeemer; that he knows and pities our infirmities, and that our very hoping in him does endear him; and he will deliver us the rather for our confidence, when it is balanced with reverence and humility: and then all these supernumerary fears are advantageous to more necessary graces, and do more secure his final condition than they can disturb it.

11. When St. Arsenius was near his death, he was observed to be very tremulous, sad, weeping, and disconsolate. The standers-by asked the reason of his fears; wondering, that he, having lived in great sanctity for many years, should not now rejoice at the going forth of his prison. The good man confessed the fear, and withal said, it was no other than he had always borne about with him in the days of his pilgrimage; and what he then thought a duty, they had no reason now to call either a fault or a misery. Great sorrows, fears, and distrustings of a man's own condition, are oftentimes but abatements of confidence, or a remission of joys and gaieties of spirit; they are but like salutary clouds, dark and fruitful: and if the tempted person be strengthened in a love of God, though he go not farther in his hopes than to believe a possibility of being saved, than to say, "God can save him, if he please," and to pray that he will save him; his condition is a state of grace; it is like a root in the ground, trod upon, humble and safe, not so fine as the state of flowers; yet that which will spring up in as glorious a resurrection as that which looks fairer, and pleases the sense, and is indeed a blessing, but not a duty.

12. But there is a state of death-bed, which seems to have in it more question, and to be of nicer consideration; a sick person, after a vicious and base life; and if, upon whatsoever he can do, you give him hopes of a pardon, where is your promise to warrant it? If you do not give him hopes, do you not drive him to despair, and ascertain his ruin to verify your proposition? To this I answer, that despair is opposed to hope, and hope relies upon the Divine promises; and where there is no promise, there the despair is not a sin, but a mere impossibility. The accursed spirits, which are sealed up to the judgment of the last day, cannot hope; and he that repents not, cannot hope for pardon. And, therefore, if all which the state of death-bed can produce, be not the duty of repentance, which is required of necessity to pardon; it is not in such a person properly to be called despair, any more than it is blindness in a stone that it cannot see. Such a man is not within the capacities of pardon; and, therefore, all those acts of exterior repentance, and all his sorrow and resolution, and tears of emendation, and other preparatives to interior repentance, are like oil poured into mortal wounds; they are the care of the physician, and these are the cautions of the church, and they are at no hand to be neglected. For if they do not alter the state, they may lessen the judgment, or procure a temporal blessing; and if the person recover, they are excellent beginnings of the state of grace; and if they be pursued in a happy opportunity, will grow up into glory.

13. But if it be demanded, whether in such cases the curate be bound to give absolution; I can give no other answer but this, that if he lie under the censure of the church, the laws of the church are to determine the particular; and I know no church in the world but uses to absolve death-bed penitents, upon the instances of those actions of which their present condition is capable; though in the primitive ages, in some cases, they denied it. But if the sick person be under no positive censure, and is bound only by the guilt of habitual vice, if he desires the prayers of the church, she is bound in charity to grant them, to pray for pardon to him, and all other graces, in order to salvation: and if she absolves the penitent, towards God it hath no other efficacy but of a solemn prayer; and, therefore, it were better, that all the charity of the office were done, and the solemnity omitted; because, in the earnest prayer, she co-operates to his salvation as much as she can; and, by omitting the solemnity, distinguishes evil livers from holy persons; and walks securely, whilst she refuses to declare him pardoned, whom God hath not declared to be so. And possibly that form of absolution, which the churches of the West now use, being indicative and declaratory of a present pardon, is, for the very form sake, not to be used to death-bed penitents after a vicious life;[a] because if any thing more be intended in the form than a prayer, the truth of the affirmation may be questioned, and an ecclesiastical person hath no authority to say to such a man, "I absolve thee:" but if no more be intended but a prayer, it is better to use a mere prayer and common form of address, than such words, which may countenance insecure confidences, evil purposes, and worse lives.

14. Thirdly: If the devil tempts a sick person, who hath lived well, to presumption, and that he seems full of confidence and without trouble, the care that is then to be taken is, to consider the disease, and to state the question right. For, at some instants and periods, God visits the spirit of a man, and sends the emission of a bright ray into him;

[a] Pœnitentia quæ ab infirmo petitur, infirma est: pœnitentia quæ à moriente tantùm petitur, timeo nè et ipsa moriatur.—S. Aug. Serm. de Temp. Vide eund. lib. 1. homil. 41.

and some good men have been so used to apprehensions of the Divine mercy, that they have an habitual cheerfulness of spirit and hopes of salvation. St. Jerome reports, that Hilarion, in a death-bed agony, felt some tremblings of heart; till, reflecting upon his course of life, he found comforts springing from thence by a proper emanation, and departed cheerfully:[b] and Hezekiah represented to God, in prayer, the integrity of his life, and made it the instrument of his hope. And nothing of this is to be called presumption, provided it be in persons of eminent sanctity and great experience, old disciples, and the more perfect christians: but because such persons are but seldom and rare, if the same confidence be observed in persons of common imperfection and an ordinary life, it is to be corrected and allayed with consideration of the Divine severity and justice, and with the strict requisites of a holy life; with the deceit of a man's own heart, with consideration and general remembrances of secret sins: and that the most perfect state of life hath very great needs of mercy;[c] and "if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" And the spirit of the man is to be promoted, and helped in the increase of contrition; as being the proper deletery to cure the extravagancies of a froward and intemperate spirit.

15. But there is a presumption commenced upon opinion, relying either upon a persuasion of single predestination, or else (which is worse) upon imaginary securities; that heaven is to be purchased upon conditions easier than a day's labour; and that an evil life may be reconciled to heaven, by the intervening of little or single acts of piety or repentance. If either of them both have actually produced ill life, to which they are apt, or apt to be abused, the persons are miserable in their condition, and cannot be absolutely remedied by going about to cure the presumption; that was the cause of all, but now it is the least thing to be considered: his whole state is corrupted, and men will not, by any discourses or spiritual arts used on their death-beds, be put into a state of grace; because then is no time to change the state, and there is no mutation then but by single actions; from good to better, a dying man may proceed, but not from the state of reprobation to the life of grace. And yet it is good charity to unloose the bonds of Satan, whereby the man is bound and led captive at his will; to take off the presumption, by destroying the cause; and then let the work of grace be set as forward as it can, and leave the event to God; for nothing else is left possible to be done. But if the sick man be of a good life, and yet have a degree of confidence beyond his virtue, upon the fancy of predestination, it is not then a time to rescind his opinion by a direct opposition, but let him be drawn off from the consideration of it by such discourses as are apt to make him humble and penitent; for they are the most apt instruments to secure the condition of the man, and attemper his spirit. These are the great temptations incident to the last scene of our lives; and are, therefore, more particularly suggested by the tempter, because they have in them something contrary to the universal effect of a holy life, and are designs to interpose between the end of the journey and the reception of the crown; and, therefore, it concerns every man, who is in a capacity of "receiving the end of his faith, the salvation of his soul," to lay up, in the course of his life, something against this great day of expense; that he may be better fortified with the armour of the Spirit against these last assaults of the devil, that he may not shipwreck in the haven.

16. "Eschewing evil" is but the one half of our work; we must also "do good." And now, in the few remanent days or hours of our life, there are certain exercises of religion which have a special relation to this state, and are, therefore, of great concernment to be done; that we may make our condition as certain as we can, and our portion of glory greater, and our pardon surer, and our love to increase; and that our former omissions and breaches be repaired, with a condition in some measure proportionable to those great hopes, which we then are going to possess. And, first, let the sick person, in the beginning of his sickness, and in every change and great accident of it, make acts of resignation to God, and entirely submit himself to the Divine will; remembering, that sickness may, to men properly disposed, do the work of God, and produce the effect of the Spirit, and promote the interest of his soul, as well as health, and oftentimes better; as being in itself, and by the grace of God, apt to make us confess our own impotency and dependencies, and to understand our needs of mercy, and the continual influences and supports of heaven; to withdraw our appetites from things below, to correct the vanities and insolencies of an impertinent spirit, to abate the extravagancies of the flesh, to put our carnal lusts into fetters and disability; to remember us of our state of pilgrimage, that this is our way, and our stage of trouble and banishment, and that heaven is our country: for so sickness is the trial of our patience, a fire to purge us, an instructor to teach us, a bridle to restrain us, and a state inferring great necessities of union and adhesions unto God. And as, upon these grounds, we have the same reason to accept sickness at the hands of God, as to receive physic from a physician; so it is argument of excellent grace to give God hearty thanks in our disease, and to accept it cheerfully, and with spiritual joy.

17. Some persons create to themselves excuses of discontent, and quarrel, not with the pain, but the ill consequence of sickness. It makes them troublesome to their friends; and consider not that their friends are bound to accept the trouble, as themselves to accept the sickness; that to tend the sick is, at that time, allotted for the portion of their work, and that charity receives it as a duty, and makes that duty to be a pleasure. And, however, if our friends account us a burden, let us also accept that circumstance of affliction to ourselves, with the same resignation and indifference as we entertain its occasion, the sickness itself; and pray to God to enkindle a flame of charity in

[b] Egredere, anima, quid times? septuaginta propè annis serviisti Christo, et jam mori times?—S. HIER. in Vita Hilar.

[c] Væ vitæ etiam laudabili, si sine misericordia discutias, eam.—S. AUG. lib. ix. Confess.

their breasts, and to make them compensation for the charge and trouble we put them to; and then the care is at an end. But others excuse their discontent with a more religious colour, and call the disease their trouble and affliction, because it impedes their other parts of duty; they cannot preach, or study, or do exterior assistances of charity and alms, or acts of repentance and mortification. But it were well if we could let God proportion out our work, and set our task; let him choose what virtues we shall specially exercise: and when the will of God determines us, it is more excellent to endure afflictions with patience, equanimity, and thankfulness, than to do actions of the most pompous religion, and laborious or expensive charity; not only because there is a deliciousness in actions of religion and choice, which is more agreeable to our spirit than the toleration of sickness can be, which hath great reward, but no present pleasure; but also because our suffering and our employment is consecrated to us when God chooses it, and there is then no mixture of imperfection or secular interest, as there may be in other actions even of an excellent religion, when ourselves are the choosers. And let us also remember, that God hath not so much need of thy works, as thou hast of patience, humility, and resignation. St. Paul was a far more considerable person than thou canst be, and yet it pleased God to shut him in prison for two years, and, in that interval, God secured and promoted the work of the gospel: and although Epaphroditus was an excellent minister, yet God laid a sickness upon him, and, even in his disease, gave him work enough to do, though not of his own choosing. And, therefore, fear it not but the ends of religion or duty will well enough proceed without thy health; and thy own eternal interest, when God so pleases, shall better be served by sickness, and the virtues which it occasions, than by the opportunities of health, and an ambulatory active charity.

18. When thou art resigned to God, use fair and appointed means for thy recovery; trust not in thy spirit upon any instrument of health; as thou art willing to be disposed by God, so look not for any event upon the stock of any other cause or principle; be ruled by the physician and the people appointed to tend thee, that thou neither become troublesome to them, nor give any sign of impatience or a peevish spirit. But this advice only means, that thou do not disobey them out of any evil principle; and yet if reason be thy guide, to choose any other aid, or follow any other counsel, use it temperately, prudently, and charitably. It is not intended for a duty, that thou shouldst drink oil instead of wine, if thy minister reach it to thee, as did St. Bernard; nor that thou shouldst accept a cake tempered with linseed oil instead of oil of olives, as did F. Stephen, mentioned by Ruffinus: but that thou tolerate the defects of thy servants, and accept the evil accidents of thy disease, or the unsuccessfulness of thy physician's care, as descending on thee from the hands of God. Asa was noted in Scripture, that, "in his sickness, he sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians."[d] Louis XI. of France was then the miserablest person in his kingdom, when he made himself their servant, courting them with great pensions and rewards, attending to their rules as oracles, and from their mouths waited for the sentence of life or death. We are, in these great accidents, especially to look upon God as the disposer of the events, which he very often disposes contrary to the expectation we may have of probable causes; and sometimes without physic we recover, and with physic and excellent applications we grow worse and worse; and God it is that makes the remedies unprosperous. In all these, and all other accidents, if we take care that the sickness of the body derive not itself into the soul, nor the pains of one procure impatience of the other, we shall alleviate the burden, and make it supportable and profitable. And certain it is, if men knew well to bear their sicknesses, humbly towards God, charitably towards their ministers, and cheerfully in themselves, there were no greater advantage in the world to be received, than upon a sick bed; and that alone hath in it the benefits of a church, of a religious assembly, of the works of charity and labour. And since our soul's eternal well-being depends upon the charities, and providence, and veracity of God, and we have nothing to show for it but his word and goodness, and that is infinitely enough; it is but reason we be not more nice and scrupulous about the usage and accommodation of our body: if we accept, at God's hands, sadness and dryness of affection and spiritual desertion,[e] patiently and with indifference, it is unhandsome to express ourselves less satisfied in the accidents about our body.

19. But if the sickness proceed to death, it is a new charge upon our spirits, and God calls for a final and entire resignation into his hands. And to a person who was of humble affections, and, in his life-time, of a mortified spirit, accustomed to bear the yoke of the Lord, this is easy, because he looks upon death, not only as the certain condition of nature, but as a necessary transition to a state of blessedness,[f] as the determination of his sickness, the period of human infelicities, the last change of condition, the beginning of a new, strange, and excellent life, a security against sin, a freedom from the importunities of a tempter, from the tyranny of an imperious lust, from the rebellion of concupiscence, from the disturbances and tempests of the irascible faculty, and from the fondness and childishness of the concupiscible; and St. Ambrose says well, "the troubles of this life and the dangers are so many, that, in respect of them, death is a remedy," and a fair, proper object of desires.[g] And we find that many saints have prayed for death,

[d] 2 Chron. xvi. 12.

[e] Νόσους δ' ἀνάγκη τὰς θεηλάτους φέρειν.—Soph. Phædr.

[f] Νομίζειν μὴν γὰρ δὴ τὸν ἐνθάδε βίον ὡς ἂν ἀκμὴν κνομένων εἶναι· τὸν δὲ θάνατον γένεσιν εἰς τὸν ὄντως βίον καὶ τὸν εὐδαίμονα τοῖς φιλοσοφησάσι.—Strabo, lib. xv.

Peto, nate, suspice cœlum; non enim tibi vita eripitur, sed mutatur in melius, dixit mater Symphoriani apud Ambros. in Vita Symphor. Serm. in c. 7. Jobi.

[g] Hoc homo morte lucratur, nè malum immortale esset.—Naz.

——— Κρεῖσσον γὰρ εἰς ἅπαξ θανεῖν,
Ἢ τὰς ἁπασας ἡμέρας πάσχειν κακῶς.—Æschyl. Prom.

that they might not see the persecutions and great miseries incumbent upon the church: and if the desire be not out of impatience, but of charity, and with resignation, there is no reason to reprove it. Elias prayed that God would "take his life,"[h] that he might not see the evils of Ahab and Jezebel, and their vexatious intendments against the prophets of the Lord. And St. Austin,[i] upon the incursion of the Vandals into Africa, called his clergy together, and, at their chapter, told them, "he had prayed to God either to deliver his people from the present calamity, or grant them patience to bear it, or that he would take him out of the world, that he might not see the miseries of his diocese;" adding, "that God had granted him the last:" and he presently fell sick, and died in the siege of his own Hippo. And if death, in many cases, be desirable, and for many reasons, it is always to be submitted to when God calls. And as it is always a misery to fear death,[k] so it is very often a sin, or the effect of sin. If our love to the world hath fastened our affections here, it is a direct sin: and this is, by the son of Sirach, noted to be the case of rich and great personages: "How bitter, O death, is thy remembrance to a man that is at rest in his possessions!"[l] But if it be a fear to perish in the ruins of eternity, they are not to blame for fearing, but that their own ill lives have procured the fear. And yet there are persons in the state of grace, but because they are in great imperfection, have such lawful fears of death, and of entering upon an uncertain sentence, which must stand eternally irreversible, be it good or bad, that they may, with piety and care enough, pray David's prayer, "O spare me a little, that I may recover my strength, before I go hence, and be no more seen." But in this, and in all other cases, death must be accepted without murmur, though without fear it cannot. A man may pray to be delivered from it; and yet, if God will not grant it, he must not go as one haled to execution: but if, with all his imperfect fears, he shall throw himself upon God, and accept his sentence as righteous, whether it speak life or death, it is an act of so great excellency, that it may equal the good actions of many succeeding and surviving days; and, peradventure, a longer life will be yet more imperfect, and God therefore puts a period to it, that thou mayest be taken into a condition more certain, though less eminent. However, let not the fears of nature, or the fear of reason, or the fears of humility, become accidentally criminal, by a murmur or a pertinacious contesting against the event, which we cannot hinder, but ought to accept by an election secondary, rational, and pious, and upon supposition that God will not alter the sentence passed upon thy temporal life; always remembering, that, in christian philosophy, death hath in it an excellency of which the angels are not capable. For, by the necessity of our nature, we are made capable of dying for the holy Jesus; and next to the privilege of that act, is our willingness to die at his command, which turns necessity into virtue, and nature into grace, and grace to glory.

20. When the sick person is thus disposed, let him begin to trim his wedding garment, and dress his lamp, with the repetition of acts of repentance, perpetually praying to God for pardon of his sins, representing to himself the horror of them, the multitude, the obliquity, being helped by arguments apt to excite contrition, by repetition of penitential psalms and holy prayers; and he may, by accepting and humbly receiving his sickness at God's hand, transmit it into the condition of an act or effect of repentance, acknowledging himself by sin to have deserved and procured it, and praying that the punishment of his crimes may be here, and not reserved for the state of separation, and for ever.

21. But above all single acts of this exercise, we are concerned to see that nothing of other men's goods stick to us, but let us shake it off as we would a burning coal from our flesh; for it will destroy us, it will carry a curse with us, and leave a curse behind us.[m] Those who, by thy means or importunity, have become vicious, exhort to repentance and holy life; those whom thou hast cozened into crimes, restore to a right understanding; those who are, by violence and interest, led captive by thee to any indecency, restore to their liberty, and encourage to the prosecution of holiness; discover and confess thy fraud and unlawful arts, cease thy violence, and give as many advantages to virtue as thou hast done to viciousness. Make recompence for bodily wrongs, such as are wounds, dismemberings, and other disabilities: restore every man, as much as thou canst, to that good condition from which thou hast removed him; restore his fame, give back his goods, return the pawn, release forfeitures, and take off all unjust invasions or surprises of his estate, pay debts, satisfy for thy fraud and injustice as far as thou canst, and as thou canst, and as soon; or this alone is weight enough, no less than a mill-stone about thy neck. But if the dying man be of God, and in the state of grace, that is, if he have lived a holy life, repented seasonably, and have led a just, sober, and religious conversation in any acceptable degree, it is to be supposed he hath no great account to make for unpretended injuries, and unjust detentions; for if he had detained the goods of his neighbour fraudulently or violently, without amends, when it is in his power and opportunity to restore, he is not the man we suppose him in this present question: and although, in all cases, he is bound to restore according to his ability, yet the act is less excellent when it is compelled, and so it seems to be, if he have continued the injustice till he is forced to quit the purchase. However, if it be not done till then, let it be provided for then. And that I press this duty to pious persons at this time,

[h] 1 Kings xix. 4. [i] In Vita S. Aug. c. 16.

[k] Fortem posce animum mortis terrore carentem,
Qui spatium vitæ extremum inter munera ponat
Naturæ, qui ferre queat quoscunque labores,
Nesciat irasci, cupiat nihil ——— Juven.

[l] Ecclus. xli. 1.

[m] Deteriores sunt qui vitam moresque bonorum corrumpunt, his qui substantias et prædia diripiunt.—S. Gregor.

is only to oblige them to a diligent scrutiny concerning the lesser omissions of this duty in the matter of fame, or lesser debts, or spiritual restitution; or that those unevennesses of account, which were but of late transaction, may now be regulated; and that whatsoever is undone in this matter, from what principle soever it proceeds, whether of sin, or only of forgetfulness, or of imperfection, may now be made as exact as we can, and are obliged; and that those excuses, which made it reasonable and lawful to defer restitution, as want of opportunity, clearness of ability, and accidental inconvenience, be now laid aside, and the action be done or provided for, in the midst of all objections and inconvenient circumstances, rather than omit it, and hazard to perform it.

22. Hither, also, I reckon resolutions and forward purposes of emendation and greater severity, in case God return to us hopes of life; which, therefore, must be reinforced, that we may serve the ends of God, and understand all his purposes, and make use of every opportunity; every sickness laid upon us being with a design of drawing us nearer to God; and even holy purposes are good actions of the Spirit, and principles of religion: and though alone they cannot do the work of grace, or change the state, when they are ineffectual, that is, when either we will not bring them into act, or that God will not let us; yet, to a man already in the state of grace, they are the additions of something good, and are like blowing of coals, which, although it can put no life into a dead coal, yet it makes a live coal shine brighter, and burn clearer, and adds to it some accidental degrees of heat.

23. Having thus disposed himself to the peace of God, let him make peace with all those, in whom he knows, or suspects, any minutes of anger, or malice, or displeasure towards him, submitting himself to them with humility, whom he unworthily hath displeased,[n] asking pardon of them who say they are displeased, and offering pardon to them that have displeased him; and then let him crave the peace of holy church. For it is all this while to be supposed, that he hath used the assistance and prayers, the counsel and the advices, of a spiritual man, and that, to this purpose, he hath opened to him the state of his whole life, and made him to understand what emendations of his faults he hath made, what acts of repentance he hath done, how lived after his fall and reparation, and that he hath submitted all that he did, or undid, to the discerning of a holy man, whose office it is to guide his soul in this agony and last offices. All men cannot have the blessing of a wise and learned minister, and some die where they can have none at all; yet it were a safer course to do as much of this as we can, and to a competent person, if we can; if we cannot, then to the best we have, according as we judge it to be of spiritual advantage to us: for, in this conjuncture of accidents, it concerns us to be sure, if we may, and not to be deceived, where we can avoid it; because we shall never return to life, to do this work again. And if, after this intercourse with a spiritual guide, we be reconciled by the solemn prayer of the church, the prayer of absolution, it will be of great advantage to us; we depart with our Father's blessing, we die in the actual communion of the church, we hear the sentence of God applied after the manner of men, and the promise of pardon made circumstantiate, material, present, and operative upon our spirits, and have our portion of the promise, which is recorded by St. James, that "if the elders of the church pray over a sick person" fervently and "effectually," (add solemnly,) "his sins shall be forgiven him," (that is, supposing him to be in a capacity to receive it,) because such prayers, of such a man, are very prevalent.[o]

24. All this is, in a spiritual sense, "washing the hands in innocency," and then let him "go to the altar:" let him not, for any excuse less than impossibility, omit to receive the holy sacrament; which the fathers assembled in the great Nicene council, have taught all the christian world to call, "the most necessary provisions for our last journey;"[p] which is the memory of that death by which we hope for life; which is the seed of immortality and resurrection of our bodies; which unites our spirit to Christ; which is a great defensative against the hostilities of the devil; which is the most solemn prayer of the church, united and made acceptable by the sacrifice of Christ; which is then represented and exhibited to God; which is the great instrument of spiritual increase, and the growth of grace; which is duty and reward, food and physic, health and pleasure, deletery and cordial, prayer and thanksgiving, an union of mysteries, the marriage of the soul, and the perfection of all the rites of christianity: dying with the holy sacrament in us, is a going to God with Christ in our arms, and interposing him between us and his angry sentence. But then we must be sure that we have done all the duty, without which we cannot communicate worthily. For else Satan comes in the place of Christ, and it is a horror not less than infinite, to appear before God's tribunal possessed, in our souls, with the spirit of darkness. True it is, that, by many laws of the church,[q] the bishop and the minister are bound to give the holy eucharist to every person who, in the article or apparent danger of death, desires it, provided that he hath submitted himself to the imposition and counsels of the bishop or guide of his soul, that, in case he recovers, he may be brought to the peace of God and his church, by such steps and degrees of repentance, by which other public sinners are reconciled. But to this gentleness of discipline, and easiness of administration, those excellent persons who made the canons thought themselves compelled, by the rigour of the

[n] Πρὸς τὸν τελευτήσαντ' ἕκαστος, κἂν σφόδρα
Ἂν ἐχθρὸς ᾖ τις, γίνεται φίλος τότε.

[o] Jam. v. 14, 15.

[p] Περὶ δὲ τῶν ἐξοδευόντων ὁ παλαιὸς καὶ κανονικὸς νόμος φυλαχθήσεται καὶ νῦν· ὥστε εἴ τις ἐξοδεύει, τοῦ τελευταίου καὶ ἀναγκαιοτάτου ἐφοδίου μὴ ἀποστερεῖσθαι.—Conc. Nicen. can. 13.

[q] Concil. Nicen. can. eod. Conc. Ancyr. c. 6. Conc. Aurelian. ii. c. 12.

Novatians; and because they admitted not lapsed persons to the peace of the church upon any terms, though never so great, so public, or so penal a repentance; therefore, these not only remitted them to the exercise and station of penitents, but also to the communion. But the fathers of the council of Eliberis denied this favour to persons who, after baptism, were idolaters;[r] either intending this as a great argument to affright persons from so great a crime, or else believing that it was unpardonable after baptism, a contradiction to that state which we entered into by baptism, and the covenant evangelical. However, I desire all learned persons to observe it, and the less learned also to make use of it, that those more ancient councils of the church,[s] which commanded the holy communion to be given to dying persons, meant only such, which, according to the custom of the church, were under the conditions of repentance, that is, such to whom punishment and discipline of divers years were enjoined; and if it happened they died in the interval, before the expiration of their time of reconciliation, then they admitted them to the communion. Which describes to us the doctrine of those ages, when religion was purer, and discipline more severe, and holy life secured by rules of excellent government; that those only were fit to come to that feast, who, before their last sickness, had finished the repentance of many years, or, at least, had undertaken it.[t] I cannot say it was so always, and in all churches; for as the disciples grew slack, or men's persuasions had variety, so they were more ready to grant repentance, as well as absolution, to dying persons: but it was otherwise in the best times, and with severer prelates. And certainly it were great charity to deny the communion to persons, who have lived viciously till their death; provided it be by competent authority, and done sincerely, prudently, and without temporal interest: to other persons, who have lived good lives, or repented of their bad, though less perfectly, it ought not to be denied, and they less ought to neglect it.

25. But as every man must put himself, so also he must put his house in order, make his will, if he have an estate to dispose of; and in that he must be careful to do justice to every man, and charity to the poor, according as God hath enabled him: and though charity is then very late, if it begins not earlier; yet, if this be but an act of an ancient habit, it is still more perfect, as it succeeds in time, and superadds to the former stock. And, among other acts of duty, let it be remembered, that it is excellent charity to leave our will and desires clear, plain, and determinate, that contention and lawsuits may be prevented, by the explicate declaration of the legacies. At last, and in all instances and periods of our following days, let the former good acts be renewed; let God be praised for all his graces and blessings of our life, let him be entreated for pardon of our sins, let acts of love and contrition, of hope, of joy, of humility, be the work of every day which God still permits us, always remembering to ask remission for those sins we remember not. And if the condition of our sickness permits it, let our last breath expire with an act of love; that it may begin the charities of eternity,[u] and, like a taper burnt to its lowest base, it may go out with a great emission of light, leaving a sweet smell behind us, to perfume our coffin; and that these lights, newly made brighter, or trimmed up, in our sickness, may shine about our hearse, that they may become arguments of a pious sadness to our friends, (as the charitable coats, which Dorcas made, were to the widows,) and exemplar to all those who observed, or shall hear of, our holy life and religious death. But if it shall happen that the disease be productive of evil accidents, as a disturbed fancy, a weakened understanding, wild discoursings, or any deprivation of the use of reason, it concerns the sick person, in the happy intervals of a quiet, untroubled spirit, to pray earnestly to God, that nothing may pass from him, in the rages of a fever, or worse distemper, which may less become his duty, or give scandal, or cause trouble to the persons in attendance; and if he shall also renounce and disclaim all such evil words which his disease may speak, not himself, he shall do the duty of a christian and a prudent person. And after these preparatives, he may, with piety and confidence, resign his soul into the hands of God, to be deposited in holy receptacles till "the day of restitution of all things;" and in the mean time, with a quiet spirit, descend into that state which is the lot of Cæsars, and where all kings and conquerors have laid aside their glories.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal and holy Jesus, who, by death, hast overcome death, and by thy passion hast taken out its sting, and made it to become one of the gates of heaven, and an entrance to felicity; have mercy upon me now, and at the hour of my death: let thy grace accompany me all the days of my life, that I may, by a holy conversation, and an habitual performance of my duty, wait for the coming of our Lord, and be ready to enter with thee at whatsoever hour thou shalt come. Lord, let not my death be in any sense unprovided, nor untimely, nor hasty, but after the common manner of men, having in it nothing extraordinary but an extraordinary piety, and the manifestation of a great and miraculous mercy. Let my senses and understanding be preserved entire till the last of my days, and grant that I may die the death of the righteous, having first discharged all my obligations of justice, leaving none miserable and unprovided in my departure; but be thou the portion of all my friends and relatives, and

[r] Conc. Elib. c. 1.

[s] Μετὰ δοκιμασίας ὁ ἐπίσκοπος ἐπιδότω.—Concil. Nicen. c. 13.
Τούτους ἐπὶ ὅρῳ δεχθῆναι—Conc. Anc. c. 9.
De his qui in pœnitentia positi vitâ excesserunt, placuit nullum communione vacuum debere dimitti.—Conc. Aurel. ii. n. 12.

[t] Vide Concil. Eliber. c. 46, et c. 69.

[u] ——————Ut se vixisse beatum
Dicat, et exacto contentus tempore vitæ
Cedat uti conviva satur————Hor. Serm. 1.

let thy blessing descend upon their heads, and abide there, till they shall meet me in the bosom of our Lord. Preserve me ever in the communion and peace of the church; and bless my deathbed with the opportunity of a holy and spiritual guide, with the assistance and guard of angels, with the perception of the holy sacrament, with patience and dereliction of my own desires, with a strong faith and a firm and humble hope, with just measures of repentance, and great treasures of charity to thee, my God, and to all the world; that my soul, in the arms of the holy Jesus, may be deposited with safety and joy, there to expect the revelation of thy day, and then to partake the glories of thy kingdom, O eternal and holy Jesus. Amen.

Considerations upon the Crucifixion of the Holy Jesus.

1. WHEN the sentence of death pronounced against the Lord was to be put in execution, the soldiers pulled off the robe of mockery, the scarlet mantle, which in jest they put upon him, and put on his own garments. But, as Origen observes, the evangelist mentioned not that they took off the crown of thorns; what might serve their interest they pursue, but nothing of remission or mercy to the afflicted Son of man: but so it became the King of sufferings, not to lay aside his imperial thorns till they were changed into diadems of glory. But now Abel is led forth by his brother to be slain: a gay spectacle to satisfy impious eyes, who would not stay behind, but attended and waited upon the hangman to see the catastrophe of this bloody tragedy.[a] But when Piety looks on, she beholds a glorious mystery. Sin laughed to see the King of heaven and earth, and the great lover of souls, instead of the sceptre of his kingdom, to bear a tree of cursing and shame. But Piety wept tears of pity, and knew they would melt into joy, when she should behold that cross, which loaded the shoulders of her Lord, afterward sit upon the sceptres, and be engraved and signed upon the foreheads of kings.

2. It cannot be thought but the ministers of Jewish malice used all the circumstances of affliction, which, in any case, were accustomed towards malefactors and persons to be crucified; and therefore it was that in some old figures we see our blessed Lord described with a table appendant to the fringe of his garment, set full of nails and pointed iron;[b] for so sometimes they afflicted persons condemned to that kind of death: and St. Cyprian affirms,[c] that Christ did stick to the wood that he carried, being galled with the iron at his heels, and nailed even before his crucifixion. But this, and the other accidents of his journey, and their malice, so crushed his wounded, tender, and virginal body, that they were forced to lay the load upon a Cyrenian, fearing that he should die with less shame and smart than they intended him. But so he was pleased to take man unto his aid, not only to represent his own need, and the dolorousness of his passion, but to consign the duty unto man, that we must enter into a fellowship of Christ's sufferings, taking up the cross of martyrdom when God requires us, enduring affronts, being patient under affliction, loving them that hate us, and being benefactors to our enemies, abstaining from sensual and intemperate delight, forbidding to ourselves lawful festivities and recreations of our weariness, when we have an end of the spirit to serve upon the ruins of the body's strength, mortifying our desires, breaking our own will, not seeking ourselves, being entirely resigned to God. These are the cross, and the nails, and the spear, and the whip, and all the instruments of a christian's passion. And we may consider, that every man in this world shall, in some sense or other, bear a cross: few men escape it, and it is not well with them that do: but they only bear it well that follow Christ, and tread in his steps, and bear it for his sake, and walk as he walked; and he that follows his own desires, when he meets with a cross there, (as it is certain enough he will,) bears the cross of his concupiscence, and that hath no fellowship with the cross of Christ. By the precept of "bearing the cross," we are not tied to pull evil upon ourselves, that we may imitate our Lord in nothing but in being afflicted; or to personate the punitive exercises of mortification and severe abstinences, which were eminent in some saints, and to which they had special assistances, as others had the gift of chastity, and for which they had special reason, and, as they apprehended, some great necessities: but it is required that "we bear our own cross;" so said our dearest Lord.[d] For when the cross of Christ is laid upon us, and we are called to martyrdom, then it is our own, because God made it to be our portion: and when, by the necessities of our spirit and the rebellion of our body, we need exterior mortifications and acts of self-denial, then also it is our own cross, because our needs have made it so; and so it is when God sends us sickness, or any other calamity: whatever is either an effect of our ghostly needs, or the condition of our temporal estate, it calls for our sufferance, and patience, and equanimity; for "therefore Christ hath suffered for us," saith St. Peter,[e] "leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps," who bore his cross as long as he could; and when he could no longer, he murmured not, but sank under it; and then he was content to receive such aid, not which he chose himself, but such as was assigned him.

3. Jesus was led out of the gates of Jerusalem,[f] that he might become the sacrifice for persons without the pale, even for all the world: and the daughters of Jerusalem followed him with pious

[a] S. Aug. Tract. 119. in Joan.

[b] O Carnificinum cribrum quod credo fore,
Ità te forabunt patibulatum per vias
Stimulis, si noster huc revenerit senex.—PLAUT. in Mostel.

[c] Tu ipse patibuli tui bajulus hærebas ligno quod toleras, evectionis et passionis anxietates sustinens et labores.—S. CYPR. de Pass.

[d] Matt. xvi. 24. [e] 1 Pet. ii. 21. [f] Heb. xiii. 13.

tears till they came to Calvary, a place difficult in the ascent, eminent and apt for the publication of shame, a hill of death and dead bones, polluted and impure, and there beheld him stripped naked, who clothes the field with flowers, and all the world with robes, and the whole globe with the canopy of heaven, and so dressed, that now every circumstance was a triumph: by his disgrace he trampled upon our pride; by his poverty and nakedness he triumphed over our covetousness and love of riches; and, by his pains, chastised the delicacies of our flesh, and broke in pieces the fetters of concupiscence.[g] For as soon as Adam was clothed, he quitted Paradise; and Jesus was made naked, that he might bring us in again. And we also must be despoiled of all our exterior adherencies, that we may pass through the regions of duty and divine love to a society of blessed spirits, and a clarified, immortal, and beatified estate.

4. There they nailed Jesus with four nails,[h] fixed his cross in the ground, which, with its fall into the place of its station, gave infinite torture, by so violent a concussion of the body of our Lord, which rested upon nothing but four great wounds; where he was designed to suffer a long and lingering torment. For crucifixion, as it was an exquisite pain, sharp and passionate, so it was not of quick effect towards taking away the life. St. Andrew was two whole days upon the cross; and some martyrs have upon the cross been rather starved and devoured with birds, than killed with the proper torment of the tree. But Jesus took all his passion with a voluntary susception, God heightening it to great degrees of torment supernaturally; and he laid down his life voluntarily, when his Father's wrath was totally appeased towards mankind.

5. Some have fancied that Christ was pleased to take something from every condition, of which man ever was, or shall be, possessed; taking immunity from sin from Adam's state of innocence, punishment and misery from the state of Adam fallen, the fulness of grace from the state of renovation, and perfect contemplation of the Divinity and beatific joys from the state of comprehension and the blessedness of heaven; meaning, that the humanity of our blessed Saviour did, in the sharpest agony of his passion, behold the face of God, and communicate in glory. But I consider, that, although the two natures of Christ were knit by a mysterious union into one person, yet the natures still retain their incommunicable properties. Christ, as God, is not subject to sufferings; as a man, he is the subject of miseries: as God, he is eternal; as man, mortal and commensurable by time: as God, the supreme lawgiver; as man, most humble and obedient to the law: and therefore that the human nature was united to the Divine, it does not infer that it must, in all instances, partake of the Divine felicities, which in God are essential, to man communicated without necessity, and by an arbitrary dispensation. Add to this, that some virtues and excellencies were in the soul of Christ, which could not consist with the state of glorified and beatified persons; such as are humility, poverty of spirit, hope, holy desires; all which, having their seat in the soul, suppose, even in the supremest faculty, a state of pilgrimage, that is, a condition which is imperfect, and in order to something beyond its present. For therefore "Christ ought to suffer," saith our blessed Lord himself,[i] and "so enter into his glory." And St. Paul affirms,[k] that "we see Jesus made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour." And again,[l] "Christ humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross: wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name." Thus his present life was a state of merit and work, and, as a reward of it, he was crowned with glory and immortality, his name was exalted, his kingdom glorified, he was made the Lord of all the creatures, the first-fruits of the resurrection, the exemplar of glory, and the Prince and Head of the catholic church: and because this was his recompence, and the fruits of his humility and obedience, it is certain it was not a necessary consequence, and a natural efflux, of the personal union of the Godhead with the humanity. This I discourse to this purpose, that we may not in our esteem lessen the suffering of our dearest Lord by thinking he had the supports of actual glory in the midst of all his sufferings. For there is no one minute, or ray of glory, but its fruition does outweigh and make us insensible of the greatest calamities, and the spirit of pain, which can be extracted from all the infelicities of this world. True it is, that the greatest beauties in this world are receptive of an allay of sorrow, and nothing can have pleasure in all capacities. The most beauteous feathers of the birds of paradise, the ostrich, or the peacock, if put into our throat, are not there so pleasant as to the eye: but the beatific joys of the least glory of heaven take away all pain, "wipe away all tears from our eyes;" and it is not possible, that, at the same instant, the soul of Jesus should be ravished with glory, and yet abated with pains grievous and afflictive. On the other side, some say that the soul of Jesus upon the cross suffered the pains of hell, and all the torments of the damned, and that, without such sufferings, it is not imaginable he should pay the price, which God's wrath should demand of us. But the same that reproves the one, does also reprehend the other; for the hope that was the support of the soul of Jesus, as it confesses an imperfection that is not consistent with the state of glory, so it excludes the despair that is the torment proper to accursed souls. Our dearest Lord suffered the whole condition of humanity, "sin only excepted," and freed us from hell with suffering those sad pains, and merited heaven for his own humanity, as the head, and all faithful people as the

[g] Athanas. de Pass. et Cruce Domini.

[h] ——κεῖθι φονῆες Εἰς δόρυ τετράπλευρον.—NONN. Albigenses primi pinxerunt imaginem crucifixi uno clavo simul utrumque pedem configente, et Virginem Mariam monoculam; utrumque in derisionem: sed postea prior figura retenta est, et irrepsit in vulgarem famam.—LUCAS Tud. lib. ii. contra Albig.

[i] Luke xxiv. 26, secundùm vulg. interp.

[k] Heb. ii. 9.

[l] Philip. ii. 8, 9.

members of his mystical body. And therefore his life here was only a state of pilgrimage, not at all trimmed with beatific glories. Much less was he ever in the state of hell, or upon the cross felt the formal misery and spirit of torment, which is the portion of damned spirits; because it was impossible Christ should despair, and without despair it is impossible there should be a hell. But this is highly probable, that, in the intension of degrees and present anguish, the soul of our Lord might feel a greater load of wrath than is incumbent in every instant upon perishing souls. For all the sadness which may be imagined to be in hell, consists in acts produced from principles, that cannot surpass the force of human or angelical nature; but the pain which our blessed Lord endured for the expiation of our sins, was an issue of an united and concentred anger, was received into the heart of God and man, and was commensurate to the whole latitude of the grace, patience, and charity of the Word incarnate.

6. And now behold the Priest and the Sacrifice of all the world laid upon the altar of the cross, bleeding, and tortured, and dying, to reconcile his Father to us: and he was arrayed with ornaments more glorious than the robes of Aaron. The crown of thorns was his mitre, the cross his pastoral staff, the nails piercing his hands were instead of rings, the ancient ornament of priests, and his flesh razed and checkered with blue and blood instead of the parti-coloured robe. But as this object calls for our devotion, our love and eucharist to our dearest Lord; so it must needs irreconcile us to sin, which, in the eye of all the world, brought so great shame, and pain, and amazement upon the Son of God, when he only became engaged by a charitable substitution of himself in our place; and therefore we are assured, by the demonstration of sense and experience, it will bring death, and all imaginable miseries, as the just expresses of God's indignation and hatred: for to this we may apply the words of our Lord in the prediction of miseries to Jerusalem, "If this be done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" For it is certain, Christ infinitely pleased his Father, even by becoming the person made guilty in estimate of law; and yet so great charity of our Lord, and the so great love and pleasure of his Father, exempted him not from suffering pains intolerable: and much less shall those escape, who provoke and displease God, and "despise so great salvation," which the holy Jesus hath wrought with the expense of blood and so precious a life.

7. But here we see a great representation and testimony of the Divine justice, who was so angry with sin, who had so severely threatened it, who does so essentially hate it, that he would not spare his only Son, when he became a conjunct person, relative to the guilt, by undertaking the charges of our nature. For although God hath set down in holy Scripture[m] the order of his justice, and the manner of its manifestation, that one soul shall not perish for the sins of another; yet this is meant for justice and for mercy too, that is, he will not curse the son for the father's fault, or, in any relation whatsoever, substitute one person for another to make him involuntarily guilty: but when this shall be desired by a person that cannot finally perish, and does a mercy to the exempt persons, and is a voluntary act of the suscipient, and shall in the event also redound to an infinite good, it is no deflection from the Divine justice to excuse many by the affliction of one, who also for that very suffering shall have infinite compensation. We see that, for the sin of Cham, all his posterity were accursed: the subjects of David died with the plague, because their prince numbered the people: idolatry is punished in the children of the fourth generation: Saul's seven sons were hanged for his breaking the league of Gibeon; and Ahab's sin was punished in his posterity, he escaping, and "the evil was brought upon his house in his son's days." In all these cases the evil descended upon persons in near relation to the sinner, and was a punishment to him and a misery to these, and were either chastisements also of their own sins, or, if they were not, they served other ends of Providence, and led the afflicted innocent to a condition of recompence accidentally procured by that infliction. But if for such relation's sake and economical and political conjunction, as between prince and people, the evil may be transmitted from one to another, much rather is it just, when, by contract, a competent and conjunct person undertakes to quit his relative. Thus, when the hand steals the back is whipped; and an evil eye is punished with an hungry belly. Treason causes the whole family to be miserable; and a sacrilegious grandfather hath sent a locust to devour the increase of the nephews.

8. But, in our case, it is a voluntary contract, and therefore no injustice; all parties are voluntary. God is the supreme Lord, and his actions are the measure of justice: we, who had deserved the punishment, had great reason to desire a Redeemer: and yet Christ, who was to pay the ransom, was more desirous of it than we were, for we asked it not before it was promised and undertaken. But thus we see that sureties pay the obligation of the principal debtor, and the pledges of contracts have been, by the best and wisest nations, slain, when the articles have been broken: the Thessalians slew 250 pledges; the Romans[n] 300 of the Volsci, and threw the Tarentines from the Tarpeian rock. And that it may appear Christ was a person in all senses competent to do this for us, himself testifies,[o] that he had "power over his own life, to take it up or lay it down." And, therefore, as there can be nothing against the most exact justice and reason of laws and punishments; so it magnifies the Divine mercy, who removes the punishment from us, who of necessity must have sunk under it, and yet makes us to adore his severity, who would not forgive us without punishing his Son for us; to consign unto us his perfect hatred against sin, to conserve the

[m] Deut. xxiv. 16. Ezek. xviii. 2—5, &c.

[n] Livius. Vide lib. Si quis rerum, D. De Custod. et Exhib. Reorum. Lib. Si à reo, D. De Fidejussoribus.

[o] John x. 18.

sacredness of his laws, and to imprint upon us great characters of fear and love. The famous Locrian, Zaleucus, made a law, that all adulterers should lose both their eyes: his son was first unhappily surprised in the crime; and his father, to keep a temper between the piety and soft spirit of a parent, and the justice and severity of a judge, put out one of his own eyes, and one of his son's.[p] So God did with us; he made some abatement, that is, as to the person with whom he was angry, but inflicted his anger upon our Redeemer, whom he essentially loved, to secure the dignity of his sanctions, and the sacredness of obedience; so marrying justice and mercy by the intervening of a commutation. Thus David escaped by the death of his son, God choosing that penalty for the expiation: and Cimon offered himself to prison, to purchase the liberty of his father Miltiades. It was a filial duty in Cimon, and yet the law was satisfied. And both these concurred in our great Redeemer. For God, who was the sole arbitrator, so disposed it, and the eternal Son of God submitted to this way of expiating our crimes, and became an argument of faith and belief of the great article of "remission of sins," and other its appendant causes and effects and adjuncts; it being wrought by a visible and notorious passion. It was made an encouragement of hope; for "he that spared not his own Son" to reconcile us, "will with him give all things else" to us so reconciled; and a great endearment of our duty and love, as it was a demonstration of his. And, in all the changes and traverses of our life, he is made to us a great example of all excellent actions, and all patient sufferings.

9. In the midst of two thieves, three long hours the holy Jesus hung, clothed with pain, agony, and dishonour, all of them so eminent and vast, that he who could not but hope, whose soul was enchased with divinity, and dwelt in the bosom of God, and in the cabinet of the mysterious Trinity, yet had a cloud of misery so thick and black drawn before him, that he complained as if God had forsaken him: but this was "the pillar of cloud" which conducted Israel into Canaan. And as God behind the cloud supported the holy Jesus, and stood ready to receive him into the union of his glories; so his soul, in that great desertion, had internal comforts proceeding from consideration of all those excellent persons, which should be adopted into the fellowship of his sufferings, which should imitate his graces, which should communicate in his glories. And we follow this cloud to our country, having Christ for our guide: and though he trod the way, leaning upon the cross, which, like the staff of Egypt, pierced his hands; yet it is to us a comfort and support, pleasant to our spirits as the sweetest canes, strong as the pillars of the earth, and made apt for our use, by having been borne and made smooth by the hands of our elder Brother.

10. In the midst of all his torments, Jesus only made one prayer of sorrow, to represent his sad condition to his Father; but no accent of murmur, no syllable of anger against his enemies: instead of that, he sent up a holy, charitable, and effective prayer for their forgiveness, and by that prayer obtained of God, that within fifty-five days eight thousand of his enemies were converted. So potent is the prayer of charity, that it prevails above the malice of men, turning the arts of Satan into the designs of God; and when malice occasions the prayer, the prayer becomes an antidote to malice. And, by this instance, our blessed Lord consigned that duty to us, which, in his sermons, he had preached, That we should forgive our enemies, and pray for them: and, by so doing, ourselves are freed from the stings of anger, and the storms of a revengeful spirit; and we oftentimes procure servants to God, friends to ourselves, and heirs to the kingdom of heaven.

11. Of the two thieves that were crucified together with our Lord, the one blasphemed; the other had, at that time, the greatest piety in the world,[q] except that of the blessed Virgin, and particularly had such a faith, that all the ages of the church could never show the like. For when he saw Christ "in the same condemnation" with himself, crucified by the Romans, accused and scorned by the Jews, forsaken by his own apostles; a dying, distressed man, doing at that time no miracles to attest his divinity or innocence; yet then he confesses him to be a Lord, and a King, and his Saviour: he confessed his own shame and unworthiness; he submitted to the death of the cross; and, by his voluntary acceptation and tacit volition of it, made it equivalent to as great a punishment of his own susception; he showed an incomparable modesty, begging but for a remembrance only; he knew himself so sinful, he durst ask no more; he reproved the other thief for blasphemy; he confessed the world to come, and owned Christ publicly; he prayed to him, he hoped in him, and pitied him; showing an excellent patience, in this sad condition. And in this I consider, that besides the excellency of some of these acts, and the goodness of all, the like occasion for so exemplary faith never can occur; and until all these things shall, in these circumstances, meet in any one man, he must not hope for so safe an exit, after an evil life, upon the confidence of this example. But now Christ had the key of Paradise in his hand; and God blessed the good thief with this opportunity of letting him in, who, at another time, might have waited longer, and been tied to harder conditions. And, indeed, it is very probable, that he was much advantaged by the intervening accident of dying at the same time with Christ; there being a natural compassion produced in us towards the partners of our miseries. For Christ was not void of human passions, though

[p] Apud Diodorum Sicul. et Ælian. Ἵνα μὴ ὁ νεανίσκος τυφλωθῇ τελέως, καὶ ἵνα μὴ διαφθαρῇ τὸ ἅπαξ κεκυρωμένον.

[q] *Latro* non semper prædonem aut grassatorem denotat, sed *militem*, qui fortassis ob zelum Judæorum aliquid contra leges Romanas fecerat: alioqui vir fuit non omnino malus. Titubaverunt qui viderunt Christum mortuos suscitantem; credidit ille qui videbat secum in ligno pendentem. Recolamus fidem latronis, quam non invenit Christus post resurrectionem in discipulis suis.—S. AUG. Serm. 144. de Tempore.

he had in them no imperfection or irregularity; and, therefore, might be invited by the society of misery, the rather to admit him to participate his joys; and St. Paul proves him to be a "merciful High-Priest," because "he was touched with a feeling of our infirmities;" the first expression of which was to this blessed thief: Christ and he together sat at the supper of bitter herbs, and Christ paid his symbol, promising that he should "that day be together with him in Paradise."

12. By the cross of Christ stood the holy Virgin-mother, upon whom old Simeon's prophecy was now verified: for now she felt "a sword passing through her very soul;" she stood without clamour and womanish noises;[r] sad, silent, and with a modest grief, deep as the waters of the abyss, but smooth as the face of a pool; full of love, and patience, and sorrow, and hope. Now she was put to it to make use of all those excellent discourses her holy Son had used to build up her spirit, and fortify it against this day. Now she felt the blessings and strengths of faith; and she passed from the griefs of the passion, to the expectation of the resurrection; and she rested in this death, as in a sad remedy; for she knew it reconciled God with all the world. But her hope drew a veil before her sorrow; and though her grief was great enough to swallow her up, yet her love was greater, and did swallow up her grief. But the sun also had a veil upon his face, and taught us to draw a curtain before the passion, which would be the most artificial expression of its greatness; whilst by silence and wonder we confess it great beyond our expression, or, which is all one, great as the burden and baseness of our sins. And with this veil drawn before the face of Jesus, let us suppose him at the gates of Paradise, calling with his last words, in a loud voice, to have them opened, that "the King of glory might come in."

THE PRAYER.

I.

O holy Jesus, who for our sakes didst suffer incomparable anguish and pains, commensurate to thy love, and our miseries, which were infinite; that thou mightest purchase for us blessings upon earth, and an inheritance in heaven; dispose us by love, thankfulness, humility, and obedience, to receive all the benefit of thy passion; granting unto us and thy whole church, remission of all our sins, integrity of mind, health of body, competent maintenance, peace in our days, a temperate air, fruitfulness of the earth, unity and integrity of faith, extirpation of heresies, reconcilement of schisms, destruction of all wicked counsels intended against us; and bind the hands of rapine and sacrilege, that they may not destroy the vintage, and root up the vine itself. Multiply thy blessings upon us, sweetest Jesus; increase in us true religion, sincere and actual devotion in our prayers, patience in troubles, and whatsoever is necessary to our soul's health, or conducing to thy glory. Amen.

[r] S. Ambros. in Luc. lib. x.
[a] Gen. l. Tacit. Annal. lib. xxi.

II.

O dearest Saviour, I adore thy mercies and thy incomparable love expressed in thy so voluntary susception and affectionate suffering such horrid and sad tortures, which cannot be remembered without a sad compassion; the waters of bitterness entered into thy soul, and the storms of death, and thy Father's anger, broke thee all in pieces; and what shall I do, who, by my sins, have so tormented my dearest Lord? What contrition can be great enough, what tears sufficiently expressive, what hatred and detestation of my crimes, can be equal and commensurate to those sad accidents which they have produced? Pity me, O Lord; pity me, dearest God; turn those, thy merciful eyes, towards me, O most merciful Redeemer; for my sins are great, like unto thy passion; full of sorrow and shame, and a burden too great for me to bear. Lord, who hast done so much for me, now "only speak the word, and thy servant shall be whole." Let thy wounds heal me, thy virtues amend me, thy death quicken me; that I, in this life, suffering the cross of a sad and salutary repentance, in the union and merits of thy cross and passion, may die with thee, and rest with thee, and rise again with thee, and live with thee for ever, in the possession of thy glories, O dearest Saviour Jesus. Amen.

SECTION XVI.

Of the Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus.

1. While it was yet "early in the morning, upon the first day of the week, Mary Magdalen, and Mary the mother of James and Salome, brought sweet spices to the sepulchre," that they might again embalm the holy body; (for the rites of embalming, among the Hebrews, used to last forty days;[a]) and their love was not satisfied with what Joseph had done. They, therefore, hastened to the grave; and after they had expended their money, and bought the spices, then begin to consider, "who shall remove the stone:" but yet they still go on, and their love answers the objection, not knowing how it should be done, but yet resolving to go through all the difficulties; but never remember or take care to pass the guards of soldiers. But when they came to the sepulchre, they found the guard affrighted and removed, and "the stone rolled away;" for there had, a little before their arrival, been a great earthquake;[b] and "an angel descending from

[b] Aurora lucis rutilat,
Cœlum laudibus intonat,
Mundus exsultans jubilat,
Gemens infernus ululat;

heaven, rolled away the stone, and sat upon it;" and for fear of him, the guards about the tomb became "astonished with fear," and were "like dead men:" and some of them ran to the high priests, and told them what happened. But they, now resolving to make their iniquity safe and unquestionable, by a new crime, hire the soldiers to tell an incredible and a weak fable, that "his disciples came by night, and stole him away:" against which accident the wit of man could give no more security than themselves had made. The women entered into the sepulchre, and missing the body of Jesus, Mary Magdalen ran to the eleven apostles, complaining that the body of our Lord was not to be found. Then Peter and John ran as fast as they could to see: for the unexpectedness of the relation, the wonder of the story, and the sadness of the person, moved some affections in them, which were kindled by the first principles and sparks of faith, but were not made actual and definite, because the faith was not raised to a flame: they looked into the sepulchre, and finding not the body there, they returned. By this time Mary Magdalen was come back; and the women who staid, weeping, for their Lord's body, "saw two angels sitting in white, the one at the head, and the other at the feet:" at which unexpected sight, they "trembled, and bowed themselves;" but an angel bid them "not to fear," telling them, that "Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified, was also risen, and was not there:" and called to mind what Jesus had told them in Galilee, concerning his crucifixion, and resurrection the third day.

2. And "Mary Magdalen turned herself back, and saw Jesus; but supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, Sir, if thou hast borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away." But "Jesus said unto her, Mary!" Then she knew his voice, and, with ecstasy of joy and wonder, was ready to have crushed his feet with her embraces: but he commanded her "not to touch him," but "go to his brethren, and say, I ascend unto my Father, and to your Father, to my God, and your God." Mary departed with satisfaction, beyond the joys of a victory or a full vintage, and told these things to the apostles; but the narration seemed to them as talk of abused and fantastic persons. About the same time, Jesus also appeared unto Simon Peter. Towards the declining of the day, two of his disciples going to Emmaus, sad, and discoursing of the late occurrences, Jesus puts himself into their company, and upbraids their incredulity; and "expounds the Scriptures, that Christ ought to suffer, and rise again the third day," and "in the breaking of bread disappeared;" and so was "known to them" by vanishing away, whom present they knew not. And instantly they hasted to Jerusalem, and told the apostles what had happened.

3. And while they were there, that is, "the same day at evening, when the apostles were assembled," all save Thomas, "secretly, for fear of the Jews, the doors being shut, Jesus came and stood in the midst of them. They were exceedingly troubled, supposing it had been a spirit." But Jesus confuted them by the philosophy of their senses, by feeling his flesh and bones, which spirits have not. For he gave them his benediction, "showing them his hands and his feet." At which sight they rejoiced with exceeding joy, and began to be restored to their indefinite hopes of some future felicity, by the return of their Lord to life: and there he first "breathed on them, giving them the Holy Ghost," and performing the promise twice made before his death; the promise of the keys, or of "binding and loosing;" saying, "whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted to them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." And that was the second part of clerical power, with which Jesus instructed his disciples, in order to their great commission of preaching and government ecclesiastical. These things were told to Thomas, but he believed not, and resolved against the belief of it, unless he might "put his finger into his hands, and his hand into his side." Jesus, therefore, on the octaves of his resurrection, appeared again to the apostles met together, and makes demonstration to Thomas, in conviction and reproof of his unbelief, promising a special benediction to all succeeding ages of the church; for they are such who "saw not, and yet have believed."

4. But Jesus, at his early appearing, had sent an order by the women, that the disciples should go into Galilee; and they did so after a few days. And Simon Peter being there, went a fishing, and six other of the apostles with him, to the sea of Tiberias, where they "laboured all night and caught nothing." Towards "the morning, Jesus appeared to them," and bade them "cast the net on the right side of the ship;" which they did, and "enclosed an hundred and fifty-three great fishes:" by which prodigious draught, John, the beloved disciple, perceived "it was the Lord." At which instant "Peter threw himself into the sea," and went to Jesus; and when the rest were come to shore, they dined with broiled fish. After dinner, Jesus, taking care for those scattered sheep, which were dispersed over the face of the earth, that he might gather them into one sheepfold under one Shepherd, asked Peter, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? Peter answered, Yea, Lord? thou, that knowest all things, knowest that I love thee. Then Jesus said unto him, Feed my lambs." And Jesus asked him the same question, and gave him the same precept, the second time, and the third time: for it was a considerable and a weighty employment, upon which Jesus was willing to spend all his endearments and stock of affections that Peter owed him, even upon the care of his little flock. And after the intrusting of this charge to him, he told him, that the reward he should have in this world, should be a sharp and an honourable martyrdom;

Cùm rex ille fortissimus,
Mortis confractis viribus,
Pede conculcans Tartara,
Solvit à pœna miseros.

Ille qui clausus lapide
Custoditur sub milite,
Triumphans pompâ nobili,
Victor surgit de funere.—Hymn. Paschal.

and, withal, checks Peter's curiosity, in busying himself about the temporal accidents of other men, and inquiring what should become of John, the beloved disciple. Jesus answered his question with some sharpness of reprehension, and no satisfaction: "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" Then they fancied that he should not die; but they were mistaken, for the intimation was expounded and verified by St. John's surviving the destruction of Jerusalem; for, after the attempts of persecutors, and the miraculous escape of prepared torments, he died a natural death, in a good old age.

5. After this, Jesus having appointed a solemn meeting for all the brethren that could be collected from the dispersion, and named a certain mountain in Galilee, 'appeared to five hundred brethren at once;" and this was his most public and solemn manifestation; and while some doubted, Jesus came according to the designation, and spake to the eleven; sent them to "preach to all the world repentance, and remission of sins in his name;" promising "to be with them to the end of the world." He appeared also unto James, but at what time is uncertain; save that there is something concerning it in the gospel of St. Matthew, which the Nazarenes of Berea used, and which it is likely themselves added out of report; for there is nothing of it in our Greek copies. The words are these: "When the Lord had given the linen, in which he was wrapped, to the servant of the high priest, he went and appeared unto James. For James had vowed, after he received the Lord's supper, that he would eat no bread till he saw the Lord risen from the grave. Then the Lord called for bread; he blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to James the Just, and said, 'My brother, eat bread, for the Son of man is risen from the sleep of death.'" So that, by this, it should seem to be done upon the day of the resurrection. But the relation of it by St. Paul, puts it between the appearance which he made to the five hundred, and that last to the apostles, when he was to ascend into heaven. Last of all, when the apostles were "at dinner, he appeared to them, upbraiding their incredulity;" and "then he opened their understanding, that they might discern the sense of Scripture," and again commanded them to preach the gospel to all the world, giving them power "to do miracles, to cast out devils, to cure diseases;" and instituted the sacrament of baptism, which he commanded should, together with the sermons of the gospel, be administered "to all nations, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Then he led them into Judea, and they came to Bethany, and from thence to the mount Olivet; and he commanded them to "stay in Jerusalem," till the Holy Ghost, "the promise of the Father, should descend upon them," which should be accomplished in a few days; and then they should know the times, and the seasons, and all things necessary for their ministration and service, and propagation of the gospel. And while he "discoursed many things concerning the kingdom," behold a cloud came, and parted Jesus from them, and carried him, in their sight, up into heaven; where he sits at the right hand of God, blessed for ever. Amen.

6. While his apostles "stood gazing up to heaven," two angels appeared to them, and told them, that "Jesus should come in like manner as he was taken away," viz. with glory and majesty, and in the clouds, and with the ministry of angels. Amen. "Come, Lord Jesus; come quickly."

Ad SECTION XVI.

Considerations upon the Accidents happening in the Interval after the Death of the holy Jesus, until his Resurrection.

1. THE holy Jesus promised to the blessed thief, that he should "that day be with him in Paradise;" which, therefore, was certainly a place or state of blessedness, because it was a promise; and in the society of Jesus, whose penal and afflictive part of his work of redemption was finished upon the cross. Our blessed Lord did not promise he should that day be with him in his kingdom, for that day it was not opened, and the everlasting doors of those interior recesses were to be shut till after the resurrection, that himself was to ascend thither, and make way for all his servants to enter, in the same method in which he went before us. Our blessed Lord "descended into hell," saith the creed of the apostles,[a] from the sermon of St. Peter, as he from the words of David, that is, into the state of separation and common receptacle of spirits, according to the style of Scripture. But the name of "hell" is no where in Scripture an appellative of the kingdom of Christ, of the place of final and supreme glory. But concerning the verification of our Lord's promise to the beatified thief, and his own state of separation, we must take what light we can from Scripture, and what we can from the doctrine of the primitive church. St. Paul had two great revelations;[b] he was "rapt up into Paradise," and he was "rapt up into the third heaven:" and these he calls "visions and revelations," not one, but divers: for Paradise is distinguished from the "heaven of the blessed," being itself a receptacle of holy souls, made illustrious with visitation of angels, and happy by being a repository for such spirits, who, at the day of judgment, shall go forth into eternal glory. In the interim, Christ hath trod all the paths before us, and this also we must pass through, to arrive at the courts of heaven. Justin Martyr said it was the doctrine of heretical persons, to say that the souls of the blessed, instantly upon the separation from their bodies, enter into the highest heaven.[c] And Irenæus makes heaven and the intermediate receptacle of souls, to be distinct places:[d] both blessed, but hugely differing in degrees. Tertullian is

[a] Symbolum Aquileiense, et ex eo Romanum hodiernum.

[b] —— Ubi duas magnas revelationes sibi obtigisse dixit Paulus, bisque in sublime se raptum; semel ad cœlum tertium, semel ad paradisum.—METHODIUS cont. Origen. apud Epiph. Idem ait Moses Barcephas, lib. de Paradiso, c. 7. p. 4.

[c] Dial. adv. Tryphon.

[d] Lib. v. c. 3.

dogmatical in the assertion,[e] that till the voice of the great archangel be heard, and as long as Christ sits at the right hand of his Father, making intercession for the church, so long blessed souls must expect the assembling of their brethren, the great congregation of the church, that they may all pass, from their outer courts into the inward tabernacle, the holy of holies, to the throne of God. And as it is certain, that no soul could enter into glory before our Lord entered, by whom we hope to have access: so it is most agreeable to the proportion of the mysteries of our redemption, that we believe the entrance into glory to have been made by our Lord at his glorious ascension, and that his soul went not thither before then, to come back again, to be contracted into the span of humanity, and dwell forty days in his body upon earth. But that he should return from Paradise, that is, from the common receptacle of departed spirits, who died in the love of God, to earth again, had in it no lessening of his condition, since himself, in mercy, called back Lazarus from thence, and some others also returned to live a life of grace, which, in all senses, is less than the least of glories. Sufficient it is to us, that all holy souls, departing, go into the hands, that is, into the custody of our Lord; that "they rest from their labours;"[f] that "their works shall follow them," and overtake them, too, at the day of judgment; that they are happy presently; that they are visited by angels;[g] that God sends, as he pleases, excellent irradiations and types of glory to entertain them in their mansions; that their condition is secured: but "the crown of righteousness is laid up"[h] against the great day of judgment, and then to be produced and given to St. Paul, and "to all that love the coming of our Lord;" that is, to all who either here in duty, or in their receptacles, with joy and certain hope, long for the revelation of that day. At the day of judgment, Christ will "send the angels, and they shall gather together the elect from the four winds;"[i] and all the refuse of men, evil persons, they shall "throw into everlasting burning." Then our blessed Lord shall call to the elect to enter into the kingdom, and reject the cursed into the portion of devils; "for whom the fire" is but now prepared in the interval. For "we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ," saith St. Paul, "that every man may receive in his body according as he hath done, whether it be good or evil."[k] Out of the body the reception of the reward is not. And, therefore, St. Peter affirms, that "God hath delivered the evil angels unto chains of darkness, to be reserved into judgment."[l] And St. Jude saith, that "the angels which kept not their first faith, but left their first habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day."[m] And, therefore, the devils expostulated with our blessed Saviour, "Art thou come to torment us before the time?"[n] And the same also he does to evil men, "reserving the unjust unto the day of judgment, to be punished."[o] For since the actions which are to be judged, are the actions of the whole man, so also must be the judicature. And our blessed Saviour intimated this to his apostles; "In my Father's house are many mansions: but I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go away, I will come again, and take you unto me; that where I am, there ye may be also."[p] At Christ's second coming this is to be performed.[q] Many outer courts, many different places, or different states, there may be: and yet there is a place whither holy souls shall arrive at last, which was not then ready for us, and was not to be entered into, until the entrance of our Lord had made the "preparation:" and that is, certainly, "the highest heaven," called, by St. Paul, "the third heaven;" because the other receptacles were ready, and full of holy souls, patriarchs, and prophets, and holy men of God; concerning whom St. Paul affirms expressly, that "the fathers received not the promises: God having provided some better thing for us, that they, without us, should not be made perfect:"[r] therefore, certain it is, that their condition was a state of imperfection, and yet they were placed in Paradise, "in Abraham's bosom;" and thither Christ went, and the blessed thief attended him. And then it was that Christ made their condition better: for though still it be a place of relation in order to something beyond it, yet the term and object of their hope is changed: they sat in the regions of darkness, expecting that great promise made to Adam and the patriarchs, the promise of the Messias; but when he that was promised came, he "preached to the spirits in prison," he communicated to them the mysteries of the gospel, "the secrets of the kingdom," the things "hidden from eternal ages," and taught them to look up to the glories purchased by his passion, and made the term of their expectation be his second coming, and the objects of their hope the glories of the beatific vision. And although the state of separation is sometimes in Scripture called heaven, and sometimes hell, (for these words in Scripture are of large significations,) yet it is never called "the third heaven," nor "the hell of the damned:" for although, concerning it, nothing is clearly revealed, or what is their portion till the day of judgment;

[e] Lib. de Anima; et de Præscript. Idem sentiunt Scriptor Resp. ad Orthod. q. 76. S. Greg. Naz. orat. 10. S. Chrysost. hom. 15. in Matt. S. Ambr. in Micheam, Cyrilli Liturg. Epiphan. ep. apud S. Hier. Theodoretus, Theophylactus, et Vet. passim.

[f] Revel. xiv. 13.

[g] Just. Mart. 75. inter quæst. Gentiles ait, bonos statim duci a morte ad Paradisum, ubi consuetudo et aspectus est Angelorum et visus Christi Salvatoris.

[h] 2 Tim. iv. 8.

[i] Matt. xiii. 41. et xxiv. 31.

[k] 2 Cor. v. 10. Ἵνα κομίσηται ἕκαστος τὰ ἴδια τοῦ σώματος· sic quidam Cod. τὰ διὰ τοῦ σώματος· sic communiter, et rectius.

[l] 2 Pet. ii. 4.

[m] Jude 6.

[n] Matt. viii. 29.

[o] 2 Pet. ii. 9. Nec tamen quisquam putet animas post mortem protinus judicari: nam omnes in una communique custodia detinentur, donec tempus adveniat, atque maximus judex meritorum faciat examen.—LACTAN. lib. vii. c. 21.

[p] John xiv. 2, 3.

[q] Satiabor cùm apparueris. Psal. xvii. 15.

[r] Heb. xi. 40. Irenæ. lib. v. adv. Hæres. ad fin. Origen. hom. 7. in Levit. Chrys. hom. 39. in 1 Cor. Theodoret. Theophylact. Oecumenius in Hebr. xi. S. Aug. lib. i. Retract. c. 14. Victorin. Mart. in c. 6. Apoc. Ambros. de Bono Mortis, c. 10. et 11.

yet it is intimated in a parable, that between good and evil spirits, even in the state of separation, there is distance of place: certain it is, there is great distance of condition; and as the holy souls, in their regions of light, are full of love, joy, hope, and longing for the coming of the great day, so the accursed do expect it with an insupportable amazement, and are presently tormented with apprehensions of the future. Happy are they, that, through Paradise, pass into the kingdom, who, from their highest hope, pass to the greatest charity, from the state of a blessed separation, to the mercies and gentle sentence of "the day of judgment,"[s] which St. Paul prayed to God to grant Onesiphorus; and more explicitly for the Thessalonians, "that their whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus."[t] And I pray God to grant the same to me, and all faithful people whatsoever.

2. As soon as the Lord had "given up his spirit" into the hands of God, "the veil of the temple was rent," the angels, guardians of the place, deserted it, the rites of Moses were laid open, and the enclosures of the tabernacle were disparked, "the earth trembled, the graves were opened," and all the old world, and the old religion, were so shaken towards their first chaos, that if God had not supported the one, and reserved the other for an honourable burial, the earth had left to support her children, and the synagogue had been thrown out to an inglorious exposition and contempt. But yet in these symbols these were changed from their first condition, and passed into a new dominion; all "old things passed away, and all things became new; the earth and the heavens" were reckoned as "a new creation," they passed into another kingdom, under Christ their Lord; and as before the creatures were servants of human necessities, they now become servants of election, and in order to the ends of grace, as before of nature; Christ having now the power to dispose of them in order to his kingdom, and by the administration of his own wisdom. And at the instant of these accidents, God so determined the persuasions of men, that they referred these prodigies to the honour of Christ, and took them as testimonies of that truth, for the affirmation of which the high priest had condemned our dearest Lord: and although the heart of the priest rent not,[u] even then when rocks did tear in pieces; yet the people, who saw the passion, "smote their breasts, and returned," and confessed Christ.

3. The graves of the dead were opened at the death, but the dead bodies of the saints that slept arose not till the resurrection of our Lord; for he was "the first fruits,"[x] and they followed him as instant witnesses, to publish the resurrection of their Head, which, it is possible, they declared to those to whom they "appeared in the holy city." And amongst these, the curiosity, or pious credulity, of some, have supposed Adam and Eve, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who, therefore, were careful to be buried in the land of promise, as having some intimation or hope, that they might be partakers of the earliest glories of the Messias, in whose faith and distant expectation they lived and died. And this calling up of company from their graves did publish to all the world, not only that the Lord himself was risen, according to his so frequent and repeated predictions, but that he meant to raise up all his servants, and that all who believe in him should be partakers of the resurrection.[y]

4. When the soldiers observed that Jesus was dead, out of spite and impotent ineffective malice, one of them pierced his holy side with a spear; and the rock being smitten, it gushed out with "water and blood," streaming forth two sacraments to refresh the church, and opening a gate that all his brethren might enter in, and dwell in the heart of God. And so great a love had our Lord, that he suffered his heart to be opened, to show, that as Eve was formed from the side of Adam, so was the church to be from the side of her Lord, receiving from thence life and spiritual nutriment; which he ministered in so great abundance, and suffered himself to be pierced, that all his blood did stream over us, until he made the fountain dry, and reserved nothing of that by which he knew his church was "to live, and move, and have her being." Thus the stream of blood issued out to become a fountain for the sacrament of the chalice, and water gushed out, to fill the fonts of baptism and repentance. The blood, being the testimony of the Divine love, calls upon us to die for his love, when he requires it; and the noise of the water calls upon us to purify our spirits, and present our conscience to Christ "holy and pure, without spot or wrinkle." The blood running upon us, makes us to be of the cognation and family of God; and the water quenches the flames of hell, and the fires of concupiscence.

5. The friends and disciples of the holy Jesus, having devoutly composed his body to burial, anointed it, washed it, and condited it with spices and perfumes, laid it in a sepulchre hewn from a rock in a garden; which, saith Euthymius, was therefore done, to represent, that we were, by this death, returned to Paradise, and the gardens of pleasures and Divine favours, from whence, by the prevarication of Adam, man was expelled. Here he finished the work of his passion, as he had begun it in a garden; and the place of sepulchre, being a rock, serves the ends of pious succeeding ages: for the place remains in all changes of government, of wars, of earthquakes, and ruder accidents, to this day, as a memorial of the sepulchre of our dearest Lord, as a sensible and proper confirmation of the persuasions of some persons, and as an entertainment of their pious fancy and religious affections.

[s] 2 Tim. i. 18.

[t] 1 Thess. v. 23. Vide Irenæum in hunc locum, lib. v. c. 6. adv. Hæres. ubi probat, absque unione corporis, animæ, et spiritus, hominem non esse.

[u] S. Ambros. in Lucam. lib. 10.

[x] Euseb. Emiss. hom. 6. de Pasch.

——— tumuloque inferna refringens
Regna, resurgentes secum jubet ire sepultos.
Prudent. Apoth.

[y] Ἐλυτροῦντο πάντες οἱ δίκαιοι, οὓς κατέπιεν ὁ θάνατος. —S. Cyr. Catech. et Chrys. hom. 88. in xxvii. Matt.

6. But now it was, that in the dark and undiscerned mansions there was a scene of the greatest joy and the greatest horror represented, which yet was known since the first falling of the morning-stars. Those holy souls, whom the prophet Zechariah calls "prisoners of hope, lying in the lake where there is no water,"[z] that is, no constant stream of joy to refresh their present condition, (yet supported with certain showers and gracious visitations from God, and illuminations of their hope,) now that they saw their Redeemer come to change their condition, and to improve it into the neighbourhoods of glory and clearer revelation, must needs have the joy of intelligent and beatified understandings, of redeemed captives, of men forgiven after the sentence of death, of men satisfied after a tedious expectation, enjoying and seeing their Lord, whom, for so many ages, they had expected. But the accursed spirits, seeing the darkness of their prison shine with a new light, and their empire invaded, and their retirements of horror discovered, wondered how a man durst venture thither, or if he were a God, how he should come to die. But the holy Jesus was like that body of light, receiving into himself the reflection of all the lesser rays of joy, which the patriarchs felt, and being united to his fountain of felicity, apprehended it yet more glorious. He now felt the effects of his bitter passion to return upon him in comforts; every hour of which was abundant recompence for three hours' passion upon the cross, and became to us a great precedent, to invite us to a toleration of the acts of repentance, mortification, and martyrdom, and that in times of suffering we live upon the stock and expense of faith, as remembering that these few moments of infelicity are infinitely paid with every minute of glory, and yet that the glory, which is certainly consequent, is so lasting and perpetual, that it were enough in a lower joy to make amends, by its continuation of eternity. And let us but call to mind what thoughts we shall have, when we die, or are dead; how we shall then, without prejudice, consider, that if we had done our duty, the trouble and the affliction would now be past, and nothing remain but pleasures and felicities eternal,[a] and how infinitely happy we shall then be, if we have done our duty, and how miserable, if not; all the pleasures of sin disappearing, and nothing surviving but a certain and everlasting torment. Let us carry always the same thoughts with us, which must certainly then intervene, and we shall meet the holy Jesus, and partake of his joys, which overflowed his holy soul, when he first entered into the possession of those excellent fruits and effects of his passion.

7. When the third day was come, the soul of Jesus returned from Paradise, and the visitation of separate spirits, and re-entered into his holy body, which he, by his Divine power, did redintegrate, filling his veins with blood, healing all the wounds, excepting those five of his hands, feet, and side, which he reserved as trophies of his victory, and argument of his passion. And as he had comforted the souls of the fathers with the presence of his Spirit; so now he saw it to be time to bring comfort to his holy mother, to re-establish the tottering faith of his disciples, to verify his promise to make demonstration of his Divinity, to lay some superstructures of his church upon the foundation of his former sermons, to instruct them in the mysteries of his kingdom, to prepare them for the reception of the Holy Ghost: and as he had, in his state of separation, triumphed over hell, so, in his resurrection, he set his foot upon death, and brought it under his dominion; so that although it was not yet destroyed, yet it is made his subject: it hath, as yet, the condition of the Gibeonites, who were not banished out of the land, but they were made "drawers of water and hewers of wood;" so is death made instrumental to Christ's kingdom, but it abides still, and shall till the day of judgment, but shall serve the ends of our Lord, and promote the interests of eternity, and do benefit to the church.

8. And it is considerable, that our blessed Lord having told them, that after three days he would rise again, yet he shortened the time as much as was possible, that he might verify his own prediction, and yet make his absence the least troublesome: he rises "early in the morning the first day of the week:" for so our dearest Lord abbreviates the days of our sorrow, and lengthens the years of our consolation; for he knows that a day of sorrow seems a year, and a year of joy passes like a day; and, therefore, God lessens the one and lengthens the other, to make this perceived and that supportable. Now the temple, which the Jews destroyed, God raised up in six and thirty hours: but this "second temple" was more glorious than the first; for now it was clothed with robes of glory, with clarity, agility, and immortality: and though, like Moses descending from the mount, he wore a veil, that the greatness of his splendour might not render him unapt for conversation with his servants; yet the holy Scripture affirms, that he was "now no more to see corruption;" meaning, that now he was separate from the passibility and affections of human bodies, and could suffer St. Thomas to thrust his hand into the wound of his side, and his finger into the holes of his hands, without any grief or smart.

9. But although the graciousness and care of the Lord had prevented all diligence, and satisfied all desires, returning to life before the most forward faith could expect him; yet there were three Maries went to the grave so early, that they prevented the rising of the sun; and though, with great obedience they staid till the end of the sabbath, yet, as soon as that was done, they had other parts of duty and affection, which called with greatest importunity to be speedily satisfied. And if obedience had not bound the feet of love, they had gone the day before; but they became to us admirable patterns of obedi-

[z] Zech. ix. 11, 12.

[a] Ἄν τι πράξῃς μετὰ πόνου καλὸν, ὁ μὲν πόνος ὄιχεται, τὸ δὲ καλὸν μένει· ἄν τι ποιήσῃς αἰσχρὸν μετὰ ἡδονῆς, τὸ μὲν ἡδὺ ὄιχεται, τὸ δὲ αἰσχρὸν μένει.—MUSONIUS apud A. Gellium, lib. xvi. c. 1.

ence to the Divine commandments. For though love were "stronger than death," yet obedience was stronger than love, and made a rare dispute in the spirits of those holy women, in which the flesh and the spirit were not the litigants, but the spirit and the spirit; and they resisted each other, as the angel-guardian of the Jews resisted the tutelar angel of Persia, each striving who should with most love and zeal perform their charge, and God determined. And so he did here too. For the law of the sabbath was then a Divine commandment; and although piety to the dead, and to such a dead, was ready to force their choice to do violence to their will, bearing them up on wings of desire to the grave of the Lord, yet at last they reconciled love with obedience. For they had been taught, that love is best expressed in keeping of the Divine commandments. But now they were at liberty; and sure enough they made use of its first minute: and going so early to seek Christ, they were sure they should find him.

10. The angels descended guardians of the sepulchre; for God sent his guards too, and they affrighted the watch appointed by Pilate and the priests: but when the women came, they spake like comforters, full of sweetness and consolation, laying aside their affrighting glories, as knowing it is the will of their Lord, that they should minister good to them that love him. But a conversation with angels could not satisfy them, who came to look for the Lord of the angels, and found him not: and when the Lord was pleased to appear to Mary Magdalen, she was so swallowed up with love and sorrow, that she entered into her joy, and perceived it not; she saw the Lord, and knew him not. For so, from the closets of darkness, they that immediately stare upon the sun, perceive not the beauties of the light, and feel nothing but amazement. But the voice of the Lord opened her eyes, and she knew him, and worshipped him, but was denied to touch him, and commanded to tell the apostles: for therefore God ministers to us comforts and revelations, not that we may dwell in the sensible fruition of them ourselves alone, but that we communicate the grace to others. But when the other women were returned and saw the Lord, then they were all together admitted to the embracement, and to kiss the feet of Jesus. For God hath his opportunities and periods, which at another time he denies; and we must then rejoice in it when he vouchsafes it, and submit to his Divine will when he denies it.

11. These good women had the first fruits of the apparition: for their forward love, and the passion of their religion, made greater haste to entertain a grace, and was a greater endearment of their persons to our Lord, than a more sober, reserved, and less active spirit. This is more safe, but that is religious; this goes to God by the way of understanding, that by the will; this is supported by discourse, that by passions; this is the sobriety of the apostles, the other was the zeal of the holy women; and because a strong fancy and an earnest passion, fixed upon holy objects, are the most active and forward instruments of devotion, as devotion is of love, therefore we find God hath made great expressions of his acceptance of such dispositions. And women, and less knowing persons, and tender dispositions, and pliant natures, will make up a greater number in heaven, than the severe, and wary, and inquiring people, who sometimes love because they believe, and believe because they can demonstrate, but never believe because they love. When a great understanding and a great affection meet together, it makes a saint great like an apostle; but they do not well, who make abatement of their religious passions by the severity of their understanding. It is no matter by which we are brought to Christ, so we love him and obey him; but if the production admit of degrees, that instrument is the most excellent which produces the greatest love: and although discourse, and a sober spirit, be in itself the best, yet we do not always suffer that to be a parent of as great religion as the good women make their fancy, their softness, and their passion.

12. Our blessed Lord appeared next to Simon: and though he and John ran forth together, and St. John outran Simon, although Simon Peter had denied and forsworn his Lord, and St. John never did, and followed him to his passion and his death; yet Peter had the favour of seeing Jesus first. Which some spiritual persons understand as a testimony that penitent sinners have accidental eminences and privileges sometimes indulged to them beyond the temporal graces of the just and innocent, as being such who not only need defensatives against the remanent and inherent evils even of repented sins, and their aptnesses to relapse; but also because those—who are true penitents, who understand the infiniteness of the Divine mercy, and that for a sinner to pass from death to life, from the state of sin into pardon and the state of grace, is a greater gift,[b] and a more excellent and improbable mutation, than for a just man to be taken into glory,—out of gratitude to God, and endearment for so great a change, added to fear of returning to such danger and misery, will re-enforce all their industry, and double their study, and observe more diligently, and watch more carefully, and "redeem the time," and make amends for their omissions, and oppose a good to the former evils, beside the duties of the present employment; and then, commonly, the life of a holy penitent is more holy, active, zealous, and impatient of vice, and more rapacious of virtue and holy actions, and arises to greater degrees of sanctity, than the even and moderate affections of just persons, who (as our blessed Saviour's expression is) "need no repentance," that is, no change of state, nothing but a perseverance, and an improvement of degrees. "There is more joy in heaven, before the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety-nine just persons that need it not:"[c] for, "where sin hath abounded, there doth grace superabound;" and that makes joy in heaven.

13. The holy Jesus, having received the affections of his most passionate disciples, the women

[b] Majus est, peccatorem ex peccato in gratiam migrare, quàm ex hoc mundo in cœlum.—S. AUGUST.

[c] Luke xv. 7.

and St. Peter, puts himself upon the way into the company of two good men going to Emmaus, with troubled spirits and a reeling faith, shaking all its upper building, but leaving some of its foundation firm. To them the Lord discourses of the necessity of the death and resurrection of the Messias, and taught them not to take estimate of the counsels of God by the designs and proportions of man: for God, by ways contrary to human judgment, brings to pass the purposes of his eternal providence. The glories of Christ were not made pompous by human circumstances; his kingdom was spiritual: he was to enter into felicities through the gates of death; he refused to do miracles before Herod, and yet did them before the people; he confuted his accusers by silence, and did not descend from the cross, when they offered to believe in him, if he would; but left them to be persuaded by greater arguments of his power, the miraculous circumstances of his death, and the glories of his resurrection; and, by walking in the secret paths of Divine election, hath commanded us to adore his footsteps, to admire and revere his wisdom, to be satisfied with all the events of providence, and to rejoice in him, if by afflictions he makes us holy, if by persecutions he supports and enlarges his church, if by death he brings us to life; so we arrive at the communion of his felicities, we must let him choose the way; it being sufficient that he is our guide, and our support, and our "exceeding great reward." For therefore Christ preached to the two disciples, going to Emmaus, the way of the cross, and the necessity of that passage, that the wisdom of God might be glorified, and the conjectures of man ashamed. But whilst his discourse lasted, they knew him not; but, in the breaking of bread, he discovered himself. For he turned their meal into a sacrament, and their darkness to light; and having to his sermon added the sacrament, opened all their discerning faculties, the eyes of their body, and their understanding too; to represent to us, that when we are blessed with the opportunities of both those instruments, we want no exterior assistance to guide us in the way to the knowing and enjoying of our Lord.

14. But the apparitions which Jesus made, were all upon the design of laying the foundation of all christian graces; for the begetting and establishing faith, and an active confidence in their persons, and building them up on the great fundamentals of the religion. And therefore he appointed a general meeting upon a mountain in Galilee, that the number of witnesses might not only disseminate the fame, but establish the article, of the resurrection; for upon that are built all the hopes of a christian; and "if the dead rise not, then are we of all men most miserable," in quitting the present possessions, and entertaining injuries and affronts without hopes of reparation. But we lay two gages in several repositories; the body in the bosom of the earth, the soul in the bosom of God: and as we here live by faith, and lay them down with hope; so the resurrection is a restitution of them both, and a state of re-union. And therefore, although the glory of our spirits, without the body, were joy great enough to make compensation for more than the troubles of all the world; yet, because one shall not be glorified without the other, they being of themselves incomplete substances, and God having revealed nothing clearly concerning actual and complete felicities till the day of judgment, when it is promised our bodies shall rise; therefore it is, that the resurrection is the great article upon which we rely, and which Christ took so much care to prove and ascertain to so many persons, because, if that should be disbelieved with which all our felicities are to be received, we have nothing to establish our faith, or entertain our hope, or satisfy our desires, or make retribution for that state of secular inconveniences, in which, by the necessities of our nature, and the humility and patience of our religion, we are engaged.

15. But I consider, that holy Scripture only instructs us concerning "the life of this world," and "the life of the resurrection, the life of grace," and "the life of glory," both in the body, that is, a life of the whole man; and whatsoever is spoken of the soul, considers it as an essential part of man, relating to his whole constitution, not as it is of itself an intellectual and separate substance; for all its actions which are separate and removed from the body, are relative and incomplete. Now, because the soul is an incomplete substance, and created in relation to the body, and is but a part of the whole man, if the body were as eternal and incorruptible as the soul, yet the separation of the one from the other would be, as now it is, that which we call "natural death;" and supposing that God should preserve the body for ever, or restore it at the day of judgment to its full substance and perfect organs, yet the man would be dead for ever, if the soul for ever should continue separate from the body. So that the other life, that is, the state of resurrection, is a re-uniting soul and body. And although, in a philosophical sense, the resurrection is of the body, that is, a restitution of our flesh and blood and bones, and is called "resurrection," as the entrance into the state of resurrection may have the denomination of the whole; yet, in the sense of Scripture, the resurrection is the restitution of our life, the renovation of the whole man, the state of re-union; and until that be, the man is not, but he is dead, and only his essential parts are deposited and laid up in trust: and, therefore, whatsoever the soul does or perceives in its incomplete condition, is but to it as embalming and honourable funerals to the body, and a safe monument to preserve it in order to a living again; and the felicities of the interval are wholly in order to the next life. And therefore, if there were to be no resurrection, as these intermedial joys should not be at all; so, as they are, they are but relative and incomplete: and therefore all our hopes, all our felicities, depend upon the resurrection; without it we should never be persons, men or women; and then the state of separation could be nothing but a fantasm, trees ever in blossom, never bearing fruit, corn for ever in the blade, eggs always in the shell, a hope eternal, never to pass into fruition, that is, for ever to be deluded, for

ever to be miserable. And therefore it was an elegant expression of St. Paul,[d] "Our life is hid with Christ in God;" that is, our life is passed into custody, the dust of our body is numbered, and the spirit is refreshed, visited, and preserved in celestial mansions: but it is not properly called a life; for all this while the man is dead, and shall then live, when Christ produces this hidden life at the great day of restitution. But our faith of all this article is well wrapped up in the words of St. John:[e] "Beloved, now we are the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." The middle state is not it which Scripture hath propounded to our faith, or to our hope; the reward is then when Christ shall appear: but, in the mean time, the soul can converse with God and with angels, just as the holy prophets did in their dreams, in which they received great degrees of favour and revelation.[f] But this is not to be reckoned any more than an entrance or a waiting for the state of our felicity. And since the glories of heaven is the great fruit of election, we may consider that the body is not predestinate, nor the soul, alone, but the whole man; and, until the parts embrace again in an essential complexion, it cannot be expected either of them should receive the portion of the predestinate. But the article and the event of future things is rarely set in order by St. Paul:[g] "But ye are come unto the mount Sion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all;" and then follows, after this "general assembly," after "the Judge of all" appears, "to the spirits of just men made perfect;" that is, re-united to their bodies, and entering into glory. The beginning of the contrary opinion brought some new practices and appendant persuasions into the church, or at least promoted them much. For those doctors, who, receding from the primitive belief of this article, taught that the glories of heaven are fully communicated to the souls before the day of judgment, did also upon that stock teach the invocation of saints, whom they believed to be received into glory, and insensibly also brought in the opinion of purgatory, that the less perfect souls might be glorified in the time that they assigned them. But the safer opinion, and more agreeable to piety, is that which I have now described from Scripture and the purest ages of the church.

16. When Jesus appeared to the apostles, he gave them his peace for a benediction; and when he departed, he left them peace for a legacy, and gave them, according to two former promises, the power of making peace, and reconciling souls to God by a ministerial act; so conveying his Father's mercy, which himself procured by his passion, and actuates by his intercession and the giving of his grace, that he might comply with our infirmities, and minister to our needs by instruments even and proportionate to ourselves; making our brethren the conduits of his grace, that the excellent effect of the Spirit might not descend upon us, as the law upon mount Sinai, in expresses of greatness and terror, but in earthen vessels, and images of infirmity: so God manifesting his power in the smallness of the instrument, and descending to our needs, not only in giving the grace of pardon, but also in the manner of its ministration. And I meditate upon the greatness of this mercy, by comparing this grace of God, and the blessing of the judgment and sentence we receive at the hand of the church, with the judgment which God makes at the hour of death upon them, who have despised this mercy, and neglected all the other parts of their duty. The one is a judgment of mercy, the other of vengeance: in the one the devil is the accuser, and heaven and earth bear witness; in the other, the penitent sinner accuses himself: in that, the sinner gets a pardon; in the other, he finds no remedy: in that, all his good deeds are remembered and returned, and his sins are blotted out; in the other, all his evil deeds are represented with horror and a sting, and remain for ever: in the first, the sinner changes his state for a state of grace, and only smarts in some temporal austerities and acts of exterior mortification; in the second, his temporal estate is changed to an eternity of pain: in the first, the sinner suffers the shame of one man or one society, which is sweetened by consolation, and homilies of mercy and health; in the latter, all his sins are laid open before all the world, and himself confounded in eternal amazement and confusions: in the judgment of the church, the sinner is honoured by all for returning to the bosom of his mother, and the embraces of his heavenly Father; in the judgment of vengeance, he is laughed at by God, and mocked by accursed spirits, and perishes without pity: in this, he is prayed for by none, helped by none, comforted by none, and he makes himself a companion of devils to everlasting ages; but in the judgment of repentance and tribunal of the church, the penitent sinner is prayed for by a whole army of militant saints, and causes joy to all the church triumphant. And to establish this tribunal in the church, and to transmit pardon to penitent sinners, and a salutary judgment upon the person and the crime, and to appoint physicians and guardians of the soul, was one of the designs and mercies of the resurrection of Jesus. And let not any christian men, either by false opinion, or an unbelieving spirit, or an incurious apprehension, undervalue or neglect this ministry, which Christ hath so sacredly and solemnly established. Happy is he that dashes his sins against the rock upon which the church is built; that the church, gathering up the planks and fragments of the shipwreck, and the shivers of the broken heart, may re-unite them, pouring oil into the wounds

[d] Coloss. iii. 3. [e] 1 John iii. 2.

[f] "Οταν ἐν τῷ ὑπνοῦν καθ' ἑαυτὴν γενήσεται ἡ ψυχὴ, τότε τὴν ἰδίαν ἀπολαβοῦσα φύσιν, προμαντεύεταί τέ καὶ προαγορεύει τὰ μέλλοντα. Τοιαύτη δέ ἐστι καὶ ἐν τῷ κατὰ τὸν θάνατον χαρίζεσθαι τῶν σωμάτων.—Arist. apud Sextum Empiric.

[g] Heb. xii. 22, 23.

made by the blows of sin, and restoring with meekness, gentleness, care, counsel, and authority, persons overtaken in a fault. For that act of ministry is not ineffectual, which God hath promised shall be ratified in heaven; and that authority is not contemptible, which the holy Jesus conveyed by breathing upon his church the Holy Ghost. But Christ intended that those, whom he had made guides of our souls, and judges of our consciences in order to counsel and ministerial pardon, should also be used by us in all cases of our souls, and that we go to heaven the way he hath appointed, that is, by offices and ministries ecclesiastical.

17. When our blessed Lord had so confirmed the faith of the church, and appointed an ecclesiastical ministry, he had but one work more to do upon earth, and that was the institution of the holy sacrament of baptism, which he ordained as a solemn initiation and mysterious profession of the faith, upon which the church is built; making it a solemn publication of our profession, the rite of stipulation or entering covenant with our Lord, the solemnity of the paction evangelical, in which we undertake to be disciples to the holy Jesus; that is, to believe his doctrine, to fear his threatenings, to rely upon his promises, and to obey his commandments all the days of our life; and he, for his part, actually performs much, and promises more;[h] he takes off all the guilt of our preceding days, purging our souls, and making them clean, as in the day of innocence; promising withal, that if we perform our undertaking, and remain in the state in which he now puts us, he will continually assist us with his Spirit,[i] prevent and attend us with his grace; he will deliver us from the power of the devil; he will keep our souls in merciful, joyful, and safe custody, till the great day of the Lord; he will then raise our bodies from the grave; he will make them to be spiritual and immortal; he will re-unite them to our souls, and beatify both bodies and souls in his own kingdom, admitting them into eternal and unspeakable glories. All which that he might verify and prepare respectively, in the presence of his disciples he ascended into the bosom of God, and the eternal comprehensions of celestial glory.

[h] Mark xvi. 16. Acts ii. 38. xxii. 16. Rom. vi. 3, 4. Eph. iv. 5, &c. 1 Cor. xii. 13. Coloss. ii. 13. Gal. iii. 17. 1 Pet. iii. 21.

THE PRAYER.

O holy and eternal Jesus, who hast overcome death, and triumphed over all the powers of hell, darkness, sin, and the grave; manifesting the truth of thy promises, the power of thy divinity, the majesty of thy person, the rewards of thy glory, and the mercies and excellent designs of thy evangelical kingdom, by thy glorious and powerful resurrection; preserve my soul from eternal death, and make me to rise from the death of sin, and to live the life of grace; loving thy perfections, adoring thy mercy, pursuing the interest of thy kingdom; being united to the church, under thee our Head; conforming to thy holy laws; established in faith, entertained and confirmed with a modest, humble, and certain hope, and sanctified by charity; that I, engraving thee in my heart, and submitting to thee in my spirit, and imitating thee in thy glorious example, may be partaker of thy resurrection; which is my hope and my desire, the support of my faith, the object of my joy, and the strength of my confidence. In thee, holy Jesus, do I trust: I confess thy faith, I believe all that thou hast taught; I desire to perform all thy injunctions, and my own undertaking: my soul is in thy hand; do thou support and guide it, and pity my infirmities; and when thou shalt reveal thy great day, show to me the mercies and effects of thy advocation, and intercession, and redemption. "Thou shalt answer for me, O Lord my God; for in thee have I trusted; let me never be confounded." Thou art just, thou art merciful, thou art gracious and compassionate; thou hast done miracles and prodigies of favour, to me and all the world. Let not those great actions and sufferings be ineffective; but make me capable and receptive of thy mercies, and then I am certain to receive them. I am thine, O save me! thou art mine, O holy Jesus! O dwell with me for ever, and let me dwell with thee, adoring and praising the eternal glories of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

[i] Matt. xxviii. 20.

CONTEMPLATIONS

OF

THE STATE OF MAN,

IN

THIS LIFE AND IN THAT WHICH IS TO COME.

TO THE READER.

COURTEOUS READER,

I HAVE soberly considered these holy and devout "Contemplations of the State of Man in this Life, and in that which is to come;" I never read any thing with more comfort, or which made a greater impression upon my soul. Therefore, hoping they may have the like effect upon others, I commend them to all persons, who desire happiness in this life, or blessedness in the future. Here thou mayest see the uncertainty of mortal life, the instability of human greatness, the fate of kingdoms, and the period of empires; the world's funeral, time laid in the dust, and the dread and horror of the last judgment. Here thou mayest have a prospect of the grandeur of heaven, the glory of the blessed, and the miseries and infelicities of the damned. The due consideration whereof will beget in thee holiness of life; nothing can be of more consequence, in these worst of days, to promote thy future happiness and glory. True piety sows the seeds of the most solid greatness. Men endowed with moral virtues, they are like diamonds, rich but unpolished; it is the fear of God that adds the true lustre, and sets them fair.

In the service of God, all the items of happiness and blessedness are summed up.

Dost thou desire riches? Serve God, and thou canst never be poor. Dost thou desire preferment? Live a holy and devout life, (as these Contemplations are the best introduction to it,) and thou shalt go ἀπὸ χάριτος εἰς δόξαν, from grace to glory; grace is "Aurora gloriæ;" glory, nothing but a bright constellation of graces; and happiness, nothing but the quintessence of holiness. I shall not detain thee longer, but beg of God that these holy Contemplations may so influence thy soul, that thou mayest be made partaker of that eternal weight of glory, which is laid up for all those that love and serve him.

I am thy Friend, and

Servant in Christ Jesus,

B. HALE, D. D.

TO THE READER.

CANDID READER,

THE most learned and pious JEREMY TAYLOR, D.D., late Lord Bishop of Down and Connor, in Ireland, having left these holy Contemplations in the hands of a worthy friend of his, with a full purpose to have printed them, if he had lived; but since it hath pleased God to take that devout and holy person to himself,—the better to advance devotion and sanctity of life, and to make men less in love with this frail life, and more with that which is eternal, it is thought fit to make them public. I beseech God to conduct us all, by the many helps and assistances which he hath been graciously pleased to afford us, to further us in piety and holiness of life, is the prayer of

Thy Friend,

ROBERT HARRIS.

LIBER I.

CHAPTER I.

Contemplations on Time, and of the State of Man in this Life.

All philosophers which have thought of the nature of time, and which, with much subtlety, have disputed what it was; at length come to conclude, That they knew not what it is; the most they can reach unto is, That no time is long; and that can only be called time which is present, the which is but a moment; and how can that be said to be, since the only cause why it is, is because it shall not be, but is to pass into the *preterit;* so as we cannot affirm it to have a being. The being of time consists only of a succession of instants, or transitory being, subsisting only by a flux of moments, and changes as many faces as it contains instants; it slides out of his hands that strives to hold it: in naming of it, we lose it; so subtle it is by nature, that it were to weigh the fire, and measure the wind, to strive to stay this Proteus; in an instant he vanisheth; and while you think to show him with your finger, he is gone. We have only a moment in our power, and a moment which is lost in the very instant in which we think to grasp it. See then, what it is to trust unto human life, since it is a member of that which is so unconstant and rapid as time, which runs and passes away according to the course of the sun, and revolutions of the stars in the firmament. Know then, that death follows thee not with leaden feet; it runs after thee with a motion equal to that of the stars, whose swiftness is so prodigious, that, according to the more moderate account of Clavius, they run in one day more than a thousand seventeen millions and a half of leagues; and in one hour, more than forty-two millions. After this rate doth death pursue thee; how is it that thou tremblest not? How comes it that thou fearest not? Even life itself is given to us but by pieces, and mingles as many parts of death as there are of life; the age of infancy dies, when we enter into that of childhood; and that of childhood, when we become youths; that of youth, when we come to age of manhood; that, when we are old; and even old age itself expires, when we become decrepit: so that, during the same life, we find many deaths, and yet can hardly persuade ourselves that we shall die once. Let us cast our eyes upon our life past; let us consider what is become of our infancy, childhood, and youth; they are now dead in us: in the same manner shall those ages of our life, which are to come, die also. Neither do we only die in the principal times of life, but every hour, every moment, includes a kind of death in the succession and change of things. What content is there in life, which dies not by some succeeding sorrow? What affliction of pain, which is not followed by some equal, or greater grief than itself? Why are we grieved for what is absent, since it offends us being present? What we desire with impatience, being possessed, brings care and solicitude, grief and affliction.

The short time which any pleasure stays with us, it is not to be enjoyed wholly, and all at once, but tasted by parts; so as, when the second part comes, we feel not the pleasure of the first, lessening itself every moment, and we ourselves still dying with it; there being no instant of life, wherein death gains not ground of us; the motion of the heavens is but the swift turn of the spindle, which rolls up the thread of our lives; and a most fleet horse, upon which death runs post after us. There is no moment of life, wherein death hath not equal jurisdiction; and there is no point of life, which we divide not with death; so as, if well considered, we live but only one point, and have not life but for the present instant. Our years past are now vanished, and we enjoy no more of them than if we were already dead; the years to come we live not, and possess no more of them than if we were not yet born; yesterday is gone, to-morrow we know not what shall be; of to-day many hours are past, and we live them not; others are to come, and whether we shall live them or no, is uncertain; so that, all counts cast up, we live but this present moment; and in this also we are dying; so that we cannot say, that life is any thing but the half of an instant, an indivisible point, divided betwixt it and death.

With reason may this life be called the shadow of death, since, under the shadow of life, death steals upon us; and as at every step the body takes, the shadow takes another, so at every pace our lives move forward, death equally advances with it; and as eternity is ever in beginning, and is, therefore, a perpetual beginning; so life is ever ending and concluding, and may, therefore, be called a perpetual end, and a continual death. There is no pleasure in life, which although it should last twenty continued years, that cannot be present with us longer than an instant; and with such counterpoise, that in it death no less appeareth, than life is enjoyed.

If a man were lord of infinite worlds, and possessed infinite riches; if they were at last to end, and he to leave them, they were to be valued as nothing; and if all things temporal have this evil property, to fade and perish, they ought to have no more esteem, than if they were not.

O miserable condition of human nature! vain is all that we live without Christ; "all flesh is grass, and all the glory of it as the flower of the field." Where is now that comely visage? Where is now the dignity of the whole body, with which, as with a fair garment, the beauty of the soul was once

clothed? Ah! pity! the lily is withered, the purple of the violet turned into paleness; therefore let us consider, what in time must become of us, and what, will we, or will not, cannot be far off; for should our lives exceed the term of nine hundred years, and that the days of Methusalem were bestowed upon us; yet all the length of life once past, (and pass it must,) were nothing; and betwixt him who lives but ten years, and him who lives a thousand, the end of life, and the unavoidable necessity of death once come, all is the same, save only he who lives longer, departs heavier laden with sins.

Vain are all honours. Vain are the applauses, the riches, and pleasures of life, which, being itself so short and so frail, makes all things vain which depend upon it, and so becomes itself a vanity of vanities, and an universal vanity. What account wouldest thou make of a tower founded upon a quicksand? Or what safety wouldest thou hope for in a ship bored with holes? Certainly thou oughtest to give no more esteem unto the things of this world, since they are founded upon a thing so unstable as this life. What can all human things be, since life, which sustains it, hath, according to David, no more consistence than smoke; or, according to Aquinas, than a little vapour, which in a moment vanisheth? Although it should endure a thousand years, yet, coming to an end, it were equal to that which lasted but a day; for as well the felicity of a long, as a short life, is but smoke and vanity, since they both pass away, and conclude in death.

Guerricus, a most famous divine, hearing the fifth chapter of Genesis read, wherein are recounted the sons and descendants of Adam, in these terms: "The whole life of Adam was nine hundred and thirty years, and he died; the life of his son Seth was nine hundred and twelve years, and he died;" and so of the rest; began to think with himself, that if such and so great men, after so long time, ended in death, it was not safe to lose more time in this world, but so to secure his life, that, losing it here, he might find it hereafter. What can the delights of man be, since his life is but a dream, a shadow, and as the twinkling of an eye? If the most long life be short, what can be the pleasures of that moment, by which is lost eternal happiness? O, how vain are men, who, seeing life so short, endeavour to live long, and not to live well! Since it is a thing most certain, that every man may live well; but no man, what age soever he attains unto, can live long; every day we die, and every day we lose some part of life; and in our growth, our life decreases and grows less; and this very day wherein we live we divide with death; our life, in the book of wisdom, is compared unto the passing of a shadow, which as it may be said to be a kind of night, so life may be called a kind of death; for as the shadow hath some part of light, some of darkness; so our life hath some part of death, and some of life, until it comes to end in a pure death; and since it is to end in a not being, it is very little to be regarded; especially compared with eternity, which hath a being constant and for ever. The shadow, wheresoever it passes, leaves no track behind it; and of the greatest personages in the world, when they are once dead, then there remains no more than if they had never lived. How many preceding emperors in the Assyrian monarchy were lords of the world, as well as Alexander? And now we remain not only ignorant of their monuments, but know not so much as their names: and of the same great Alexander, what have we at this day, except the vain noise of his fame! There is nothing constant in this life; the moon hath every month her changes; but the life of man hath them every day, every hour; now he is sick, now in health, now sorrowful, now merry, now fearful. With what imaginations is he afflicted! With how many labours and toils does he daily wrestle! With what thoughts and apprehensions doth he torment himself! What dangers of soul and body doth he run into! What vanity is he forced to behold! What injuries to suffer! What necessities and afflictions! Nay, such is our whole life, that it seems unto me little less evil than that of hell, but only for the hope we have of heaven; our infancy is full of ignorance and fears, our youth of sin, our age of sorrow, and our whole life of dangers. There is none content with his condition, but he who will die whilst he lives; insomuch as life cannot be good, unless it most resemble death. Since, therefore, the whole time of this life is so short, and we know not how long it will last, let us resolve not to lose the opportunity of gaining eternity. Although we were certain to live yet a hundred years longer, we ought not to spare one minute from the gaining of eternity: but being uncertain how long we are to live, and perhaps shall die to-morrow, how can we be so careless, as to let the securing of our glory pass, which hereafter will never be offered? Consider what an eternal repentance will follow thee, if thou makest not use of the occasion of time for the purchasing of the kingdom of heaven; especially when thou shalt see, that, with so little ado, thou mightest have gained that everlasting glory, which, to satisfy a short pleasure, thou hast lost for ever.

THE PRAYER.

O eternal God, who dwellest in eternity, whose power is eternal, and whose kingdom is the kingdom of all ages! Take me by thy right hand, O Lord; conduct me to thy eternal glory: let me esteem all things as nothing, in respect of eternity. Grant, O Lord, that I may so pass through things temporal, that I do not finally lose the things eternal. Amen.

CHAPTER II.

All Things on this side Heaven are inconstant and transitory.

As time itself is in a perpetual succession and mutation, being the companion of motion, so it fixes

this ill condition unto most of those things which pass along in it; the which not only have an end, and that a short one, but even, during the shortness of time which they last, have a thousand changes; and before their ends, many ends; and before their deaths, many deaths; each particular change, which our life suffers, being the death of some estate, or part of it. For as death is the total change of life, every change is the death of some part. Sickness is the death of health, sleeping of waking, sorrow of joy, impatience of quiet, youth of infancy, age of youth. The same condition hath the universal world, and all things in it; so that all things which follow time, and even time itself, at last must die. All human things, as well intrinsically, and of their own nature, as by external violences which they suffer, are subject to perish; the fairest flower withers of itself, yet is oftentimes before borne away by the wind, or perishes by some storm of hail. The most exact beauties lose their lustre by age, but are often before blasted by some violent fever. The strongest and most sumptuous palaces decay with continuance, if before not ruined by fire or earthquake. Cast your eyes upon those things which men judge most worthy to endure, and made them to the end they should be eternal: how many changes and deaths have they suffered!

Gregory of Nazianzen placed the city of Thebes, in Egypt, as the chiefest of those wonders which the old world admired;[a] most of the houses were of alabaster-marble, spotted with drops of gold, which made them appear most splendid and magnificent; upon the walls were many pleasant gardens, the gates no fewer than a hundred, out of which the prince could draw forth numerous armies without noise. Pomponius Mela writes, that out of every port there issued ten thousand armed men, which, in the whole, came to be an army of a million; yet all this huge multitude could not secure it from a small army conducted by a youth, who took and destroyed it.[b]

Marcus Polus writes, that he passed by the city of Quinsay, which contained fourscore millions of souls:[c] and Nicholas de Conti, passing not many years after by the same way, found the city wholly destroyed, and begun to be newly built after another form. But yet greater than this was the city of Nineveh, which was of three days' journey; and it is now many ages since, that we know not where it stood. No less stately, but perhaps better fortified, was the city of Babylon: and that which was the imperial city of the world, became a desert, a habitation of harpies, satyrs, and monsters; and the walls, which were two hundred feet in height, and fifty in breadth, could not defend it from time.

It is not much that cities have suffered so many changes, since monarchies and empires have done the same: and so often hath the world changed her face, as she hath changed her monarch and master. He who had seen the world as it was in the time of the Assyrians, would not have known it as it was in the time of the Persians; and he who knew it in the time of the Persians, would not have judged it for the same when the Greeks were masters; after, in the time of the Romans, it appeared with a face not known before; and he who knew it then, would not know it now; and some years hence it will put on another form, being in nothing more like itself than in its perpetual changes. Therefore, nothing does more deserve our scorn and contempt, and more now than ever; since it becomes every day worse, and grows old, and decays with age; neither is the world only grown worse in the natural frame of it, but is also much defaced in the moral; the manners of men have altered it more than the violences and encounters of the elements.

How many kingdoms were overthrown by the covetousness of Cyrus! The ambition of Alexander did not only destroy a great part of the world, but made it put on a clear other face than it had before. That which time spares, is often snatched away by the covetousness of the thief; and how many lives are cut off by revenge, before they arrive unto old age!

There is no stability in any thing, and least in man; who is not only changeable in himself, but changes all things besides.

One day often makes an end of great riches. Many personages of great honour and esteem, changing their fortune, become infamous. Dionysius was thrust from his throne, from a king of Sicily, to be schoolmaster in Corinth, and taught boys; who could think, that, from a king, he should be necessitated to become a schoolmaster? Who would not wonder at the cozenage of the world, that should see him in his royal palace with a sceptre in his hand, compassed about with his servants, and the great ones of his kingdom; and should after behold him in his school, managing a rod, in the midst of a number of boys? Crœsus, the most rich king of Lydia, who, being in hope to overthrow the Persians, not only lost his own kingdom, but fell into the power of his enemies, and failed a little of being burnt alive. Particular persons are not only witnesses that all human things are dreams: but cities, nations, and kingdoms; nothing remains like itself; all things present are more frail and weak than the webs of spiders, and more deceitful than dreams. From this inconstancy of human things, we may extract a constancy for ourselves; first, by despising things so transitory; secondly, by a resolute hope of an end or change in our adversity and afflictions; since nothing here below is constant, but all mutable; and as things sometimes change from good to evil, so they may also from evil unto good.

There is no confidence to be placed in human prosperity; for neither kingdom, empire, nor any greatness whatsoever, can secure their owners from ruin and misfortunes. Behold Andronicus clothed in purple, adored by nations, commanding the East, his temples enriched with a royal diadem, the imperial sceptre in his hands, and his very shoes studded with oriental gems; presently after, he is insulted over by the basest of his people, buffeted

[a] Nazian. in Monod.—PLIN. lib. xxxvi. c. 2.
[b] Pomp. Me. lib. c. 9. Evag. lib. ii. c. 1.
[c] Polus, lib. ii. rerum Indic. c. 68.

by women, and pelted with dirt and stones in his imperial city; and lastly, they hung him up by the heels betwixt two pillars, and there left him to die. This is enough to make us contemn all temporal goods and human felicity, which not only passes away with time, but often changes into greater misfortunes. What esteem can that merit, which stands exposed to so much misery, which is by so much the more sensible to the sufferer, by how much it was less expected?

The emperor Vitellius, whom the east and west acknowledged to be the great monarch of the world, in Rome saluted with so glorious titles, that he seemed to be all he could desire less than a god; but wherein ended all his majesty, but in the greatest infelicity and misery that can be imagined? The people having violently seized upon him, tied a rope about his neck, and his hands behind him, tore his garments from his back, and struck a dagger under his chin; they haled him ignominiously up and down the streets of Rome, cast filth in his face, and reviled him with a thousand injurious speeches, and at last killed him in the market-place, and threw him down the Gemonies, where they used to fling the corpses of malefactors. Folly is all human greatness, since at last it must end, and perhaps in a disastrous and unhappy conclusion.

Who would have imagined that Valerianus the emperor, who was mounted upon his brave courser, trapped with gold, clad in purple, crowned with the imperial diadem, adored by nations, and commanding over kingdoms, should be taken prisoner by the king of Persia, be kept enclosed in a cage like some wild beast, used as a footstool for the king to get on horseback? But such contrary fortunes happen in human life, let us not therefore trust in it; crowns nor sceptres do not secure us from the inconstancy of changes; and we may better trust unto the wind, or to letters written upon water, than unto human felicity.

The changes of fortune are but exchanges of one condition for another; no man can fall when he is at lowest; and the lowest and basest of all things is human felicity, which when it quits us, we fall not, but change it, and perhaps for the better: the life of man is a lamentable tragedy, wherein we observe such contrary extremes. I know all human greatness is vanity; therefore I will never grieve for the loss of that which was nothing; that is not worthy of grief which deserves not love: things below, as they merit not my affections when I enjoy them, so they ought not to vex and afflict me when I lose them.

What are imperial diadems? what are thrones, and majesty? what are ornaments of gold and silver? All are vanity, and vanity of vanities. What were, then, the spectacles of the amphitheatre, the games of the circus, and the seignory of the world, but vanity of vanities, universal vanity? The same would Crœsus have preached from the flames; Bajazet from his cage; and Dionysius from his school. If we had the opinion of those persons which are now damned, what would they think of majesty which they enjoyed in this life? Vanity! they will say it is a smoke, a dream, a shadow. Where is now the splendour of the consulate? where the lictors and their fasces? where the crowns and tapestry? where the banquets and revels? All those things are perished; a boisterous wind hath blown away the leaves, and left the naked trees tottering, and almost plucked up by the roots. Where are the seven wonders of the world? where is Nero's golden palace? where are Diocletian's hot baths? where is Julius's colossus; or Pompey's amphitheatre? They are all gone, there is no print of them remaining. And if we consider the greatness of this world, we shall perceive, that by how much it is more glorious, by so much it is more vain. What greater majesty, than that of the Roman empire? yet scarce was the election of a Roman emperor known, before he was murdered: amongst nineteen or twenty emperors which passed betwixt Antoninus the philosopher and Claudius the Second, not one escaped a violent death; so as the greatest felicity of the world was tied to the greatest mishap: therefore Dionysius, to express the miseries and infelicities of the lives of kings, said, "It was like that of condemned persons, which every hour expect death." "O crown!" said king Antigonus, more noble than happy, "if men knew how full thou art of cares and dangers, no man would take thee up, though he should find thee in the streets." And Constantine the Great, who was arrived at the height of human felicity, said, "His life was something more honourable than that of shepherds, but much more troublesome." There is no felicity upon earth, which carries not its counterpoise of misfortunes; no happiness which mounts so high, which is not depressed by some calamity.

The felicity of this life is but a shadow of true happiness; for the shadow is not a body, but a resemblance of a body; and seeming to be something, is nothing; the inconstancy and speedy change of human things deserves this name, because the shadow is always altering, and ends on a sudden; and as the shadow, when it is at length, and can increase no further, is nearest to the end; so temporal goods, and human fortunes, when they are mounted up as high as the stars, are then nearest to vanish, and disappear suddenly. Those who work in perspective, will so paint a room, that the light entering only through some little hole, you shall perceive beautiful and perfect figures and shapes; but if you open the windows, and let in a full light, at most you shall see but some imperfect lines and shadows; so things of this world seem great and beautiful unto those who are in darkness, and have but little light in heaven; but those who enjoy the perfect light of truth and faith, find nothing in them of substance.

The things of this world are not only a shadow, but are very deceitful; they promise us goods, and give us evils; promise us ease, and give us cares; promise security, and give us danger; promise us great contents, and give us great vexations; there is no felicity upon earth, no happiness which mount so high, which is not depressed by some low calamity: it is not needful to attend the end of life to see the

imposture of it, it is enough to see the alterations whilst it lasts; be assured, that vain is all the greatness of the earth, if that of heaven be not gained by it. Since, then, all kingdoms, empires, honours, and greatness whatsoever, are but a shadow, and will presently vanish, and we are here in this world but as in an inn, from whence we are suddenly to depart; let us take care for our journey, and furnish ourselves with provision and a viaticum for eternity; let us clothe ourselves with such garments as we may carry along with us: this may be our comfort, that our wealth, whether we will or no, may be taken from us, but eternal happiness, unless by our fault, cannot; we may be deprived of honours against our wills, but not of our virtues except we consent; temporal goods may perish, be stolen, and lost many ways, but spiritual goods can only be forsaken, and are then only lost when we leave them by our sins; the roses of glory in heaven do never fade, nor doth custom dull the lively taste of those celestial delights: let us therefore convey our riches here through the hands of the poor in bills of exchange, into the eternity of glory, where such money is current, for our good works will follow us. I will therefore preserve myself in humility, I will not confide in prosperity, nor presume upon my virtues, though never so great, since every man is subject to fall into those misfortunes he little thinks of: I will not trust in life, because it may fail, whilst the goods of it remain; and will as little trust in them, because they may likewise fail, whilst it continues.

Blessed Lord! thou art my salvation, thou art my glory, my aid, and all my hope is in thee: at thy right hand there are riches, greatness, and powers, for ever, without end.

CHAPTER III.

All Sublunary Things are contemptible, and of no Value.

THE things of this world, though their vanity, which swells and blows them up, seems to extend and engreaten them; yet they are in themselves contemptible and little; those things which seem to make the greatest noise, are honour, fame, and renown; we shall see how narrow they are; and hear one who was placed in the highest degree of glory and dignity in the whole world, since he was lord of it, the emperor Marcus Antoninus, who speaks in this manner: Perhaps thou art solicitous of honour; behold how quickly oblivion blots out all things; behold a chaos of eternity both before and after!

How vain is the noise of fame! how great the inconstancy and uncertainty of human judgments and opinions! in how narrow a compass are all things enclosed! The world is but a point: and of it, how small a corner of it is inhabited! and who, and how many, are those in it, who are to praise thee? He who desires fame and honour after death, thinks not that he who is to remember him shall shortly die also; and in the same manner he who is to succeed after him, until that all memory, which is to be propagated by mortal men, be blotted out. But suppose that those who are to remember thee, were immortal; what could it import thee being dead? nay, being alive, what could it profit thee to be praised? All that is fair, is fair of itself, and is perfected with itself; and to be praised, is no part of the beauty.

Consider the vanity of those titles, which many have assumed only to make themselves known in the world: let us judge how it will fare with us of Europe, by those who have taken titles upon them in Asia; for if the fame of those in Asia arrive not to the knowledge of us in Europe, no more shall ours in Europe to theirs in Asia.

The name of Echebar was thought by his subjects to be eternal, and that all the world did not only know, but fear him;[a] but ask here in Europe who he was, and no man hath heard of him; demand of the most learned, and few shall resolve you that he reigned in Mogor.

How few have heard of the name of Veneatapadino Ragium! He imagined that there was no man in the world who knew him not; how many can tell me that he was the king of Narsinga? If, then, these warlike and potent princes are not known in Europe, no more shall Charles the Fifth, and many other excellent men in arms and literature, which have flourished in these parts, be known in Asia and Africa.

If we reflect upon the truth of those titles, which many arrogate unto themselves, we shall perceive them all to be vain. How many are called Highness, and Excellence, who are of base and abject spirit, and continue in mortal sin, which is the meanest and lowest thing in the world! how many are called Serenissimi, who have their understanding darkened, and their will perverted! Others call themselves Most Magnificent, with as much reason as Nero might be called Most Clement. The things wherein we have placed honour, make it most ridiculous; some think they should be valued and esteemed, because they are strong; not remembering, that a bear, a bull, or a sumpter-mule, is stronger than they: some, because they are richly clad, become mighty proud, and puffed up; not being ashamed to be more esteemed for the work of a mechanic tailor, than for their virtuous actions: others think to be honoured for their dishonours, bragging of their vices: others boast of the nobility of their blood, without looking upon virtue, and so make that a vice which was to oblige them to noble actions; converting that which was to be their honour, into infamy; valuing themselves more for being noble, than being virtuous and just.

A man is no greater than what he is in the eyes of God; and the estimation which God hath of us, is not for being born in a palace, but for being righteous and just: what an error is it, then, to value ourselves more for our human birth by which

[a] Jarric. in Thesau. Indic.

we are made sinners, than for our divine birth, by which we are made just! How foolish were he, who, being the son of a king and bond-woman, should esteem himself more for being the son of a slave, than of a monarch! More fool is he, who values more the nobility of his blood in being a gentleman, than the nobility of his soul in being a christian: all honours of the earth are but splendid vanities; and those who seek after them, are like boys who hunt after butterflies; yet many souls have perished by them. If David cursed the mountains of Gilboa, because Saul and Jonathan died upon them; with much more reason may we curse the high mountains of honour, upon which so many souls have been sure to perish.

Let us consider what riches are, unto whom Gregory Nazianzen did much honour, when he called them a precious dung; truly in themselves they are not much better: "Gold and silver," said Antoninus the philosopher, "were nothing else than excrements and dregs of the earth: what are precious stones but shining pebbles, some red, some green?" &c.; silk, but the slaverings of worms? and the finest Holland, and the purest linen, but threads of certain plants? Other webs of esteem are made of hair of beasts; whereof, if we should meet one in our meat, it would make us loathe it; and many in their clothes are proud of them: furs, what are they but the skins of contemptible vermin? civet, but the sweat of a cat near its most noisome parts? amber, but the uncleanness of a whale; or something which the sea purges from it, as not worthy to be preserved? What are possessions, palaces, cities, provinces, and spacious kingdoms. They are only toys of men, who, though old, are but children in esteeming so much of them. Lucian, beholding them not from the imperial heaven, but from the sphere of the moon, said, "All Greece possessed not above four fingers; and that Peloponnesus was not bigger than a lentil seed." To Seneca, the whole compass of the earth seemed but a point: and all the greatness thereof only matter of sport. Riches were invented for the ease and commodity of life; but as man hath made them, they serve for the greatest trouble and vexation: he who hath wealth, hath most want, because he not only needs for himself, but for all which he possesseth: so that he which hath a great house, hath the same necessities that his house hath, which are many; for a great house requires much furniture, and a large family; and so charges the master with multitudes of servants, great quantities of plate, hangings, and other ornaments superfluous to use and human commodity; insomuch as none are more poor than the rich; because they want, not only for themselves, but for all that is theirs: at least, riches want not this incommodity, that although they were invented for human use and ease, yet he that hath them in the greatest abundance, hath the greatest cares, troubles, dangers, and ever the greatest losses. Let us, therefore, while we have time, make over our riches; let us send them before us into another world; heaven stands open to receive them, we need not doubt of safe carriage; the carriers are very faithful and trusty, they are the poor and needy of this world; we make over unto them here, by way of exchange, a few things of little value; being to receive in heaven for them, an exceeding eternal weight of glory.

How narrow is the sphere of all our pleasures, which, besides the short time they endure, are mingled with wormwood of many pains and griefs! The adulterer, how many troubles and dangers does he usually pass, before he compass his desire! in the enjoying, what fears and suspicions assault him! and when it is past, (if he thinks seriously of his sin,) what remorse and repentance afflict him! And oftentimes, how many long diseases and sharp pains succeed that, which lasted but a moment! The several sorts of gusts, whereof the touch is capable, exceed not two or three, but the distinct sorts of pains which afflict it, are without number; the greatest pleasure of the sense holds no comparison with the grief endured by the separation of a member; or the pain suffered by him who hath the stone, sciatica, or some violent disease in extremity.

What shall we say of the royal and imperial dignity, which seems, in human judgment, to embrace all the happiness of the world? Honours, riches, pleasures, all are contained in it; but how small is a kingdom, since the whole earth, in respect of the heavens, is no bigger than a point!

Look not upon the crown, but upon the tempest of cares which accompany it; fix not thy eyes upon the purple, but upon the mind of the king, more sad and dark than the purple itself; the diadem doth not more encompass his head, than cares and suspicions his soul: look not at the squadrons of his guards, but at the armies of his molestations which attend him; for nothing can be so full of cares as the palaces of kings: but it is far otherwise in heaven, the palace and house of God, where the just, without mixture or counterpoise of misery, are to enjoy those eternal.

If you look upon the so much esteemed greatness of this world; the brave palaces, renowned cities, large kingdoms; you may compare them to those little houses of sand or dirt, made by children for their entertainment; which men stand by and laugh at; and oftentimes, if their parents or masters find that it hinders them from learning of their lessons, they strike them down with their feet, and destroy that in a moment, which hath cost the boys much time and labour; so God useth to deal with those who, neglecting his service, employ themselves in scraping together riches, enlarging their possessions, building of palaces, which he destroys with that ease, as if they were those little houses of sand, made by children; and certainly, more children are they who set their hearts upon the greatness of this short life, than those who busy themselves in walls of dirt.

Esteem none for their exterior lustre and bravery; he must die as well as the most poor and unknown beggar; he must be buried, and at last appear before the just judgment; wherefore dost thou then value and admire those things which have no consistence, as if they were to last for ever?

If you look upon a table, where you behold

painted a rich and powerful man and a poor contemptible beggar, you neither envy the one nor despise the other; because you know them to be shadows and no truths: the same judgment we ought to make of the things themselves; for all are but shadows, and little more than nothing: and as in a comedy or farce, it imports little who plays Alexander, and who the beggar, since all are equal when the play is done; so are all after death.

I will, therefore, from hence learn not to admire the grandeur of this world, nor to desire any thing in it; I have an inheritance in heaven which none can take from me; there I have a mansion, not made by the hands of men; I will look after those eternal goods, which, by my faith and hope, I do now enjoy; they can never be taken from me, for they are the eternal inheritance of the just.

CHAPTER IV.

The Vanity of Man.

If we consider the greatest thing in nature, which is man, we shall see how vain and little he is, being temporal. What is man? saith Seneca. A frail vessel, broken with the least motion; a most weak body, naked by nature, and unarmed, subject to the injuries of fortune; composed of things infirm and fluid, and those very things, without which man cannot live, as smell, taste, meat, and drink, are mortal unto him. The wise Solon did not answer more favourably, when they demanded of him, What was man? "He is," saith he, "a corruption in his birth, a beast in his life, and food for worms when he is dead." He does things evil, which are not lawful; things filthy, which are not decent; things vain, which are not expedient. Behold the plants and trees; they produce flowers, haws, and fruit; man, nothing but vermin and worms: they furnish us with oil, wine, and balsam; man affords nothing but phlegm and ordure: those send forth a fragrant odour, and man abominable stink: and such is man even in his youth and best time: but if he reach old age, which is esteemed as a felicity, his heart is afflicted, his head shakes, his spirits languish, his breath smells, his face wrinkles, his stature bends, his eyes wax dim, his hands tremble, his hair falls, his ears grow deaf; neither is he more changed in body than in mind: an old man is easily displeased, hardly pacified, believes quickly, covetous, froward, still complaining, admires what is past, contemns what is present, sighs, grieves, languishes, and is always infirm.

Consider, also, wherein man ends: what thing more noisome than a human carcass? what more horrible than a dead man? he whose embraces were most acceptable when he was alive, even his sight is troublesome when he is dead. What do riches and honour profit him? they shall not free him from death, they shall not defend him from the worms, they shall not take away his stink and ill savour. He, who even now was seated in a glorious throne, is now flung into an obscure tomb; he, who lately feasted in a sumptuous sata, is now feasted upon by worms in a dark sepulchre. Wherefore dost thou wax proud, dust and ashes, whose conception was in sin, whose birth in misery, whose life in pain, and whose death necessity? Wherefore dost thou swell, and adorn thy flesh with precious things, which, in a few days, is to be devoured by worms; and dost not rather adorn thy soul with good works, which is to be presented in heaven before God and his angels?

Besides that man is a thing so poor and mean, and composed of so base and vile materials; this vileness and meanness hath no firmness nor consistence, but is a river of changes, a perpetual corruption, and a fantasm of time; his nature, from his birth until his death, is unstable, mutable, and transitory; the more you consider it, the more it flies from you. The embryon, which is framed from seed, quickly becomes an infant; from thence a boy, from thence a young man, from thence an old, and then decrepit; and so the first age being past and corrupted by new ones which succeed, it comes at last to die: how ridiculous then are men to fear one death, who have already died so many, and are yet to die more! He never remains the same, but in every moment he changes, as it were, with various fantasms in one common matter; if he be still the same, how comes he to delight in things he did not before? He now loves and abhors after another manner than formerly; he now praises and dispraises other things than he did before, he uses other words, and is moved with other affections; he doth not hold the same form, nor pass the same judgment he did; and how is it possible, that without change in himself, he should thus change in his motions and affections? Certainly, he who still changes, is not the same; and he who is not the same, cannot be said to be, but, in a continual mutation, slides away like water: where shall we then find true being, but in that only which is eternal, and knows no beginning; which is incorruptible, which is not changed with time?

Man is not only thus vile and base whilst he lives, and much more being dead; but even his soul, whilst it remains in his body, is not of much greater esteem: for although the soul be of itself of a most noble substance, yet his vices do so much vilify it, that he makes it more abominable than the body; and, without doubt, the soul, when it is dead in mortal sin, is more corrupt and stinking in the sight of the angels, than a body dead eight days ago; for if that body be full of worms, this is full of sins and vices; and if a man knew himself well, he would be more affrighted at the misery of his soul, than at that of his flesh.

Amongst all evils, man is the most evil; every beast hath an evil which is peculiar unto it, but man is all evils; the devil dares not approach a just man, but man dares despise him. Man is compared to the beasts of the field: it is worse to be compared to a beast, than to be one; for it is no

fault to be born an unreasonable creature; but to be endowed with reason, and to be compared to a beast, is a fault of the will, so as this untamed passion makes him worse than beasts.

What sorts of deaths and torments hath not human cruelty found out? what sorts of poison hath not the passion of man invented? Orpheus, Orus, Medisius, Hesiodotus, and other authors, have found out five hundred several ways of giving poison covertly, which have since been, to the calamity of man, wonderfully increased: nothing is now secure from the malice of man, since poison hath been given even in the shaking of hands, when men were to be reconciled and made friends: only in the sense of hearing, it hath not yet found a door to enter; all the rest of the senses it hath mastered: with the smell of a rose, with the sight of a letter, with the touch of a thread, with the taste of a grape, death hath found an entrance.

And as though man were not miserable enough by nature, his very passions must contribute to make him wretched and unhappy: the proud man grieves and consumes for the felicity of another; the envious dies to see a happy man live; the covetous man loses his sleep for what he hath no need of; the choleric man ruins himself for what no ways concerns him: with reason did the prophet say, "In vain doth man trouble himself; he troubles himself, and before he attains rest, is overwhelmed; he mounts on high like a tempest; and like dust is scattered and disappears; he is kindled like a flame, and vanishes like smoke; he spreads himself as a cloud, and is contracted as a drop." He is troubled to gain the filth of riches, and a little dirt; his are the troubles, others' the joys; his are the cares, others' the contents; his are the curses, others' the respect and reverence. The life of man is full of vain labours, of vexatious thoughts, thinking how to obtain what he desires, and then how to keep it; after how to increase it, then how to defend it, and lastly how to enjoy it; and yet, in conclusion, all falls to pieces in the handling, and becomes nothing. What labour doth it cost the poor spider to weave his web, passing incessantly from one part to another; and often returning to the same place where he began, consuming himself with the threads drawn from his proper entrails, for the forming of his pavilion; which, with many journeys, having placed on high, and at last finished this goodly artifice, one touch of a broom defaces and brings to ground all his labour! Just such are the employments of man, of much toil, and of little profit; spending the most part of his time in useless projects, which, of themselves, fall to nothing, and, in the end, vanish without effect.

In vain doth man trouble himself, for he enjoys a life but lent him, and that but for a short time; man is but a debt of death, which is to be paid without delay. I have considered with tears what man was made of, what he is, and what he shall be. He was made of earth, and conceived in sin, and born for punishment: O unhappy condition of human nature! O the vanity and delusions of man! Thou which gloriest in the strength of body, thou which embracest the gifts of fortune, and thinkest not thyself her servant, but her darling; see how thou mightest have perished, even before thou wert, with so little a thing as a snuff of a candle; and mayest yet with a smaller matter, pricked with the little tooth of an adder; or, like Anacreon, the poet, choked with the stone of a grape; or, like Fabius, the Roman senator, suffocated with a hair in a draught of milk. The life of man, compared to the continuance of the world, is but a moment; and the world's continuance is but a moment in respect of eternity.

With good reason then is the life of man to be valued as nothing; since nothing is more frail, nothing more perishing; and, in conclusion, is little more than if it had no being at all. Glass, without violence, may last long; but the life of man ends of itself: glass may, with care, be preserved for many ages; but nothing can preserve the life of man.

All this king David well understood, who was the most powerful and happy prince the Hebrews ever had; yet, when he considered that his greatness was to have an end, valued it as nothing; and not only esteemed his kingdoms and treasures as vanity, but even his life itself: wherefore he says, "Thou hast put, Lord, a measure unto my days, and my substance is as nothing." [a] All my kingdoms, all my trophies, all my treasures, all which I possess, all is nothing: and presently adds, "doubtless all is vanity;" all which living man is, all his whole life is vanity, and nothing that belongs to him so frail as himself.

O if we could but frame a true conception of the shortness of this life, how should we despise the pleasures of it! This is a matter of such importance, that God commanded the principal of his prophets, that he should go into the streets and market-places, and proclaim aloud, that "all flesh is grass, and all the glory of it as the flowers of the field;" for as the grass, which is cut in the morning, withers before night, and as the flower is quickly faded, so is the life of all flesh, the beauty and splendour of it withering in a day: he who shall look upon the frailty of our flesh, and that every moment of an hour we increase and decrease without ever remaining in the same state; and even what we now speak, dictate, or write, flies away with some part of our life, will not doubt to say, "his flesh is grass, and the glory of it as the flower of the field:" he that was yesterday an infant, is now a boy, and will suddenly be a youth, and even until old age runs changing through uncertain conditions of life, and perceives himself first to be an old man, before he begins to admire that he is not still a boy; nay, seeing death seizeth upon others, yet he will not believe that it shall happen to him; and although he hear of it hourly, yet it appears unto him as a hidden mystery, which he cannot understand. God, therefore, commanded his prophet Isaiah, that he should proclaim it with a loud voice, as a thing of great importance, and that it might sink into the heart of man: receive, therefore, this truth from God himself, "All flesh is grass," all age is short,

[a] Psal. xxxvii.

all time flies, all life vanishes; and a great multitude of years are but a great nothing.

Let us hear how true this is, from those who lived the longest, and have had the experience of what it is to live; perhaps thou mayest promise thyself to live a hundred years, as though this were a long life: hearken then unto holy Job, who lived two hundred and forty years, who knew best what it was to live; what says he of all his years? "My days," saith he, "are nothing;" nothing, he calls them, although they lasted almost three ages. In other places, he says the life of man is like the flower, which springs up to-day, and to-morrow is trodden under foot; and that it flies like a shadow, without ever remaining in the same state: how poor a thing then is life, since holy Job calls it but a shadow, though then three or four times longer than at present! Those who lived more than eight hundred years, esteemed their life but as a shadow; and in the instant when they died, judged they were scarce born. How can we think to live long in a time, wherein it is much to make the age of sixty years! A life then of eight hundred years being no more than the flirting up and down of a little sparrow, the flight of an arrow, or to say better, the passage of a shadow: what then are fifty years, unto which, perhaps, thou mayest attain? certainly the longest term whereunto human life extends, was compared by Homer, but unto the leaves of the tree, which, at most, endure but a summer's season. Euripides judged that too much, and said, that human felicity was to be valued but at the length of a day: and Demetrius Phalereus allowed it but a moment's space. Consider, then, how vile are all things temporal, and how frail is all the glory of the world, being grounded upon so feeble a foundation: the goods of the earth can be no greater than is life, which give them their value; and if that be so poor and short, what shall they be? what good can be of value, which is sustained by a life so contemptible and full of misery? A figure of this was the statue of Nebuchadnezzar, which although made of rich metal, as of gold and silver, yet was founded on feet of clay; so as a little stone falling upon it, overthrew it unto the earth. All the greatness and riches of the world have, for foundation, the life of him who enjoys them, which is so frail and slippery, that not a little stone, but even the grain of a grape hath been able to ruin and overthrow it.

I shall not, therefore, be ambitious of a rich mausoleum after my death, for the repose of my body; nor do I desire a stately sepulchre, a beautiful urn, or that my name or actions should be engraven in marble: I know this, that if I shall be miserable and unhappy hereafter, they will be but for my greater shame and reproach. Out of this life I can carry nothing but my good works; I will not add unto my evil ones that of vain glory; I will take heed whereon I set my heart, since the accomplishing of what I wish may be a punishment of my desires; if those things of the earth which I most love and desire should continue, if they be taken from me it is a chastisement of my earthly affection; and if I be permitted to enjoy them, I am fearful that they may be the temporal reward of some good work, which may either diminish or deprive me of the eternal.

CHAPTER V.

The Miseries of Temporal Life.

If man, before he was born, knew what he was to suffer in his life, he would not be born at all; therefore Silenus, being demanded what was the greatest happiness man was capable of, said, "Not to be born, or die quickly." With reason did Democritus say, That the life of man was most miserable, since those who seek for good, hardly find it, and evil comes of itself, and enters our gates unsought for: insomuch as our life is always exposed unto innumerable dangers, injuries, losses, and to so many infirmities, that, according to Pliny and many physicians, Greeks and Arabians, there were more than thirty several sorts of new diseases discovered in the space of few years; and now every day finds out others, and some so cruel, that they are not to be named without horror; and the malice of the disease is not greater than many times the remedies strange. Some have been cured by cauterizing with fire, by sawing off a member, by trepanizing the scull, or drawing bones from it; others have been cured with the opening of the belly, and drawing forth the guts. Above all, the cure of Palæologus II. emperor of Constantinople, was most cruel, whose infirmity, after a year's continuance, found no other remedy but to be continually vexed and displeased; his wife and servants, who most desired his health, having no ways to restore it, but by disobedience, still crossing and opposing him in what he most desired: a harsh cure for a prince! If remedies be so great evils, what are the infirmities? The sickness of Mæcenas was so strange, that he slept not, nor closed his eyes, in three whole years. That of king Antiochus was so pestilential, that his loathsome smell infected his whole army, and his body flowed with lice and vermin. Consider here the end of majesty, when the greatest power of earth cannot defend itself against so noisome and contemptible an enemy. In the same manner Feretrina, queen of the Barcæans, all the flesh of her body turned into maggots and grubs, which, swarming every where, at last consumed her. Some have had serpents bred in their arms and thighs, which have devoured their flesh even whilst they lived. With reason, then, does man enter into the world with tears, as divining the many miseries which he shall have time enough to suffer, but not to lament; and, therefore, begins to weep so early. All the days of man are full of grief and misery.

What shall I say of those strange pestilential distempers, which have destroyed whole cities and provinces? In many places it hath raged with such fury, as if it meant to extirpate all mankind; so

many thousands of people having died, that whole towns and countries have remained desert. The evil hath been many times so great, that fathers forsook their children, and women their husbands; riches did not preserve them from dying of hunger; if they found by chance what to eat, the fury of the distemper was such, as they often died with the morsel in their mouths. To all this is human life subject. Let those, therefore, who are in health and jollity, fear what may befall them.

Famine is no less a misery of man's life, than pestilence, which not only particular persons, but whole provinces, have often suffered; many times people when they had nothing left them to eat, have fed on horses, dogs, cats, rats, dormice, and other vermin, when they could lay hold on them; and when those failed, ate one another; nay, fathers spared not their sons, nor women those whom they brought forth; and many would willingly have pawned their bowels, to have had wherewith to feed them. What a horrid prospect is it, to see a company of people appearing in the streets more like unto ghosts and phantoms than living men! others stretched upon the ground half dead, and ready to draw the last gasp! What pity is it to behold thousands of women, feeble, pale, and hunger-starved, charged with a great number of their poor languishing infants, which, dried up with hunger, could not so much as weep, or demand succour from their sorrowful and afflicted mothers; who could only help them with their compassionate looks, of which rivers of tears, which ran from their eyes, were a sufficient witness! This a lamentable scene of a most miserable tragedy! All those miseries which fall not under imagination are found in the life of man.

Greater than all these calamities is that of war, which, of the three scourges of God, wherewith he uses to chastise kingdoms, is the most terrible; as well because it is commonly followed by the other two, as for that it brings along with it greater punishments; and which is worse, greater sins, whereof plagues are free, in which all endeavour to be reconciled with God; and even those who are in health dispose themselves for death. Famine also, though it brings with it some sins, yet it lessens others; though it be accompanied with many thefts, yet it suits not so much with pride and vanity; neither doth it permit so many sorts of vices as are occasioned by war.

Above all, the greatest calamities of man's life are not pestilence, famine, or war, but human passions not subordinate to reason. What did David suffer from the envy of Saul? exile, hunger, dangers, and war. Naboth sooner lost his life by the covetousness of Ahab, than he could have done by a plague. Elias was more afflicted with the desire of revenge in Jezebel, than if he had had the pestilence; for that made him weary of his life, and this would but have made him weary of his disease. What plagues or wars were like the ambition of Herod, which destroyed so many thousand children? What contagion was more mortal than the cruelty of Nero and other tyrants, who took away the lives of so many innocent people, to satisfy their fears or fancies?

Who is so happy to content all, and be envied of none? Who is so esteemed that some do not despise him? Who is so general a well-doer, that nobody complains of him? The Athenians found fault with their Simonides, because he talked too loud. The Thebans accused Panniculus, that he spit too much. The Carthaginians spake ill of Hannibal, because he went open-breasted, with his stomach bare. Others laughed at Julius Cæsar, because he was ill-girt. There is none so upright, in whom envy will not find something to reprehend.

So many are the miseries of life, that they cannot all be numbered. Death, which is thought by some the greatest of evils, is by many esteemed a lesser evil than life; the many evils in this, surpassing the greatness of the evil in that: and, therefore, some have conceived it is better to suffer the greatest, which is death, than to suffer so many, though lesser, which are in life: for this reason, one calls death the last and greatest physician, because, though in itself it be the greatest evil, yet it cures all others; and, therefore, prescribes the hopes of it, as an efficacious remedy and comfort in the afflictions of life.

What security can there be in life, when the earth, which is the mother of the living, is unfaithful to them, and sprouts out miseries and deaths, even of whole cities? What can be secure in the world, if the world itself be not, and the most solid parts of it shake? If that which is only immovable and fixed for to sustain the living, tremble with earthquakes; if what is proper to the earth, which is to be firm, be unstable and betray us; where shall our fears find a refuge? When the roof of the house shakes, we may fly into the fields; but when the earth shakes, whither shall we go?

In the time of the plague we may change places; but from the whole earth who can fly? and so from dangers: and therefore not to have a remedy, may secure us as a comfort in our evils; for fear is foolish without hope. Reason banishes fear in those who are wise, and in those who are not. Despair of remedy gives a kind of security, at least takes away fear. He that will fear nothing, let him think all things are to be feared. See what slight things endanger us; even those which sustain life lay ambushes for us. Meat and drink, without which we cannot live, take away our lives. It is not wisdom, therefore, to fear swallowing by an earthquake, and not to fear the falling of a tile. In death, all sorts of dyings are equal. What imports it, whether one single stone kills thee, or a whole mountain oppress thee? Death consists in the soul's leaving of the body, which often happens by slight accidents.

Wonderful are the ways by which death finds us out, and most poor and contemptible those things, upon which life depends; it hangs not upon a thread, but sometimes upon so small a thing as a hair. No door is shut to death; it enters where the air cannot enter, and encounters us in the very action of life. Small things are able to deprive us

of so great a good! A little grain of a grape took away the life of Anacreon. The affections of the soul, and the pleasures of the body, become the high way unto death. Homer died of grief, and Sophocles of an excess of joy; Dionysius was killed with the good news of a victory, which he had obtained; Aurelianus died dancing; Cornelius Gallus, and Titus Etherius, died in the act of lust.

Let no man assure himself of that life which hath so many entrances for death. Let no man say, "I shall not die to-day;" for many have thought so, and yet suddenly died that very hour. By so inconsiderable things, as we have said, have many died; and thou mayest die without any of them; for sudden death, there is no need of a hair, or excess of grief, or sudden joy to surprise thee: it may happen without any of those exterior causes. A corrupt humour in the entrails, which flies unto the heart without any body's perceiving it, is sufficient to make an end of thee; and it is to be admired that no more die suddenly, considering the disorders of our life, and the frailties of our bodies. We are not of iron or brass, but of soft and delicate flesh. A clock, though of hard metal, in time wears out, and every hour needs mending; and breaking of one wheel stops the motions of all the rest. There is more artifice in a human body than in a clock, and it is much more delicate; the nerves are not of steel, nor the veins of brass, nor the entrails of iron. How many have had their livers or spleens corrupted or displaced, and have died suddenly! No man sees what he hath within his body; and such may his infirmity be, although he thinks and feels himself well, yet he may die within an hour. Let us all tremble at what may happen!

But christians, in all the miseries and dangers of human life, have great comforts to lay hold on; which are, a good conscience, hope of glory, conformity unto the Divine will, and the imitation and example of Jesus Christ. From these four he shall in life have happiness, in death security, in both comfort, and in eternity a reward.

We may draw from what hath been said, how unjust was the complaint of Theophrastus, that nature hath given a longer life unto many birds and beasts, than unto man. If our life were less troublesome, he had some reason; but it being so fraught with miseries, he might rather think that life the happiest which was shortest; wherefore it is better to die young and die well, than to die old and die ill. This voyage being of necessity, the felicity of it consists not in being long, but being prosperous; and that, at the last, we arrive in the desired port. Therefore, supposing so many miseries, we cannot complain of God for having given us a short life, but of ourselves for having made it a bad one; our life being compassed with so many miseries, as that death seems rather a shelter for evils, than a punishment. God was pleased that it should be short, that the vexations and misfortunes of it, which cannot be counterpoised with any joys of the earth, might be more supportable. At least, if this life, with so many miseries, do not displease us; yet let the eternal, with all its felicities, content us better; and let us not endeavour less for the immortal life in heaven, than we do for this mortal on earth. Let us keep always in mind the years of eternity; so whatsoever adversity or affliction happen, we shall more easily bear it. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."[a]

Therefore, if the world frown upon me; if I meet with many troubles and afflictions; if misfortunes befall me; if they rush upon me like waves, one on the neck of another; if I be tossed up and down; then these shall be my daily thoughts: Well, let the world have its course, I am content to bear it; God's will be done: let the sea be troubled, let the waves thereof roar, let the winds of affliction blow, let the waters of sorrow rush upon me, let the darkness of grief and heaviness compass me about, yet will I not be afraid: these storms will blow over, these winds will be laid, these waves will fall, this tempest cannot last long, and these clouds shall be dispelled. Whatsoever I suffer here, shall shortly have an end; I shall not suffer eternally; come the worst that can come, death will put an end to all my sorrows and miseries; "Domine, da mihi modo patientiam, et postea indulgentiam; Lord, grant me patience here, and ease hereafter." I will suffer patiently whatsoever can happen, and shall endeavour to do nothing against my conscience, and displeasing unto thee; for all is safe and sure with him, who is certain and sure of blessed eternity.

CHAPTER VI.

The End of Temporal Life.

If the end of life should fall under our election, and that it were in the power of man to make choice how many years he would continue in life, and after what manner he would have it, and that it might conclude some other way than by death; yet the consideration that it, and all things temporal, were to perish, and at last to have an end, were sufficient to make us despise it; and that very thought would drown all the pleasures and contents which it could afford us: for as all things are of greater and lesser esteem, according to the length and shortness of their duration; so life, being to end, be it in what manner soever, is much to be disvalued. A fair vessel of crystal, if it were as consistent and durable as gold, were more precious than gold itself; but being frail, and subject to break, it loses its estimation; and although of itself it might last long, yet being capable, by some careless mischance, of being broken, it becomes of much less value. In the same manner, our life, which is much more frail than glass, being subject to perish by a thousand accidents; and though none of them should happen, could not long continue, since it consumes itself; it must needs, together with those temporal goods which attend it, be most contemptible: but, con-

[a] 2 Cor. iv. 17.

sidering that the ending of it is by the way of death, infirmities, and misfortunes, which are the harbingers, and prepare the way for death; it is to be admired, that man, who knows he is to die, makes an account of temporal felicity, seeing the misery in which the prosperity of this world, and the majesty of the greatest monarchies, are at last to finish.

Let us consider king Antiochus, lord of so many provinces, in all his pomp and glory, glittering in gold, and dazzling the eyes of the beholders with the splendour of his diamonds and precious jewels; mounted upon a stately courser, commanding over numerous armies, and making the very earth tremble under him. Let us then behold him in his bed, pale and wan, his strength and spirits spent, his loathsome body flowing with worms and corruption; forsaken by his own people, by reason of his poisonous stink, which infected his whole camp; and, finally, dying mad, and in rage. Who, seeing such a death, would wish the felicity of his life? Who, with the condition of his misery would desire his fortune? See, then, wherein the goods of this life conclude.

Who could have known Cæsar, who had first seen him triumph over the conquered world, and then behold him gasping for a little breath, and weltering in his own blood, which flowed from twenty-three wounds, opened by so many stabs.

Who could believe it was the same Cyrus; he who subdued the Medes, conquered the Assyrians, and Chaldean empire; he who amazed the world with thirty years' success of continued victories, now taken prisoner, and put to an ignominious death by the command of a woman?

Who could think it were the same Alexander, who in so short a time subjugated the Persians, Indians, and the best part of the known world; and should after behold him conquered by a calenture, feeble, exhausted in body, dejected in spirit, dried up, and parched with thirst, without taste in his mouth, or content in his life; his eyes sunk, his nose sharp, his tongue cleaving to his palate, not being able to pronounce one word? What amazement is it, that the heat of a poor fever should consume the mightiest power and fortune of the world; and that the greatest of temporal and human prosperities should be drowned by the overflowing of one irregular and inordinate humour! How great a monster is human life, since it consists of so disproportionable parts; the uncertain felicity of our whole life ending in a most certain misery!

Who would marry a woman, though of a comely and well-proportionate body, who had the head of an ugly dragon? Certainly, although she had a great dowry, none would covet such a bed-fellow. Wherefore do we wed ourselves unto this life, which, although it seems to carry along with it much content and happiness, yet is it in effect no less a monster; since, though the body appear unto us beautiful and pleasant, yet the end of it is horrible and full of misery.

Let no man flatter himself with the vigour of his health, with the abundance of his riches, with the splendour of his authority, with the greatness of his fortune: for by how much he is more fortunate, by so much shall he be more miserable, since his whole life is to end in misery.

Let no man be deceived in beholding the prosperity of a rich man; let him not measure his felicity by what he sees at present, but by the end, wherein he shall conclude; not by the sumptuousness of his palaces, nor by the multitude of his servants, nor by the bravery of his apparel, nor by the lustre of his dignity: but let him expect the end of that which he so much admires; and he shall then perceive him at best to die in his bed, dejected, dismayed, and struggling with the pangs and anxieties of death. If he comes so off, it is well; otherwise the daggers of his enemy, the teeth of some wild beast, or a tile thrown upon his head by some violent wind, may serve to make an end of him, when he least thinks of it. O how great a madness is it to glory in any thing on this side heaven! The estate of the most powerful is subject to most impetuous storms, whose end is to be sunk and overthrown. O how wavering and uncertain is the height of the greatest honour! False is the hope of man, and vain is all his glory! O uncertain life, due unto perpetual toil and labour! What doth it now profit thee, to have raised so many costly palaces of marble, when thou now must die? O how many things dost thou now think of doing, not knowing the bitterness of their end? Thou beholdest thy friend now dying; and know, that thou also shalt quickly follow him.

Let us forbear to look upon those several kinds of death which are incident to human nature; let us consider that which is esteemed the most happy; when we die not suddenly, or by violence, but by some infirmity, which leisurely makes an end of us; or by a pure resolution, which naturally brings death along with it. What greater misery of man's life than this, that death should be accounted happy; not that it is so, but because it is less miserable than others? For what grief and sorrow doth not he pass, who dies in this manner! How do the accidents of his infirmities afflict him! The heat of his fever, which scorches his entrails; the thirst of his mouth, which suffers him not to speak; the pain of his head, which hinders his attention; the sadness of his heart, proceeding from the apprehension that he is to die; besides other grievous accidents, which are usually more in number than a human body hath members to suffer; together with remedies, which are no less painful than the evils themselves. To this, add the uncertainty whither he is to go; to heaven or hell. What news can be more terrible unto a sinner, than that he is to die; to leave all his pleasure in death, and to give an account unto God for his life past? If lots were to be cast, whether one should have his flesh plucked off with burning pincers, or be made a king; with what fear and anxiety of mind would that man expect the issue! How then shall he look, who, in the agony of death, wrestles with eternity, and, within two hours' space, looks for glory or torments without end? What life can be counted happy, if

that be happy which ends with so much misery? If we will not believe this, let us ask him, who is now passing the terrors of death, what his opinion of life is; let us now inquire of him, when he lies with his breast sticking forth, his eyes sunk, his feet dead, his knees cold, his visage pale, his pulses without motion. What will this man say his life was, but by how much more prosperous, by so much more vain; and that all his felicity was false and deceitful, since it came to conclude in such a period? What would he now take for all the honours of this world? Certainly, I believe, he would part with them at an easy rate; nay, if they have been offensive to God Almighty, he would give all in his power he never had enjoyed them.

He who, unto the hour of his death, hath enjoyed all the delights the world can give him, at that hour what remains with him? Nothing; or if any thing, a greater grief. Consider of how little substance all temporal things will appear, when thou shalt be in the light eternal. The honours which they have given thee, shall be no more thine: the pleasures, wherein thou hast delighted, can be no more thine; thy riches are to be another's. See, then, whether the happiness of this life, which is not so long as life itself, be of that value, that for it we should part with eternal felicity.

I beseech thee, ponder what is life, and what is death. Life is the passing of a shadow, short, troublesome, and dangerous; a place which God hath given us in time, for the desiring of eternity.

Consider why God leads us about in the circuit of this life, when he might, at the first instance, have placed us in heaven. Was it that we should spend our time idly, and daily invent new chimeras, of vain and frivolous honours? No, certainly, it was not; but that, by virtuous actions, we might gain heaven, show what we owe unto our Creator, and, in the midst of the troubles and afflictions of this life, discover how loyal and faithful we are unto our God. For this he placed us in the lists, that we should take his part, and defend his honour; for this he entered us into this militia and warfare, (for the life of man is a warfare upon earth,) that here we might fight for him, and, in the midst of his and our enemies, show how true and faithful we are to him. Were it fit that a soldier, in the time of battle, should stand disarmed, passing away his time at dice upon a drum-head? This doth he who seeks his ease in this life, and sets his affections upon things of the earth; not endeavouring those of heaven, nor thinking upon death, where he is to end.

A peregrination is this life; and what passenger is so besotted with the pleasures of the way, that he forgets the place whither he is to go? How camest thou, then, to forget death, whither thou travellest with speed; and canst not, though thou desirest, rest one small minute by the way? For time, although against thy will, will draw thee along with it. The way of this life is not voluntary, like that of travellers; but necessary, like that of condemned persons, from the prison unto the place of execution. To death thou standest condemned, whither thou art now going; how canst thou laugh?

A malefactor, after sentence past, is so surprised with the apprehension of death, that he thinks of nothing but dying. We are all condemned to die; how come we, then, to rejoice in these things, which we are to leave so suddenly?

Death is compared unto a thief, who not only robs us of our treasure and substance, but bereaves us of our lives. Since, therefore, thou art to leave all, why dost thou load thyself in vain? What merchant, knowing that so soon as he arrived unto the port, his ship and goods should be sunk, would charge his vessel with much merchandise? Arriving at death, thou, and all thou hast, are to sink and perish; why dost thou, then, burden thyself with that which is not needful, but rather a hinderance to thy salvation?

This is the salary which the goods of the earth bestow on those who serve them; that if they do not leave or ruin them before their death, they are then certain at least to leave them, and often hazard the salvation of those that dote upon them. O vain man! this short life is bestowed upon thee for gaining the goods of heaven, which are to last eternally; and you spend it in seeking those of the earth, which are to perish instantly.

Besides all this, though one should die the most happy death that can be imagined, yet behold the dead body; how ugly and noisome doth the miserable carcass remain, that even friends fly from it, and scarce dare stay one night alone with it: the nearest and most obliged kindred procure it in all haste to be carried forth a-doors; and, having wrapped it in some coarse sheet, throw it into the grave, and within two days forget it. And he, who in life could not be contained in great and sumptuous palaces, is now content with the narrow lodging of seven foot of earth; he, who used to lodge in rich and dainty beds, hath for his couch the hard ground; for his mattress, moths; and for his covering, worms; his pillows, at best the bones of other dead persons; then heaping upon him a little earth, and perhaps a grave-stone, they leave his flesh to be feasted upon by worms, whilst his heirs triumph in his riches.

He who gloried in the exercise of arms, and was used to revel at balls, is now stiff and cold, his hands and feet without motion, and all his senses without life; he who with his power and pride trampled upon all, is now trod under foot by all: consider him eight days dead, drawn from his grave, how ghastly and horrible a spectacle he will appear! Behold then what thou pamperest, a body, which, perhaps within four days, may be eaten by loathsome vermin: whereon dost thou found thy vain pretensions, which are but castles in the air, founded upon a little earth, which turning into dust, the whole fabric falls to the ground. See where all human greatness concludes; and that the end of man is no less loathsome and miserable than his beginning!

The memory of the loathsomeness of a dead body may serve to make us to despise the beauty of that which is living; therefore, if, at any time, thou shalt be surprised with the temptation of the frail beauty of the flesh, send thy thoughts presently

unto the sepulchre of the dead, and let them there see what they can find agreeable to the touch, or pleasing to the sight. Consider that dust and dry ashes were once soft and lively flesh, and in its youth was subject to the like passions as thou art. Consider those rigid nerves, those naked teeth, the disjointed disposition of the bones and arteries, and that horrible dissipation of the whole body; by this means thou mayest take from thy heart those vain deceits and illusions.

All this is certainly to happen unto thyself; wherefore dost thou not amend thy civil conditions? This is to be thy end; unto this, therefore, direct thy life and actions. With reason had the Brahmins their sepulchres still placed open before their doors, that, by the memory of death, they might learn to live. Wisdom is the meditation of death; therefore ever have in thy thoughts that meditation, "Remember, thou art to die."

Therefore, whatsoever misery or affliction shall fall upon thee, say, "By the Divine assistance, I will bear it patiently; Lord Jesu, stand by me, and comfort me: Lord Jesu, be present with thy servant, that putteth his trust in thee; receive my spirit, and lead me through the valley and shadow of death; lead me, and forsake me not, until thou hast brought my soul into the land of the living, O thou which art my light, life, and salvation!"

CHAPTER VII.

Of Death, and the Certainty of it.

Besides the misery wherein all the felicity of this world is to determine, there are other considerations of the end of our life to be considered; by which we may perceive, how vain and contemptible are all the goods of it. We will principally speak of three.

1. That death is most certain, and no ways to be avoided.

2. That the time is most uncertain; because we know neither when or how it will happen.

3. That it is but only one, and but once to be experienced; so that we cannot, by a second death, correct the errors of the first.

Concerning the certainty of death, it imports us much to persuade ourselves of it; for, as it is infallible that the other life shall be without end, so it is as certain that this shall have it. God hath not made a law more inviolable than that of death; thou art to die, assure thyself of that; an irrevocable law is this; and, without remedy, thou must die. I pray, tell me, where is Adam now? where is Cain? where is long-lived Methuselah? where is Noah? where is Shem? where is Abraham? where is Jacob? They are dead and gone, their time is past; we may say of them, "Vixerunt, fuerunt Tröes;" once they were, now they are not: and be assured, that "mortuus est" shall be every man's epitaph; for "we must needs die, and are as water spilt upon the ground."[a]

The time will come, when those eyes, with which thou readest this, shall be burst, and lose their sight; those hands which thou now employest, be without sense or motion; this mouth, which now discourses, shall be mute, without breath or spirit; and this flesh, which thou now pamperest, shall be consumed and eaten by worms and vermin: the time will come, when thou shalt be covered with earth, thy body stink and rot; the time will come, when thou shalt be forgotten as if thou never hadst been, and those that pass, shall walk over thee, without remembering that such a man was born. Consider this, and persuade thyself, that thou must die as well as others; that which hath happened to so many, must happen also to thee; think upon this seriously, and reflect with thyself soberly, how thou shalt look when thou art dead; and this consideration will give thee a great knowledge what thy life is, and make thee despise the pleasures of it.

If death were only contingent, and not certain, yet because it might happen, it ought to make us very careful and solicitous. If God should say, that only one of all those in the world should die, but did not declare who that one were, yet all would fear: why, then, dost thou not now fear, when all men must infallibly die, and perhaps thou the first?

Now is the bow drawn; now the arrow let loose, and already in the way to hit thee; why dost thou strive to shun it, and dost not rather humble and prepare thyself to receive it? If one should tell thee, that a whole tire of artillery were immediately to be discharged at thee, and no way left to avoid the strokes; how wouldst thou be amazed! but if thou perceivedst that fire were already given, the very noise perhaps would kill thee; know then, that the artillery of death with much more fury is already shot, and there is no quarter of an hour, wherein it flies not more than ten millions of leagues to overtake thee, and yet from whence it parted, and where it now is, thou knowest not; wert thou certain it were far off, yet it runs with so precipitate a course, that it will not fail in a short time to reach thee. Therefore, thou being ignorant at what distance it is, thou oughtest every moment to expect it, since every moment it may be with thee.

Let every man therefore say within himself: It is I who am to die, and resolve into dust; I have nothing to do with this world; the other was made for me, and I am only to care for that; in this I am only a passenger, and am therefore to look upon the eternal, whither I am going, and am there to make my abode for ever; certain it is, that death will come and hurry me along with him; all the business therefore I have now, is to dispose myself for so hard an encounter; and since it is not in the power of man to free me from it, I will only serve the Lord, who is able to save me in so certain and imminent a danger.

2. As it is most certain that we are to die, so it is most uncertain when or in what manner we shall die: who knows whether he is to die in his old age,

[a] 2 Sam. xiv. 14.

or in his youth; if by sickness, or struck by a thunderbolt; if a year hence, or to-day? The doors of death are ever open; and the enemy continually lies in ambush, and, when we least think of him, will assault us.

He who suspected that thieves were to enter his house, would wake all night, because they should find him at no hour unprovided; it being, then, not a suspicion, but an apparent certainty, that death will come, and we know not when, why do we not always watch? We are in a continual danger, and therefore ought to be continually prepared; it is good ever to have our accounts made with God, since we know not but he may call us in such haste as we shall have no time to perfect them; it is good to play a sure game, and be ever in the grace of God.

Who would not tremble to hang over some vast precipice, wherein if he fell, he were certain to be dashed into a thousand pieces, and that by so weak a supporter as a thread? This, or, in truth, much greater, is the danger of him, who is in mortal sin, who hangs over hell by the thread of life, a twist so delicate, that not a knife, but the wind, and the least fit of sickness, breaks it: wonderful is the danger where he stands, who continues but one minute in mortal sin. Death hath time enough to shoot his arrow, in the speaking of a word; the twinkling of an eye suffices: who can be pleased whilst he stands naked and disarmed in the midst of his enemies? Amongst as many enemies is man as there are ways to death, which are innumerable; it is not then safe for man to be disarmed and naked of the grace of God, in the midst of so many adversaries and dangers of death, which hourly threaten him. What person, being led to execution, would entertain himself by the way with vain conceits? We are condemned persons, who are going to execution, though by different ways, which we ourselves know not, some the straight way, and some by by-paths, but are all sure to meet in death; we ought therefore still to be prepared, and free from the distracting pleasures of this life, for fear we fall suddenly; this danger of sudden death is sufficient to make us distaste all the delights of the earth.

Death is therefore uncertain, that thou shouldst be ever certain to despise this life, and dispose thyself for the other; thou art every hour in danger of death, to the end, that thou shouldst be every hour prepared to have life; what is death but the way unto eternity? A great journey thou hast to make; wherefore dost thou not provide in time? and the rather, because thou knowest not how soon thou mayest be forced to depart. Who is there, who does not desire to have served God faithfully two years, before death should take him? If, then, thou art not sure of one, why dost thou not begin? Trust not in thy health or youth, for death steals treacherously upon us, when we least look for it; promise not thyself to-morrow, for thou knowest not whether death will come to-night.

Since, then, thou knowest not when thou art to die, think thou must die to-day; and be ever prepared for that which may ever happen; trust in the mercies of God, and implore them incessantly; but presume not to defer thy conversion for a moment; for who knows whether thou shalt ever from henceforward have time to call upon him? and having called upon him, whether thou shalt be heard? To what purpose defer we that until to-morrow, which imports so much to be done to-day, and perhaps will not be to-morrow, if not to-day? It was a very good answer that Messodamus gave one, inviting him to a feast the next day: "My friend," saith he, "why dost thou invite me against to-morrow? I durst not, for these many years, secure myself that I should live one day; for I have expected death every hour." No man is sufficiently armed against death, unless he be always prepared to entertain it.

3. To this uncertainty of death is to be added that of being only one, and only once to be tried; so as the error of dying ill cannot be amended by dying well another time. God gave unto man his senses and other parts of his body double; he gave him two eyes, that, if one failed, he might serve himself of the other; he gave him two hands, that, if one were lost, yet he might not wholly be disabled; but of deaths he gave but one; and, if that one miscarry, all is ruined. A terrible case, that the thing which most imports us, which is to die, hath neither trial, experience, nor remedy; it is but only once to be acted, and that in an instant, and upon that instant all eternity depends, in which if we fail, the error is never to be amended.

If an ignorant peasant, who had never drawn a bow, should be commanded to shoot at a mark far distant, upon condition that, if he hit it, he should be highly rewarded with many rich gifts; but if he missed it, and that at the first shoot, he should be burnt alive; in what straits would this poor man find himself! how perplexed that he should be forced upon a thing of that difficulty wherein he had no skill, and that the failing should cost him so dear as his life; but especially that it was to be only once assayed, without possibility of repairing the first fault by a second trial! This is our case: I know not how we are so pleasant; we have never died, we have no experience or skill in a thing of so great difficulty; we are only once to die, and in that all is at stake; either eternity of torments in hell, or of happiness in heaven: how live we then so careless of dying well, since for it we were born, and are but once to try it? This action is the most important of all our life; upon it depends eternity; and, if missed, without repair or amendment. These human actions which may be repeated, if one miss, the other may hit; and that which is lost in one way, may be regained in another. If a rich merchant had this year a ship sunk in the ocean, another may arrive laden with such riches as may recompense the loss of the former; but if we once fail in death, the loss is never to be repaired.

That which is but only one, is worthy of more care and esteem, because the loss of it is irreparable; let us then value the time of this life, since there is no other given wherein to gain eternity.

A certain soldier being called in question by Lamachus, a centurion, for some misdemeanour or other committed in the camp, earnestly desired pardon for that once, and promised never to offend in the like again. But the centurion made him this answer: "In bello, bone vir, non licebit bis peccare; O sir! know you thus much, there is no offending in war twice." But in death, alas! there is no offending once; there is no hope of pardon; once dead, and always dead; he that dies once ill, is damned for ever; there is no returning again to rise, to amend what is done amiss; as death leaves a man, so judgment finds him; and as judgment leaves him, so eternity findeth him.

If a man were obliged to leap some great and desperate leap, upon condition, that, if he performed it well, he should be made master of a wealthy kingdom; but if ill, he should be chained to an oar, and made a perpetual galley-slave; without doubt this man would use much diligence in preparing himself for so hazardous an undertaking, and would often practise before an action of so great consequence, from which he expected so different fortunes. How far more different are those, which we expect from so great a leap as is from life to death; since the kingdoms of the earth, compared with that of heaven, are trash, rubbish; and the tugging at an oar, in the galleys, compared with hell, a glory. When the leap is great and dangerous, he who is to leap it, uses to fetch his career backwards, that he may leap further, and with greater force: we, therefore, knowing the danger of the leap from life to death, that we may perform it better, ought to fetch our career far back, even from the beginning of our short life; and from our first use of reason, from which we shall know, that the life we live is mortal, that at the end of it we have a great debt to pay, and that we are to discharge both use and principle, when we least think of it.

It was the saying of Iphicrates, That it is a shame for an emperor at any time to say with the fool, "Non putâram, I did not think it;" but it is a greater shame for a christian man to say, "Non putâram," I did not think there had been such a difference between a godly and wicked life; I did not think eternity was to follow after this life; I did not think I should have died so suddenly.

Let us therefore husband time in which we may gain eternity, which being once lost, we shall lose both the time of this life and the eternity of the other. How many millions are now in hell, who, whilst they were in this world, despised time, and would now be content to suffer, thousands of years, all the torments of the damned, for the redemption of one instant, in which they might, by repentance, recover the eternal life of glory, which is now lost without remedy! And yet thou castest away not only instants, but hours, days, and years! Consider what a damned person would give for some part of that time which thou losest; and take heed that thou hereafter, when there shall be no repair of that time, which thou now so vainly mispendest, be not thyself in the same grief and bitterness.

We are now upon the stage, therefore we may act on our part; we have to deal with potent enemies, therefore we must be always prepared to fight; we are still in our race, therefore we must hold out to the last: let us then so act our parts, that the angels may rejoice to be spectators; let us so fight, that we may win the crown; let us so run, that we may obtain.

Consider how by time thou mayest gain eternity: look not then upon the loss of it, as upon the loss of time, but of eternity; endeavour then, whilst it lasts, to get a good bargain; for this life once past, there is no more occasion for traffic; the time appointed for storing up is but short; but the gain and profit is eternal: therefore leave the cares of this world, and elevate your whole heart and affections unto heaven, and there place your thoughts, which are to be upright and settled, in God Almighty.

I know, O Lord, I am here but as a sojourner in a strange land,[b] and not as a citizen in my own country. I am here but a tenant at will, and must shortly depart; for here I have no continuing city; but I must seek one to come, eternal in the heavens; where I shall bear a part in the heavenly quire with angels, evermore praising thy holy name; where I shall behold light incomprehensible; where I shall be in no fear of death. Farewell, then, all the world, and all the things in it; "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done;" and welcome to me, thou art welcome eternally, O Beloved, eternally thou art welcome; now I am blessed, O Lord, for I shall dwell in thy house, and shall still be praising thee.[c]

CHAPTER VIII.

Of that Moment wherein we are to die, and Life to end.

We ought seriously to consider all which is to pass in that moment of death, for which the time of this life was only bestowed upon us; and upon which depends the eternity of the other. O most dreadful point, which art the end of time, and beginning of eternity! O most fearful instant, which shuttest up the prefixed term of this life, and determinest the business of our salvation; how many things are to pass in thee! In the same instant life is to finish, all our works to be examined; and that sentence given, which is to be executed for all eternity. O last moment of life! O first of eternity! how terrible is the thought of thee, since in thee not only life is to be lost, but to be accounted for, and we then to enter into a region which we know not; in that moment I shall cease to live, in that moment I shall behold my Judge, who shall lay all my sins open before me, with all their weight, number, and enormity. In it I shall receive a strict charge of all the Divine benefits bestowed upon me; and in it a judgment shall pass upon me,

[b] Heb. xiii. 14.

[c] Psal. lxxxiv. 4.

either for my salvation or damnation eternal! How wonderful is it, that for so many matters, and of so great importance, there is no more time allotted than the space of an instant; no place left for reply, intercession of friends, or appeal! O fearful moment, upon which so much depends! Admirable is the high wisdom of God, which hath placed a point in the midst betwixt time and eternity, unto which all the time of this life is to relate, and upon which the whole eternity of the other is to depend! O moment, which art neither time nor eternity, but art the horizon of both, and dividest things temporal from eternal! O narrow moment! O most dilated point! wherein so many things are to be concluded, and so strict an account is to be given, and where so rigorous a sentence is to be pronounced, is ever to stand in force! A strange case, that a business of eternity is to be resolved in a moment, and no place allowed for the intercession of friends, or our own diligence!

It will be then in vain to make any addresses or application; there is none will intercede for thee, nor can give thee absolution; the rigour of the Judge in that instant wherein thou expirest will allow no further mercy: St. John says, that heaven and earth shall fly from the presence of the Judge:[a] whither wilt thou go, to what place canst thou repair, being the person against whom the process is commenced? It is therefore said, that heaven and earth shall fly, because neither the saints of heaven shall there favour thee, nor the powers of earth assist thee; there shall be place for nothing that may help thee: what, then, would a sinner give for leave to offer up one poor prayer to God, when it is too late! That which would now serve thy turn, and thou despisest, thou wouldst then have done, and canst not. Provide thyself, therefore, in time, whilst it may avail thee, and defer it not until that instant, wherein nothing can do thee good. Now thou mayest help thyself, now thou mayest find favour: expect not that moment wherein thy own endeavours will be useless, and there will be none to help or assist thee.

O what a lamentable thing will it be for a sinner, to see himself not only abandoned by men, but also by angels, and even by God himself; and to be delivered over into the power of the infernal dragon, without all hopes of escaping from him, who will seize upon his soul, and carry it to the abyss of hell, there to be tormented for ever!

How can men be careless, seeing so important a business, as is the salvation of their souls, depends upon an instant, wherein no new diligence nor preparation will avail them? Since, then, we know not when that moment will be, let us not be any moment unprovided; this is a business not to be one point of time neglected, since that point may be our damnation. What will a hundred years, spent with great austerity in the service of God, profit us, if, in the end of all those years, we shall commit some grievous sin, and death shall seize upon us before repentance?

Let no man secure himself in his past virtues, but continue them unto the end; since, if he die not in grace, all is lost; and if he doth, what matters it to have lived a thousand years in the greatest troubles and afflictions this world could lay upon him? O moment, in which the just shall forget all his labours, and shall rest assured of all his virtues! O moment! which art certain to be, uncertain when to be, and most certain never to be again! I will therefore now fix thee in my memory, that I may not hereafter meet thee in my eternal ruin and perdition.

There are three things which would make a sinner tremble: The first, when his soul is to be plucked out of his body; the second, when it is to appear before God to receive judgment; and the third, when sentence is to be pronounced. How terrible, then, is this moment, wherein all these three things so terrible are to pass! Let a christian often, whilst he lives, place himself in that instant, from whence let him behold, on one part, the time of his life which he is to live; and, on the other, the eternity whereunto he enters; and let him consider what remains unto him of that, and what he hopes for in this; in that instant a thousand years of life shall appear unto the sinner no more than one hour; and one hour of torments shall appear a thousand years. Behold thy life from this watch-tower, from this horizon, and measure it with the eternal, and thou shalt find it of no extension.

O dreadful moment, which cuts off the thread of time, and begins the web of eternity! I will therefore provide for this moment, that I may not lose eternity; this is that precious pearl, for which I will give all that I have or am; it shall ever be in my memory, I shall ever be solicitous of it, since it may every day come upon me.

For eternity depends upon death, death upon life, and life upon a thread, which may either be broken or cut; and that even when I most hope, and most endeavour to prolong it. My life is never secure; I will therefore ever fear that instant, which gives an end to time, and beginning to eternity.

THE PRAYER.

Benediction and praise be to him who is seated upon the throne, and to the Lamb, who hath redeemed us in his blood, and hath placed us in his eternal kingdom. Amen.

CHAPTER IX.

The End of Temporal Life is terrible.

DEATH, because it is the end of life, is, by the philosopher, said to be the terrible of all things terrible: what would he have said, if he had known it to be the beginning of eternity, and the gate through which we enter into that vast abyss, no man knowing upon what side he shall fall into that pro-

[a] Apocal. xx.

found and bottomless depth! If death be terrible for ending the business of life, what is it for ushering in the instant, wherein we are to give an account of life before that terrible and most just Judge, who, therefore, died that we might use it well!

It is not the most terrible part of death to leave the life of this world, but to give an account of it unto the Creator of the world; especially in such a time wherein he is to use no mercy: this is a thing so terrible, that it made holy Job to tremble, notwithstanding he had so good an account to make; who was so just, that God himself gloried in having such a servant.

Death is terrible for many weighty reasons; whereof, not the least is the sight of the offended Judge, who is not only judge but party, and a most irrefragable witness; in whose visage shall then appear such a severity against the wicked, that it is better to suffer all manner of torments, than to behold the face of his angry Judge.

How will it then amaze us, when we shall behold Jesus Christ himself alive, not a dead image; not in the humility of the cross, but upon a throne of majesty and seat of justice; not in a time of mercy, but in the hour of vengeance; not naked, with pierced hands, but armed against sinners with the sword of justice; when he shall come to judge and revenge the injuries which they have done him! God is as righteous in his justice as in his mercy; and as he hath allotted a time for mercy, so he will for justice.

As in this life the rigour of his justice is, as it were, repressed and suspended; so in that point of death, when the sinner shall receive judgment, it shall be let loose, and overwhelm him. A great and rapid river, which should, for thirty or forty years together, have its current violently stopped; what a mass of waters would it collect in so long a space! and if it should then be let loose, with what fury would it overrun and bear down all before it! and what resistance could withstand it? Since, then, the Divine justice, which the prophet Daniel compares not to an ordinary river, but to a river of fire,[a] for the greatness and fury of the rigour, shall be repressed for thirty or forty years during the life of man, what an infinity of wrath will it amass together! and with what fury will it burst out upon the miserable sinner, in the face of the offended Judge! And, therefore, the prophet Daniel saith, That a river of fire issued from his countenance, and that his throne was of flames, and the wheels of it burning fire, because all shall then be fire, rigour, and justice; he sets forth unto us his tribunal-throne with wheels, to signify thereby the force and violence of his omnipotency, in executing the severity of his justice; all which shall appear in that moment, when sinners shall be brought into judgment, when the Lord shall speak unto them in his wrath, and confound them in his fury.

O man! which hast now time, consider in what condition thou shalt see thyself in that instant; then neither the blood of Christ, shed for thee, nor the Son of God crucified, nor the intercession or prayers of the blessed saints, nor the Divine mercy itself, shall avail thee; but thou shalt only behold an incensed and revenging God, whose mercies shall then only serve to augment his justice: thou shalt perceive that none will take thy part, but all will be against thee; thou art to expect no patron, no protector, but thy virtuous actions; only they shall accompany thee; when all shall leave thee, they only shall not forsake thee: the rich man shall not then have multitudes of servants to set forth his greatness, nor well-feed lawyers to defend his process; only his good works shall bestead him, and they only shall defend him.

There, when their treasures, which have been heaped up in this world, and guarded with so much care, shall fail their masters, their alms bestowed on the poor shall not fail them; there, when their children, kindred, friends, and servants, shall all fail them, the strangers which they have lodged, the sick which they have visited, and the needy which they have succoured, shall not fail them: let us, therefore, provide for that day, and take care that our works be good ones.

It is to be admired how many dare do ill in the presence of that Judge, with whom nothing can prevail but doing well; and the wonder is much the greater, that we dare, with our evil works, offend him who is to judge them. The thief is not so impudent as to rob his neighbour, if the magistrate looks on; but would be held a fool, if he should rob or offend the magistrate himself, in his own house. How dares, then, this poor thing, man, injure the very person of his most upright and just Judge, (before whom it is most certain he shall appear,) to his face, in his own house; in so high a manner as to prefer the devil, his and our greatest enemy, before him? Every one who sins, makes, as it were, a judgment, and passes a sentence in favour of Satan against Jesus Christ; of this unjust judgment of man, the Son of God, who is most unjustly sentenced by a sinner, will, at the last day, take a most strict and severe account; let him expect, from his own injustice, how great is to be the Divine justice against him.

Let him take heed how he works, since all his actions are to be viewed and reviewed by his Redeemer. An artist who knows his work was to appear before some king, or to be examined by some great master in the same art, would strive to give it the greatest perfection of his skill: since, therefore, all our works are to appear before the King of heaven, and the chief Master of virtues, Jesus Christ, let us endeavour that they may be perfect and complete; and the rather, because he is not to examine them for curiosity, but to pass upon us a sentence, either of condemnation, or eternal happiness. Let us, then, call to mind that we are to give an account unto God Almighty, and, therefore, let us take heed what we do; let us weep for what is amiss; let us forsake our sins, and strive to do virtuous actions; let us look upon ourselves as guilty offenders, and let us stand in perpetual fear of the Judge; still reprehending himself, and saying, Ah me! wretch that I am, how shall I appear before

[a] Dan. vii.

the tribunal of God? How shall I be able to give an account of all my actions? If thou shalt always have these thoughts, thou mayest obtain salvation; and be assured, he that seriously thinks upon death, will never have the boldness to sin.

Another cause of the terribleness of death is, the innumerable multitude of our sins, and their monstrous deformity, shall then be laid open: this is signified by the prophet Daniel, where he says, that the throne of the tribunal of God was of flaming fire; whose nature is not only to burn, but to enlighten; and, therefore, in that Divine judgment shall not only be executed the rigour of his justice, but the ugliness, likewise, of human nature shall be discovered: the Judge himself shall not only appear severe, but our sins shall all be discovered and laid open to us; and the sight of them shall make us tremble with fear and astonishment, especially when we shall perceive them to be manifest unto him, who is both judge and party. Our sins now seem unto us but light and trivial, and we see not half of them; but in our leaving of this life, we shall find them heavy and insupportable.

How shall we remain amazed, when we shall see a number of our actions to be sins, which we never thought to be such! And which is more, we shall find that to be a fault, which we thought to be a laudable work; for many actions, which, in the eyes of men, seem virtuous, will then be found vices in the sight of God; then shall be brought to light the works which we have done, and those which we have left undone; the evil of that action which we have committed, and the good of that which we have omitted: neither is there account to be taken only of the evils which we do, but of the good also, which we do not well; all will be strictly searched, and narrowly looked into, and must pass by many eyes.

The devil, as our accuser, shall frame the process of our whole life, and shall accuse us of all he knows; and if any thing shall escape his knowledge, it shall not, therefore, be concealed; for our own conscience shall cry out and accuse us of it; and lest our conscience might flatter us, or be ignorant of some faults, our guardian-angel shall then be fiscal and accuser, calling for Divine justice against us, and shall discover what our own souls are ignorant of. And if the devil, our conscience, and guardian-angel, shall fail in any thing, as not knowing all, the Judge himself, who is both party and witness, and whose Divine knowledge penetrates into the bottom of our wills, shall there declare many things for vices, which were here esteemed for virtues. O strange way of judgment, where none denies, and all accuse, even the offender accuses himself; and where all are witnesses, even the judge and party! O dreadful judgment, where there is no advocate, and four accusers, the devil, thy conscience, thy guardian-angel, and thy very Judge, who will accuse thee of many things, which thou thoughtest to have alleged for thy defence: then all shall be laid open, and confusion shall cover the sinner with the multitude of his offences. How shall he blush to see himself in the presence of the King of heaven, in so foul and squalid garments!

If a man, when he is to speak with some great prince, desire to be decently and well clad, how will he be out of countenance to appear before him dirty, and half naked! How shall then a sinner be ashamed to see himself before the Lord of all, naked of good works, bedirtied and defiled with abominable and horrid crimes!

Besides the multitude of sins whereof the whole life shall be full, the heinousness of them shall be also laid open before him, and he shall tremble at the sight of that, which he now thinks but a trivial fault; for then he shall clearly see the ugliness of sin, the dissonancy of it unto reason, the deformity it causes in the soul, the injury it doth to the Lord of the world, his ingratitude to Christ his Redeemer, the prejudice it brings unto himself; hell, into which he falls, and eternal glory, which he loses; the least of these were sufficient to cover his heart with sadness and grief; but all together, what amazement and confusion will they cause, especially when he shall perceive that sins produce an ugliness in the soul, beyond all the corporal deformities which can be imagined. Let us, therefore, avoid them now, for all are to come to light, and we must account for all, even to the last farthing: neither is this account to be made in gross only, for the greatest and most apparent sins, but even for the least and smallest: in human tribunals, the judge takes no notice of small matters, but in the courts of Divine judicature nothing passes; the least things are as diligently looked into as the greater. There is also, in the end of life, another cause of much terror unto sinners, which is the lively knowledge which they shall have of the Divine benefits received, and the charge which shall be laid against them for their great ingratitude and abuse of them: in that instant, sinners are not only to stand in fear of their own bad works, but of the grace and benefits of God Almighty conferred upon them.

Another confusion shall cover them, when they shall see what God hath done to oblige and assist them toward their salvation; and what they, to the contrary, have done, to draw upon them their own damnation: they shall tremble to see what God did for their good, and that he did so much as he could do no more, all which hath been misemployed and abused by themselves.

We will consider every one of these benefits by themselves. The first which occurs is, that of the creation: and what could God do more, since in this one benefit of thy creation, he gave thee all what thou art, both in soul and body? If, wanting an arm, thou wouldst esteem thyself much obliged, and be very thankful unto him who should bestow one upon thee, which were sound, strong, and useful; why art thou not so to God, who hath given thee arms, heart, soul, body, and all?

Consider what thou wert, before he gave thee a being; nothing: and now thou enjoyest, not only a being, but the best being of the elemental world: betwixt being and not being, there is an infinite distance; see, then, what thou owest unto thy Creator;

and thou shalt find thy debt to be no less than infinite, since he hath not only given thee a being, but a noble being, and that not by necessity, but out of an infinite love, and by election; making choice of thee amongst an infinity of men possible, whom he might have created. If lots were to be cast among a hundred persons for some honourable charge, how fortunate would he be esteemed, who should draw the lot from so many competitors! Behold, then, thy own happiness, who, from an absolute nothing, hath lighted upon a being amongst an infinity of creatures possible; and whence proceeds this singular favour, but from God? who, out of those numberless millions, hath picked out thee, he having many others, who, if he had created them, would have served him better than thyself: besides this, he not only created thee by election, and gave thee a noble being; but supernatural happiness being no way due unto thy nature, he created thee for it, and gave thee for thy end the most high and eminent that could be imagined, to wit, the eternal possession of thy Creator.

It being, then, so great a benefit to have created thee, it is yet a greater to have preserved and suffered thee until this instant, without casting thee into a thousand hells for thy sins and offences. From how many, for one only fault committed, hath he withdrawn his preservation, and suffered them to die in that sin for which they are now in hell! and some of them, if they had been pardoned, would have proved more grateful than thou! Behold how many angels, for their first offence, he threw headlong down from heaven, and expected them no longer, and yet still expects thee.

Consider thou owest him for preserving thee, as much as for creating thee; preservation being a continued creation; and more for preserving thee, although his enemy. In thy creation, although thou didst not deserve a being, yet thou demerited it not; but in thy preservation thou hast deserved the contrary, which is, to be forsaken and abandoned.

Consider the benefit thou receivest by the incarnation of the Son of God; by which thou art delivered from sin and hell, at such a time, when thy miserable condition was desperate of all other remedy; and he hath exalted thee to his grace, and the inheritance of the kingdom of heaven; and this he did with such singular love, even to the annihilating, as it were, himself, that he might exalt thee, taking upon himself thy nature, that he might only confer an honour upon thee, which he would not to the angels. All is great, all is transcendent in this unspeakable goodness; see what God could do more for thee, and see that thou mayest do much more for him, and dost not.

Consider the benefit of our redemption by the death and passion of Christ: what could the Son of God do more for thee, than die and shed his blood for thee, and that not with an ordinary death, but so ignominious, as it seems he could not suffer more? Set before thy eyes Christ crucified upon mount Calvary; if a man more infamous be imaginable; executed publicly between two thieves, as a traitor and an heretic, broaching false doctrine, and making himself king, as a traitor unto Cæsar.

Two crimes so infamous, as they not only defame the person who commits them, but stain and infect his stock and lineage. Behold in what poverty he died, if greater can be thought on; to the end thou mayest see, if it were possible he should do more for thee than what he did. Whilst he lived, he had not whereon to repose his head; neither found he one drop of water, to refresh his sacred lips; even the earth refused him, wanting whereon to rest his feet. Behold with what grief and pains he expired; since, from head to foot, he was but one continued wound; his feet and hands were pierced with nails, and his head with thorns.

Who would not be amazed at the goodness and piety of a great emperor, who, having a desire to pardon a notorious traitor, should, rather than abate one jot of his justice, take upon him the habit and shape of that traitor, and suffer publicly in the market-place, that the offender might be spared? Thus did God, taking upon him the form of a servant, and dying upon the cross, to free condemned man from eternal death.

Consider, then, how dreadful it shall be unto a sinner, when he shall receive a charge, not only of his own being, and his own life, but also of the being and life of God; of the incarnation, passion, life, and death, of Christ our Redeemer, who hath so often given himself in the sacrament of his body and blood.

The murderer, who stands charged with the life of a man, although it be of some wicked person, yet fears to be apprehended and brought to judgment. How is it, then, that he, who is charged with the life of God, tremble not? O how fearful a thing is it, when a vile creature shall enter into judgment with his Creator; and shall be demanded an account of the blood of Christ, whose value is infinite! What account can he give of such a benefit, and of all the rest which he hath received, even from the greatest unto the least?

When Christ shall say unto him: "I, when thou hadst no being, gave thee one; inspired thee with a soul, and placed thee above all things that are upon the earth. I, for thee, created heaven, air, sea, earth, and all things; and yet am dishonoured by thee, and held most vile and base; and yet, for all this, have not ceased to do thee good, and bestowed upon thee innumerable benefits; for thy sake, being God, I was content to make myself a servant; was buffeted, spit upon, and condemned to a punishment of slaves; and to redeem thee from death, suffered the death of the cross. It is heaven I intended for thee, and from thence sent thee the Holy Ghost. I invited thee unto the kingdom of heaven; offered myself to be thy head, thy spouse, thy food, thy drink, thy shepherd; I chose thee for the heir of heaven, and drew thee out of darkness into light."

To such excess of love, what have we to answer, but to stand astonished and confounded, that we have been so ungrateful, and given occasion to the devil, of one of the greatest scorns and injuries

which could be put upon our Redeemer? when he shall say unto him, "Thou createdst man; for him wast born in poverty, lived in labour, and died in pain and torment; I have done nothing for him but sought to damn him into a thousand hells; and yet, for all this, it is I whom he strives to please, and not thee. Thou dost prepare for him a crown of eternal glory, I desire to torment him in hell; and yet he had rather serve me without interest, than thee for thy promise of so great a reward. I should have been ashamed to have created and redeemed a wretch, so ungrateful unto him, from whom he hath received so great benefits. But, since he loves me better than thee, let him be mine, unto whom he hath so often given up himself."

We are not only to give an account of these general benefits, but of those which are more particular: of the good examples which we have seen, of the instructions we have heard, of the inspiration which hath been sent us. Let us tremble, that we are so careless of that, for which all the care in the world is not sufficient. Now is the time of benefiting ourselves: if we shall now despise it, in what case shall we be? Let us not mispend the time of this life, since so severe an account will be demanded of all the benefits which we have received. Let us take heed what use we make of this temporal life; let us not lose it, since we are to answer for every part of it. This time is bestowed upon us, wherein to gain heaven; and a most strict account will be demanded of us, if we despise it. It is not ours for which we are to answer; we are not the lords of time; let us not, therefore, dispose of it for our own pleasure, but for the service of God, whose it is.

THE PRAYER.

O God, every way most perfect and good! which art so scrupulous in thy justice, and so indulgent in thy mercy; rigorous with thyself, that thou mightest be merciful unto us: O God, infinitely good, infinitely holy, infinitely just and perfect! we magnify thee, we praise thee, we glorify thee; we give thanks unto thee, heavenly Father, for all the blessings thou hast bestowed upon us.

CHAPTER X.

The End of all Time.

AFTER we have finished the time of this life, the end of all time is to succeed, which is to give a period unto all which we leave behind us. Let man, therefore, know, that those things which he leaves behind, for his memory after death, are as vain as those he enjoyed in his life. Let him raise proud mausoleums; let him erect statues of marble; let him build populous cities; let him leave a numerous kindred; let him stamp his name in brass, and fix his memory with a thousand nails; all must have an end. His cities shall sink, his statues fall, his family perish, his memory be defaced: and all shall end, because all time must end. Not only our pleasures and delights are to end in death, but our memories, at the farthest, are to end with time: and since all are to conclude, all are to be despised as vain and perishing.

If the death of a monarch or prince of some corner of the world, prognosticated by an eclipse or comet, cause a fear and amazement in the beholders; what shall the death of the whole world, and with it all things temporal, and of time itself,[a] foretold by angels, with prodigious apparitions and dreadful noise, produce in us? Time shall end, and the world shall die; and that, if we may so say, a most horrible and disastrous death. How much the whole world, and the whole race of mankind, exceeds one particular person, by so much shall the universal end surpass in terror the particular end of this life.

Let us look upon the strange manner of the end of the world, which, being so terrible, gives us to understand the vanity and deceit of all things in it. As it is usual in wars to skirmish, and to make inroads before the day of battle; so before that dreadful day, wherein the army of vengeance and of all punishments are to encounter with the army of sin, the Lord shall, from divers parts, send forth several calamities, as plagues, famine, earthquakes, wars, inundations, droughts; which shall be forerunners of that great day of battle; which shall, like light horsemen, scour the campania. And if those miseries do now so much afflict us, what shall they then do, when God shall add unto them his utmost force and power; when all creatures shall arm against sinners, and the zeal of the Divine justice shall be their captain-general? Which the wise man declares in these words: "His zeal shall take up arms, and shall arm the creatures, to revenge him of his enemies: he shall put on justice as a breastplate, and righteous judgment as a helmet; and he shall take equity as a buckler, and shall sharpen his wrath as a lance, and the circuit of the earth shall fight for him; thunderbolts shall be sent from the clouds, as a well-shooting bow, and shall not fail to hit the mark; and hail shall be sent, full of stormy wrath; the waters of the sea shall threaten them, the rivers shall combat furiously; a most stormy wind shall rise against them, and shall divide them as a whirlwind."[b]

Very dreadful are these words, although they contain but the war, which three of the elements are to make against sinners. But not only fire, air, and water, but earth also, and heaven, shall fall upon them, and confound them; for all creatures shall express their fury in that day, and shall rise against man. And if the clouds shall discharge thunderbolts and stones upon their heads, the heavens shall shoot no less balls than stars, which shall fall from thence. If hail, no bigger than little stones, falling but from the clouds, destroy

[a] Apoc. c. 10.

[b] Sap. 5.

the fields, and sometimes kill the lesser sort of cattle; what shall pieces of stars do, falling from the firmament or upper region?

As in man, who is called the lesser world, when he is to die, the humours, which are as the elements, are troubled and out of order; his eyes, which are as the sun and moon, are darkened; his other senses, which are as the lesser stars, fall away; his reason, which is as the celestial virtues, is off the hinges: so in the death of the greater world, before it dissolves, and expire, the sun shall be turned into darkness, the moon into blood, the stars shall fall, and the whole world shall tremble with a horrid noise. If the sun, moon, and other celestial bodies, which are held incorruptible, shall suffer such changes, what shall be done with those frail and corruptible elements of earth, air, and water? If this inferior world doth depend upon the heavens, those celestial bodies being altered and broken in pieces, in what estate must the lower elements remain, when the virtues of heaven shall falter, and the wandering stars shall lose their way, and fail to observe their order?

How shall the air be troubled with violent and sudden whirlwinds, dark tempests, horrible thunders, and furious flashings of lightning! How shall the earth tremble with dreadful earthquakes, opening herself with a thousand mouths, and casting forth, as it were, whole volcanoes of fire and sulphur; and, not content to overthrow the loftiest towers, shall swallow up high mountains, and bury cities in her entrails? How shall the sea then rage, mounting her proud waves above the clouds, as if they meant to overwhelm the whole earth? The roaring of the ocean shall astonish those who are far distant from the sea, and inhabit in the midst of the firm land. Therefore, it is said, that there shall be in the earth afflictions of nations, for the confusion of the noise of the sea.

What shall men do in this general perturbation of nature? They shall remain amazed and pale as death. What comfort shall they have? They shall stand gazing one upon another, and every one shall conceive a new fear, by beholding in his neighbour's face the image of his own death. What fear and horror shall then possess them, when they shall hourly expect the success and dire effects portended by those monstrous prodigies! All commerce shall then cease; the market-places shall be unpeopled, and the tribunals remain solitary and silent; none shall then be ambitious of honours, none shall seek after pastimes and new-invented pleasures; nor shall the covetous wretch then busy himself with the care of his treasures; none shall frequent the palaces of kings and princes, but, through fear, shall forget even to eat and drink; all their care shall be employed how to escape those deluges, earthquakes and lightning; seeking for places of security, which they shall not meet with. Who will remember the sumptuous buildings he hath reared, the beauty he hath once doted upon?

If we shall forget what we ourselves most valued and gloried in, how shall we remember that of others? What remembrance shall there then be of the acts of the great Alexander? of the learning of Aristotle? of the wisdom of Solomon? and of the endowments of the most renowned men of the world? Their fame shall remain from thenceforward for ever buried, and shall die with the world for a whole eternity.

The mariners, when in some furious tempest they are upon point of sinking, how are they amazed at the rage of the watery element! How grieved and afflicted with ruin, which threatens them! What prayers and vows do they send up to heaven! How disinterested are they of all worldly matters, since they fling their wealth and riches into the sea, for which they have run such hazard! In what condition shall be, then, the inhabitants of the earth; when not only the sea, with its raging, but heaven and earth, with a thousand prodigies, shall affright them? When the sun shall put on a robe of mourning, and amaze them with the horror of his darkness; when the moon shall look like blood, the stars fall, and the earth shall shake them with its unquiet trembling; when the whirlwinds shall throw them off their legs, and frequent and thick flashes of lightning dazzle their sight, and confound their understanding: what shall sinners then do, for whose sake all these fearful wonders shall happen?

Let us, by the particular changes which have happened, judge how dreadful the conjunction of so many and so great calamities, in the end of the world, all together will be. But all the alterations past of the elements were no more than skirmishes; what shall then be the battle which they are to give unto sinners, when the heavens shall shoot their arrows, and give the alarm, with prodigious thunders, and shall declare their wrath with horrible apparitions?

In the last days, the sun shall hide his beams under a mourning garment; and the moon shall clothe herself with blood, to signify the wars, which all the creatures are to make with fire and blood, against those who have despised their Creator. When on one side, the earth shall rouse itself up against them, and shall shake them off her back, as unwilling to endure their burdens any longer; when the sea shall pursue and assault them within their own houses; and the air shall not permit them to be safe in the fields. Certainly, it shall then be no wonder, if they shall desire the mountains to cover them, and the hills to hide them within their caverns. What shall it be, then, when the Lord of all shall arm all the elements against man, and shall give the alarm to all creatures, to revenge him upon him, so ungrateful for his infinite benefits?

The creatures now groan, to see themselves abused by man, in contempt of his and their Creator; but they shall then shake off their yokes, and shall revenge themselves of the grievances which they suffer under him, and the injuries he hath done unto the Creator of all: all the elements, all creatures, the whole world, shall be up in arms against man; the summer shall be changed into winter, and winter into the summer; no creature shall observe the prefixed law, with him who hath not observed the law of his Creator, that so they may revenge both God and themselves: but more terrible, then, is that which

follows, that, after so many calamities, the bottomless pit, which is hell, shall burst open, and out of his profound throat belch forth so thick a smoke, as shall wholly darken the sun and air; from which smoke shall sally forth a multitude of deformed locusts, which, in great swarms, shall disperse themselves over the face of the whole earth, and leaving the fields, herbs, and what is sown, fall upon such men as have been unfaithful unto God, and shall, for five months, torment them with greater rage than scorpions. [c]

Some doctors understand those locusts according to the letter; that they shall be a certain kind of true locusts, but of a strange figure and fierceness; others, that they shall be devils in hell, in the shape of locusts. And it is no marvel, that, in the destruction of the world, devils shall appear in visible forms; since in the destruction of Babylon, they appeared in divers figures of beasts, as was prophesied by Isaiah.

But how shall it then fare with sinners, when, after all, shall come that general fire, so often foretold, which shall either fall from heaven, or ascend out of hell, or, (according to Albertus Magnus,) proceed from both, and shall devour and consume all it meets with? Whither shall the miserable fly, when that river of flames, or, (to say better,) that inundation and deluge of fire, shall so encompass them, as no place of surety shall be left; where nothing can avail but a holy life; when all besides shall perish, in that universal ruin of the whole world?

What lamentations were in Rome, when it burnt for seven days together! What shrieks were heard in Troy, when it was wholly consumed with flames! What howling and astonishment in Pentapolis, when those cities were destroyed with fire from heaven! What weeping was there in Jerusalem, when they beheld the house of God, the glory of their kingdom, the wonder of the world, involved in fire and smoke! Imagine what these people felt; they saw their houses and goods on fire, and no possibility of saving them; when the husband heard the shrieks and cries of his dying wife; the father, of his little children; and, unawares, perceived himself so encompassed with flames, that he could neither relieve them, nor free himself.

What then shall be the straits and exigencies of that general burning, when those who shall escape earthquakes, inundations of the sea, the fury of whirlwinds, and lightning from heaven, shall fall into that universal fire, that deluge of flames, which shall consume all, and make an end of men and their memories! Of those who lived before the flood, and were masters of the world for so long a time, except it be of some few, we know nothing. Those heroical actions, which, certainly, some of them performed, and gained by them incomparable fame, lie buried in the waters; and there remains no more memory of those who did them, than if they had never been born: no more permanent shall be the fame of those, which now resounds in the ears of the whole world: Cyrus, Alexander, Hannibal, Scipio, Cæsar Augustus, Plato, Aristotle, Hippocrates, Euclid, and the rest; no more world, no more fame; this fire shall end all the smoke.

And, indeed, the world may be said to be like a house full of smoke; which in such manner blinds the eyes, as it suffers not those within it to see things as they are; and so the world, with its deceits, so disguise the nature of human things, as we perceive not what they are; ambition and human honour (which the world so much dotes after) are no more than smoke, without substance, which so blinds our understandings, that we know not the truth of that we so much covet. It is no marvel, that so much smoke comes at last to end in flames.

What shall it then profit the worldlings, to have rich vessels of gold and silver, curious embroideries, precious tapestries, pleasant gardens, sumptuous palaces, and all what the world now esteems, when they shall, with their own eyes, behold their costly palaces burnt, their rich and curious pieces of gold melted, and their flourishing and pleasant orchards consumed, without power to preserve them or themselves? All shall burn, and with it the world, and all the memory and fame of it shall die; and that which mortals thought to be immortal, shall then end and perish.

No more shall Aristotle be cited in the schools, nor Ulpian alleged in the tribunals; no more shall Plato be read amongst the learned, nor Cicero imitated by the orators; no more shall Seneca be admired by the understanding, nor Alexander extolled among captains; all fame shall then die, and all memory be forgotten. O vanity of men, whose memorials are as vain as themselves, which in few years perish, and that which lasts longest can endure no longer than the world! What became of that statue of massy gold, which Gorgias, the Leontine, placed in Delphos, to eternize his name; and that of Gabrion, in Rome; and that of Berosus, with the golden tongue, in Athens; and innumerable others, erected to great captains, in brass or hardest marble? Certainly, many years since they are perished: if not, they shall perish in this great and general conflagration; only virtue no fire can burn.

Three hundred and sixty statues were erected by the Athenians unto Demetrius Phalereus, for having governed their commonwealth ten years with great virtue and prudence: but of so little continuance were those trophies, that those very emblems, which were raised by gratitude, were soon after destroyed by envy; and he himself who saw his statues set up in so great a number, saw them also pulled down; but he still retained this comfort, which christians may learn from him, that, beholding how they threw his images unto the ground, he could say, at last, "they cannot overthrow those virtues for which they were erected." If they were true virtues, he said well: for those neither envy can demolish, nor human power destroy.

And, which is more, the Divine power will not, in this general destruction of the world, consume them, but will preserve, in his eternal memory, as many as shall persevere in goodness, and die in his holy grace; for only charity, holiness, and christian virtues, shall not end when the world ends.

[c] Apoc. c. 9.

The rich man shall not be preserved by his wealth, nor the mighty by his power, nor the crafty by his wiles; only the just shall be freed by his virtues. None shall escape the terror of that day, by fast-sailing ships, or speed of horses; the sea itself shall burn, and the fire shall overtake the swiftest post; only holiness and charity shall defend the servants of God.

How then shall I, miserable sinner, in this universal conflagration, behave myself? What counsel shall I take in that extremity, when my own conscience shall be my accuser, and when I shall behold the world all on fire about me? Whither shall I flee for safety, when no place will afford it? Shall I climb unto the mountains? thither the flames will follow me. Shall I descend into the valleys? thither the fire will pursue me. Shall I shut up myself in some strong castle or tower? But there the wrath of God will assault me, and the fire will pass the fosses, consume the bulwarks, and make an end of them and me. What shall I, poor wretch, do? Let thy power, O Lord, triumph over my misery, and glorify thyself in my greatest extremities; and thy will, O Lord, be done, if it be thy Divine pleasure, in my confusion.

CHAPTER XI.

Of the last Day of Time, and of the Judgment which is to pass upon all Things in the World.

We must suppose, that the coming of Christ to judgment is to be with greater terror and majesty, than hath yet been manifested by any of the Divine Persons, either in himself, or any of his creatures. If an angel which represented God, and was only to promulgate the law, came with that terror and majesty unto mount Sinai, as made the Hebrew people, though purified and prepared for his coming, to quake and tremble; what shall the Lord of the law do, when he himself comes to take an account of the law, to revenge the breach of it? With what terror and majesty shall he appear unto sinners, and to such which are unprepared for his reception, who are then to be all present, and judged in that last day of time! For after those prodigious thunders, lightnings, earthquakes, and prodigies; after burning in that deluge of fire the sinners of the world, the saints remaining still alive, that that article of our faith may be literally fulfilled, "From thence he shall come to judge both the quick and the dead;" the heavens shall open, and over the valleys of Jehosaphat, the Redeemer of the world, attended by all the angels of heaven, invisible forms of admirable splendour, shall, with a Divine majesty, descend to judge it.

Before the Judge shall be borne his standard, which Chrysostom and divers other doctors affirm, shall be the very cross on which he suffered.[a] Then shall the just meet (as the apostle says) their Redeemer in the air; who at his issuing forth of the heavens, shall, with a voice that may be heard of all the world, pronounce this his commandment, "Arise, ye dead, and come unto judgment;" which shall be proclaimed by four angels, in the four quarters of the world, with such vehemence, that the sound shall pierce unto the infernal region; from whence the souls of the damned shall issue forth, and re-enter their bodies, which shall from thenceforward suffer the terrible torments of hell. The souls of the blessed filling their bodies with the four gifts of glory, shall make them more resplendent than the sun, and with the gift of agility shall join themselves with those just, who remain alive in the air in their passible bodies; which being yet mortal, and therefore not able to endure these vehement affections of the heart, of joy, desire, reverence, love, and admiration of Christ, shall then die, and in that instant behold the Divine essence, after which their souls shall be again immediately united to their bodies, before they can be corrupted, or so much as fall unto the ground, and thenceforward continue glorious; for in the moment wherein they die, they shall be purified from those noxious humours and qualities wherewith our bodies are now infected.

And therefore it was convenient they should first die, that being so cleansed from all filth, they might, by the restitution of their blessed souls, receive gifts of glory. Who can express the joy of those happy souls, when they shall take possession of their new, glorious, and beautiful bodies, which were long since eaten by worms or wild beasts, some four, some five thousand years ago turned into dust and ashes? What thanks shall they give unto God, who, after so long a separation, hath restored them to their ancient companions? But the souls of the damned, how shall they rage and curse their own flesh, since, to please and pamper it, hath been the occasion of their torments and eternal unhappiness!

The reprobates being then in the valley of Jehosaphat,[b] and the predestinate in the air, the Judge shall appear above mount Olivet, unto whom the clouds shall serve as a chariot, and his most glorious body shall cast forth rays of such incomparable splendour, as the sun shall appear but as coal; for even the predestinate shall shine as the sun, but the light and brightness of Christ shall far exceed them, as the sun doth the least star; the which most admirable sight shall be yet more glorious by those thousand millions of excellent and heavenly spirits which shall attend him, who, having formed themselves aërial bodies of more or less splendour, according to their hierarchy and order, shall fill the whole space betwixt heaven and earth with unspeakable beauty and variety.

The Saviour of the world shall sit upon a throne of great majesty, his countenance shall be most mild and peaceable towards the good, and, though the same, most terrible unto the bad; out of his sacred wounds shall issue beams of light towards the just,

[a] Chrysost. tom. iii. de Cruce.

[b] Zac. c. 1.

full of love and sweetness; but unto sinners full of fire and wrath, who shall weep bitterly for the evils which issue from them; so great shall be the majesty of Christ, that the miserable damned, and the devils themselves, notwithstanding all the hate they bear him, shall yet prostrate themselves and adore him, and, to their greater confusion, acknowledge him for Lord and God;[c] and those who have most blasphemed him, shall then bow before him, fulfilling the promises of the eternal Father, that all things should be subject unto him, that he would make his enemies his footstool, and that all knees should bend before him: here also shall the sinners behold him in glory, whom they have despised for vain trifles of the earth.

What an amazement will it be to see him King of so great majesty, who suffered so much ignominy upon the cross, and even from those, whom he redeemed with his most precious blood! What will they then say, who in scorn crowned the sacred temples of the Lord with thorns, put a reed in his hand for a sceptre, clothed him in some old and broken garment of purple, buffeted and spit upon his blessed face? I know not how the memory of this doth not burst our hearts with compunction!

There shall be thrones for the apostles, and those saints who, poor in spirit, have left all for Christ, who, sitting now as judges with their Redeemer, and condemning by their good example the scandalous lives of sinners, shall approve the sentence of the supreme Judge, and declare his great justice before the world, which with the wicked shall remain confounded and amazed. The tyrants who have afflicted and put to death the holy martyrs, what will they now say, when they shall see them in this glory? Those who trampled under foot the justice and right of the poor of Christ, what will they do when they shall behold their judges? How confounded shall be the kings of the earth, when they shall behold their vassals in glory! and lords, when they shall see their slaves amongst the angels, and themselves in equal rank with devils! The good he shall place upon his right hand, elevated in the air, that all the world may honour them as holy; and the wicked shall stand far at his left, remaining upon the earth to their own confusion, and scorn of all.

Immediately the books of all men's consciences shall be opened, and their sins published to the whole world; the most secret sins of their hearts, and those filthy acts which were committed in private, shall all, to their great shame and confusion, be then discovered; the virtuous actions of the just, how secretly soever performed, their holy thoughts, their pious desires, their pure intentions, their good works, which the world now disesteems as madness, shall then be manifested, and they for them be honoured by the whole world.

Nothing shall be of greater confusion unto sinners, than to behold those who have committed equal and greater sins than themselves to be there in glory; because they made use of the time of repentance, which they despised and neglected. This confusion shall be augmented by that inward charge, which God shall lay against them of his Divine benefits, unto which their angel-guardians shall assist, by giving testimony how often they have dissuaded them from their evil courses, and how rebellious and refractory they have still been to their holy inspirations. The saints shall accuse them, that they have laughed at their good counsels; and shall set forth the dangers whereunto they themselves have been subject by their ill example.

The just Judge shall then immediately pronounce sentence in favour of the good, in these words of love and mercy, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom which was prepared for you from the creation of the world." O what joy shall fill the saints! And what spite and envy shall burst the hearts of sinners! But more, when those miserable wretches shall hear the severe Judge say, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into eternal fire, prepared for Satan and his angels:" with this sentence they shall remain for ever overthrown, and covered with eternal sorrow and confusion. "Depart from me!" Alas, dread Sovereign, whither shall they go to avoid thy displeasure! Art thou not in heaven, in hell, and every where? Dost thou not fill heaven and earth? Dost not thou hold the universe in thy hands? And doth not thy power comprehend all things? To whom shall they betake themselves? Art not thou he who hast the words of eternal life, who art even thyself life everlasting? Whither wilt thou have these miserable creatures to retire themselves? Do what they can, they cannot go out of thee, since in thee all things have motion, being, and life. Begone, barren trees, twice dead, rooted out of the blessed earth, and are only fit to be cast into the fire; you are not worthy to take up place in the paradise of heaven, where no trees are planted but such as bear good fruit.

At that instant, the fire of that general burning shall invest those miserable creatures;[d] the earth shall open, and hell shall enlarge its throat to swallow them for all eternity, accomplishing that malediction, "Let death come upon them, and let them sink alive into hell;"[e] snares, fire, and sulphur shall rain upon sinners: but the just shall then rejoice, singing that song of the Lamb related by St. John, "Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord God Omnipotent! just and righteous are thy ways, King of all eternity! Who will not fear thee, O Lord, and magnify thy name?"[f] With thousand other anthems of joy and jubilee they shall ascend above the stars in a most glorious triumph, until they arrive in the imperial heaven, where they shall be placed in thrones of glory, which they shall enjoy for an eternity of eternities.

In the mean time, the earth, which was polluted for having sustained the bodies of the damned, shall be purified in that general burning; and then shall be renewed the earth, the heavens, the stars, and the sun, which shall shine seven times more than before: and the creatures, which have been here violated and oppressed by the abuse of man, shall then rejoice to see themselves freed from the

[c] Psal. cix. 1 Cor. xv. Phil. ii. [d] Psal. liv. [e] Psal. x. [f] Apoc. xv.

tyranny of sin and sinners; and, joyful of the triumph of Christ, shall put on mirth and gladness.

This is the end wherein all time is to determine; and this the catastrophe, so fearful unto the wicked, where all things temporal are to conclude: let us therefore take heed how we use them; and that we may use them well, let us be mindful of this last day, this day of justice and calamity, this day of terror and amazement; the memory whereof will serve much for the reformation of our lives: let us think of it, and fear it; for it is the most terrible of all things terrible, and the consideration most profitable and acceptable to cause in us a holy fear of God, and to convert us unto him. While I live, I will therefore ever preserve in my memory this day of terror, that I may hereafter enjoy security for the whole eternity of God. Above all things, I will keep before my eyes the last of all days; and all the moments of my life I will think, and for ever think, of eternity.

LIBER II.

CHAPTER I.

Of the Greatness of Things Eternal.

Although all temporal things are in themselves little and base, yet unto him, who shall consider the greatness and majesty of the Eternal, they will appear much less, and contemptible.

The greatness of the glory eternal consists not only in the eternity of its duration, but in its intension also, as being supreme, and without limits in its excellency; and therefore we ought not to think much of the sufferings of a thousand years' torments, or to remain in hell itself for some long time, so we might behold Christ in his glory, and enjoy the company of saints, and be partakers of so great a happiness, but for one day.

Such is the beauty of righteousness, such the joy of that eternal light, of that immutable truth and wisdom, that although we were not to continue in it above one day, yet for so short a time, a thousand years in this life, replenished with delights, and abundance of all goods temporal, were justly to be despised: "One day in thy courts is better than a thousand." And if those joys of heaven were short, and those of earth eternal, yet we ought to forsake these for those. What shall it be to possess them for an eternity, when the joy of each day shall be equivalent to many years? If the beauties of all creatures, heavens, earth, flowers, pearls, and all other things that could give any light, were all comprised in one thing; if every one of the stars yielded as much light as the sun, and the sun shone as bright as all they together: all this so united, would be, in respect of the beauty of God Almighty, as a dark night in respect of the clearest day. As Ahasuerus, who reigned from India to Ethiopia, over one hundred and seventy provinces, made a great feast for all his princes, which lasted one hundred and eighty-one days; so shall this King of heaven and earth make his great supper of glory, which shall last for all eternity, for the setting forth of his majesty, and for the honour and entertainment of his servants; where the joys shall be such, as neither the eye hath seen, nor the ear hath heard, nor hath entered into the heart of man to conceive: "Come, eat and drink, and be filled, my beloved," shall the King of heaven say; "this feast of mine shall never be ended, there shall come no sorrow after it." O life of lives, surpassing all life! O everlasting life! O life, blessed for evermore, where there is joy without sorrow! O the inanity and emptiness of temporal goods! what proportion do they hold with this greatness, since they are so poor, that even time, from whence they have their being, makes them tedious, and not to be endured? Who could continue a whole month without any diversion, in hearing the choicest music? Nay, who could pass a day free from weariness, without some thought of pleasures? But such is the greatness of those joys which God hath prepared for them who love and fear him, as we shall still desire them afresh, and they will not cloy us in a whole eternity.

Eternal glory is great, both in respect of its purity, being free from all ill; and in respect of its perfection, being highly and excellently good: it doth as far exceed all the grandeur of this world, as the heavens are distant from the earth; and how far that is, we shall form some conception of it, as much as our weakness is able to express.

The most famous mathematician, Christopher Clavius, says, that from the sphere of the moon, which is the lowest heaven, unto the earth, are one hundred and twenty thousand six hundred and thirty miles; from the heaven of the sun, four millions thirty thousand nine hundred and twenty-three miles; and from the firmament, or eighth heaven, one hundred sixty-one millions eight hundred fourscore and four thousand nine hundred and forty-three miles. Here Plato wills the mathematicians to cease their inquiries; for from hence there is no rule of measuring further; but, without all doubt, it is much further from thence to the imperial heaven; for the only thickness of the starry sphere is said to contain as much as the whole space betwixt that and the earth; insomuch as if a millstone were

thrown from the highest of the firmament, and should every hour fall two hundred miles, it would be ninety years before it arrived at the earth. The mathematicians also, and some learned interpreters of the holy Scripture, affirm, that the distance from the earth unto the highest of the firmament, is less than that from thence to the lowest of the imperial heaven; and therefore conclude, if one should live two thousand years, and every day should travel a hundred miles, he should not in all that time reach the lowest of the firmament; and if, after that, he should also travel other two thousand years, he should not reach the highest of it; and from thence four thousand years before he arrived at the lowest of the imperial heaven. O blessed Jesu, which makes us in a moment despatch so great a journey, and in one little instant brings the souls of the just thither; so short is the way which brings us to heaven, that in an instant the righteous shall mount above the sun and moon, tread the stars under their feet, and enter into the heaven of the blessed.

Proportionable unto this distance of place, is the advantage which the greatness of heaven hath above that of earth, and the same holds in their blessings: let us mount, then, with this consideration, thither, and from that height let us despise all the vanities of this world. All the kingdoms of the earth are but as a point, yea, but as a point of a point: he is higher than the world, who cares not for the world: but of heaven, Baruch could say, "How great is the house of God, how large is the place of his possession!"[a] It is great, and hath no end; high, and unmeasurable. If one, who had ever been bred in an obscure dungeon, were told, that above the earth there was a sun, which enlightened the whole world, and cast his beams far above a hundred thousand leagues in circumference, all the discourses which could be made unto such a one, would hardly make him conceive the brightness and beauty of the sun: much less can the glory of those things of the other world be made to appear unto us, though set forth with the greatest beauty the world affords.

O what fools then are they, who, for one point of earth, lose so many leagues of heaven! who, for one short pleasure, lose things so immense and durable! O the greatness of the omnipotency and goodness of God, who hath prepared such celestial mansions and glorious things for the humble and little ones who serve him! "My soul, O Lord my God, thirsteth after thee;[b] I will behold thy face in righteousness; for in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.[c] Whatsoever I can wish for is present with thee, whatsoever can be desired, is in thee in abundance; thou shalt make me drink of the river of thy pleasures; for with thee is the fountain of life, and in thy light I shall see light.[d] How happy shall I be, when I shall see thee in thyself, and thee in me, and myself in thee, living in everlasting felicity, and enjoying the beatifical vision of thee for evermore! I will therefore trust in thee, my Lord God, for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah there is everlasting happiness, and joys without end."[e]

[a] Bar. c. iii. [b] Psal. xvii. 15. [c] Psal. xvi. 11.

CHAPTER II.

The Greatness of the Eternal Honour of the Just.

THE greatness of those goods of the other life, are honours, riches, pleasures, and all the blessings both of body and soul: of each whereof we shall say some thing apart; and will begin with that of honour.

The nature of honour is to be a reward of virtue; and by how much greater the reward is, by so much the greater is the honour which is conferred: what honour shall it then be, when God shall give unto those who served him, not only to tread upon the stars, to inhabit the palaces of heaven, to be lords of the world, but transcending all that is created, and finding nothing amongst his riches sufficient to reward them, shall give them his own infinite essence, to enjoy, as a recompence of their holiness, not for a day, but to all eternity!

The highest honour which the Romans bestowed upon their greatest captains, was to grant them a day of triumph, and, in that, permission to wear a crown of grass or leaves, which withered the day following: but the triumph of the just shall be eternal; and their never-fading crown is God himself. O most happy diadem! O most precious garland of the saints, which is of as great worth and value as is God himself! Sapores, king of the Persians, was most ambitious of honour, and would therefore be called the brother of the sun and moon, and friend to the planets. This vain prince erected a most glorious throne, which he placed on high, and thereon sat in great majesty, having under his feet a globe of glass, whereon were artificially represented the motions of the sun, the moon, and stars; and to sit crowned above this fantastical heaven, he esteemed as a great honour. What shall be, then, the honour of the just, who shall truly and really sit above the sun, the moon, and firmament, crowned by the hand of God himself; and that with a crown of gold, graven with the seal of holiness and the glory of honour? And this honour arrives at that height, that Christ himself tells us, "He who shall overcome, I will give him to sit with me in my throne; even as I have overcome, and have sitten with the Father in his throne."[a] O happy labour of the victorious, and glorious combat of the just, against the vices and temptations of the world, whose victory deserves so inestimable a crown!

How great shall be that glory, when a just soul shall, in the presence of an infinite number of angels, sit in the same throne with Christ; and shall, by the just sentence of God, be praised for a conqueror over the world, and the invisible powers of hell! What can it desire more, than to be partaker of all those Divine goods, and even to accompany Christ in the same throne? O how cheerfully do they bear all afflictions for Christ, who, with a lively faith and certain hope, apprehend so sublime honours!

If the applause of men, and the good opinion which they have from others, be esteemed an honour,

[d] Psal. xxxvi. 8, 9. [e] Isa. xxvi. 4. [a] Apoc. iii.

what shall be the applause of heaven, and the good opinion not only of saints and angels, but of God himself, whose judgment cannot err? David took it for a great honour, that the daughter of his king was judged a reward of his valour: God surpasses this, and honours so much the service of his elect, that he pays their merits with no less a reward than himself.

Besides this, he, who is most known, and is praised and celebrated for good and virtuous by the greatest multitude, is esteemed the most glorious and honourable person: but all this world is a solitude in respect of the citizens of heaven, where innumerable angels approve and praise the virtuous actions of the just: and they likewise are nothing; and all creatures, men, and angels, but as a solitary wilderness, in respect of the Creator. What man so glorious upon earth, whose worth and valour hath been known to all? Those who were born before him could not know him: but the just in heaven shall be known by all, past and to come, and by all the angels, and by the King of men and angels. Human fame is founded upon the applause of mortal men, who, besides being less than angels, may be deceived, may speak untruth, and are, most part of them, sinners and wicked; how far must that honour exceed it, which is conferred upon the just by the holy angels, and by those blessed and pure souls, who cannot be deceived themselves, nor will deceive others! If we esteem it more to be honoured by the kings of the earth, by the great men of the world, than by some ignorant peasants of some poor village; how ought we then to value the honour which shall be bestowed upon us by the saints in heaven, who are the kings and grandees of the court of God, and are all replenished with most perfect and Divine wisdom? All the honour of men is ridiculous; and his ambition no wiser who seeks it, than if one worm should desire to be honoured by another: all the earth is but as a village, or rather some small cottage, in respect of heaven; let us not, therefore, strive for a name upon earth, but that our names may be written in heaven.

If Saul thought the honour too much which was given to David by the damsels, when they celebrated his victory in their songs, what shall it be to be celebrated by all the angels and saints in celestial responsories? When a servant of God enters into heaven, he shall be received with such divine music, all the blessed in heaven often repeating those words in the gospel, "Well done, good servant and true; because thou hast been faithful in a few things, thou shalt be placed over much; enter into thy Master's joy." Which words they shall repeat in quires: this shall be a song of victory and honour, above all the honours of the earth; being conferred by so great, so wise, so holy, and so authentic persons. Although the honour and applause, which the just receive in heaven, from the citizens of that holy city, be incomparable; yet that honour and respect, with which God himself shall treat them, is far above it; it is expressed in no meaner similitude than that of the honour done by the servant unto his Lord; and therefore it is said, that God himself shall, as it were, serve the blessed in heaven at their table. It is much amongst men to be seated at the table of a prince; but for a king to serve his vassal, as if he himself were his servant, who ever heard it?

David, when he caused Mephibosheth (although the grandchild of a king, and the son of an excellent prince, unto whom David owed his life) to sit at his table, he thought he did him a singular honour; but this favour never extended to wait on him. The honour which God bestows upon the just, exceeds all human imaginations; who, not satisfied with crowning all the blessed with his own Divinity, giving himself to be possessed and enjoyed by them for all eternity, does also honour their victories and heroic actions with new crowns.[b]

The just shall shine like the stars in the firmament; and if the least saint in heaven shall shine seven times more than the sun, what shall that light be, which shall outshine so many suns![c]

The honour of the just in heaven depends not, like that of the earth, upon accidents and reports, nor is exposed to dangers, or measured by the discourse of others; but in itself contains its own glory and dignity. The Romans erected statues unto those whom they intended to honour, because, being mortal, there should something remain after death, to make their persons and services, which they had done to the commonweal, known to posterity; but in heaven there is no need of this artifice, because those, which are there honoured, are immortal, and shall have in themselves some character engraved, as an evident and clear token of their noble victories and achievements: what greater honour than to be friends of God, sons, heirs, and kings in the realm of heaven?

St. John, in his Apocalypse, sets forth this honour of the blessed, in the twenty-four elders, who were placed about the throne of God;[d] and in that honour and majesty, as every one was seated in his presence, and that upon a throne, clothed in white garments, in sign of their perpetual joy, and crowned with a crown of gold, in respect of their dignities. To be covered in the presence of kings is the greatest honour they confer upon the chiefest grandees; but God causes his servants to be crowned and seated upon thrones before him; and our Saviour, in the day of judgment, makes his disciples his fellow-judges. Certainly, greater honour cannot be imagined, than that which the just receive in heaven; for if we look upon him, who honours, it is God; if with what, with no less joy than his own Divinity, and other most sublime gifts; if before whom, before the whole theatre of heaven; if the continuance, for all eternity: therefore, let us so dispose of our lives here, and live so righteously and holily, that we may be thought worthy of that crown of glory, which he hath prepared for all those who love and serve him.

[b] Apoc. xxi. [c] Apoc. i. 21. [d] Apoc. iv.

CHAPTER III.

Of the Riches of the Eternal Kingdom of Heaven.

THE riches in heaven are no less then the honours; though those are, as hath been said, inestimable. There can be no greater riches than to want nothing which is good, nor to need any thing which can be desired; and in that blessed life no good shall fail, nor no desire be unsatisfied; if, as the philosophers say, he is not rich who possesseth much, but he who desires nothing; there being in heaven no desire unaccomplished, there must needs be great riches. It was a position of the Stoics, that he was not poor who wanted, but he who was necessitated: since, then, in the celestial kingdom there is necessity of nothing, most rich is he who enters into it. By reason of these divine riches, Christ, our Saviour, when he speaks in his parables of the kingdom of heaven, doth sometimes call it, "the hidden treasure, the precious pearls;" for if divine happiness consists in the eternal possession of God, what riches may be compared with his who enjoys him? and what inheritance to that of the kingdom of heaven? and what possession more precious than the Divinity? and what more to be desired than the Creator of all things precious, who gives himself for a possession and riches unto the saints, to the end they should abhor those riches which are temporal, if by them the eternal are endangered?

Besides the possession of God, the just shall reign with Christ eternally in the kingdom of heaven; whose riches must needs be immense, since they are to be kings of so great and ample a kingdom: if the earth, compared with heaven, be but a point, and yet contains so many kingdoms; what shall that be which is but one kingdom, and yet extended over the whole heavens? Some famous mathematicians say of the imperial heaven, that it is so great, that if God should allow unto every one of the blessed a greater space than the whole earth, yet there would remain as much more to give unto others; and that the capaciousness of this heaven is so great, that it contains more than ten thousand and fourteen millions of miles. What wonder will it be to see a city so great, of so precious matter! Divines confess the capaciousness of this heaven to be immense, but are more willing to admire it, than bold to measure it.[a] It is all composed of matter far more beautiful and precious than gold, pearl, and diamonds: the heavens which we discover, with the sun and all the other stars, are but the pavement of the eternal firmament; the inhabitants thereof tread under their feet the front of the brightest stars: the sun and moon were made to give light to this low elementary world; the heavenly Lamb is the lamp which doth lighten the eternal Sion, the mansion of glory; what shall that place be, where the saints in the light of glory see the uncreated and inaccessible light of the Deity!

It is called a kingdom, for its immense greatness; and a city, for its great beauty and population: it is full of inhabitants of all nations and conditions; where are many thousands of angels, an infinite number of the just, even as many as have died since Abel; and thither also shall repair all who are to die unto the end of the world, and after judgment shall there remain for ever, invested in their glorious bodies: neither shall this populous city be inhabited with mean and base people, but with citizens so noble, rich, and just, that all of them shall be most holy and wise kings: how happy shall it be to live with such persons! The queen of Sheba, only to see Solomon, came from the end of the earth: to behold a king issue out of his palace, all the people flock together: what shall it then be, not only to see, but to live and reign with many angels, and converse with so many eminent and holy men! If there should now descend from heaven one of the prophets or apostles, with what earnestness and admiration would every one strive to see and hear him: in the other world we shall hear and see them all: how admirable will it be to see thousands of thousands in all their beauty and greatness; and so many glorious bodies of saints in all their lustre! If one sun be sufficient to clear up the whole world here below, what joy shall it be, to behold those innumerable suns in that region of light!

This kingdom of God is not like other kingdoms, which contain huge deserts, inaccessible mountains, and thick woods; nor is it divided into many cities and villages, distant one from another; but this kingdom, although a most spacious region, is all one beautiful city: who would not wonder if all England were but one city, and that as beautiful as Rome in the time of Augustus Cæsar, who found it of brick, and left it of marble! What a sight were that of Syria, if all a Jerusalem! What shall then be the celestial city of saints, whose greatness possesses the whole heavens, and is, as the holy Scriptures describe, (to exaggerate the riches of the saints,) all of gold and precious stones! The gates of this city were, as St. John says, one entire pearl, and the foundation of the walls jasper, sapphire, calcedon, emerald, topaz, jacinth, amethyst, and other most precious stones; the streets of fine gold, so pure as it seemed crystal, joining in one substance the firmness of gold and transparency of crystal, and the beauty both of one and the other. If all England were of sapphire, how would it amaze the world! How marvellous then will the holy city be, which, though extended over so many millions of leagues, is all of gold, pearl, and precious stones; or, to say better, of a matter of far more value, and peopled with such a multitude of beautiful citizens, who are as far above any imaginable number, as the capacity of the city is above any imaginable measure!

Of those incomparable riches, the blessed are not only to be lords, but kings; neither is this celestial measure, or this kingdom of heaven, less or poorer by having so many lords and kings: it is not like the kingdoms on earth, which permit but one king at once; and if divided, become of less power and majesty; but is of such condition, that it is wholly possessed by all in general, and by each one in par-

[a] Jo. Gaiter in Peregrino.

ticular; like the sun, which warms all and every one, and not one less because it warms many. The effects of riches are much greater and more noble in heaven, than they can be upon earth: wealth may serve us here to maintain our power, honours, and delights; but all the gold in the world cannot free us from weakness, infamy, or pain; it cannot make a calenture not to afflict us, or that the pains of the head or gout do not molest us, or that cares and fears shall not break our sleep: this only is to be had in heaven; where their power is so free from weakness, that one only angel, without army, guns, swords, or lance, could destroy at once one hundred and eighty thousand.[b]

Besides, it is to be considered, that the great riches of the saints are not like those of the kings of the earth, drawn from the tributes imposed upon their vassals, which, though just, yet are not free from this ill condition; that what enricheth the prince, impoverishes the subject: the riches in heaven have no such blemish, they are burdensome to none; and what is given unto the servants of Christ, who reign in heaven, is not taken from any.

If all the earth were of gold, and all the rivers of balsam, and all the rocks of precious stones, wouldst thou not say, that this is a great treasure? Know, that a treasure, which exceeds gold as far as gold doth dirt,—balsam, water,—or precious stones, pebbles,—remains as a reward for the just.

Wherefore we ought to lift up our souls, and alienate our affections from the frail felicity of these temporal goods of the earth, and say, with David, "Glorious things are said of thee, thou city of God; whatsoever pains and poverty we suffer here, we shall receive in glory so much the greater riches."

How poor and narrow a heart must that christian have, who confines his love to things present, sweating and toiling for a small part of the goods of this world, which itself is so little! Why doth he content himself with some patch of the earth, when he may be lord of the whole heavens? Let us not, therefore, who are to die to-morrow, afflict ourselves for that which may perish sooner than we: let us not toil to enjoy that which we are shortly to leave, but let us lay up our treasures in heaven, that kingdom of the blessed, where the riches, joys, and comforts are eternal, and can never be taken from us. I will, therefore, study to use this world with indifference, and shall not be puffed up when things succeed happily, nor dejected when they fall crossly, but shall bless God in all conditions; whether I abound or want, whether rich or poor, I will bless the Lord at all times; his praises shall be ever in my mouth: I shall never complain of the necessities of this life, since, though all things fail me, the means of my salvation will not fail me; for even that want may be a means to obtain it.

[b] Reg. iv. 19.

CHAPTER IV.

Of the Greatness of Eternal Pleasures.

Honour, profit, and pleasures, are distinct goods upon earth, and are rarely found together; honour is seldom a companion of profit, or profit of pleasure; and so the sick man drinks his purge, because it is profitable, how bitter soever: the pleasures of the world are, for the most part, mixed with some shame, and oftentimes with infamy; they are costly and expensive, we cannot entertain our pleasures without diminishing our wealth; it is not so in eternal goods, in which to be honest is to be profitable, and to be profitable delectable; eternal honours are accompanied with immense riches, and they are both attended by pleasures without end. All this is signified by the Lord, when he received the faithful servant into glory, when he said, "Well done, good servant and true; because thou hast been faithful in few things, I will place thee over many; enter into the joy of thy Lord:" first he honours him, commending him for a good and faithful servant; then enriches him, delivering many things into his hands; and so admits him into the joy and pleasure of his Lord; thereby signifying the greatness of this joy, not saying that this joy should enter into him, but that he should enter into joy, and into no other but that of his Lord: so great is the joy of that celestial Paradise, that it wholly fills and embraces the blessed souls, which enter into heaven, as into an immense sea of pleasure and delight. The joys of the earth enter into the hearts of those who possess them, but fill them not; because the capacity of man's heart is greater than they can satisfy; but the joys of heaven in the blessed enter into themselves, and fill and overflow them in all parts.

The multitude of joys in heaven is joined with their greatness; and so great they are, that the very least of them is sufficient to make us forget the greatest contents of the earth; and so many they are, as that though a thousand times shorter, yet they would exceed all temporal pleasures, though a thousand times longer; but joining the abundance of those eternal joys with their immense greatness, that eternal bliss becomes ineffable; so great are the joys of heaven, that all the arithmeticians of the earth cannot number them, the geometricians cannot measure them, nor the most learned in the world explicate them;[a] the just shall rejoice in what is above them, which is the vision of God; in what is below them, which is the beauty of heaven, and the blessed souls; in what is within them, which is the glorification of their bodies; in what is with them, which is the company of angels, and men made perfect: God shall feast all their senses with unspeakable delight, for he shall be their object; and shall be a mirror to the sight, music to the ear, sweetness to the taste, balsam to the smell, flowers to the touch; there shall be the clear light of summer, the pleasantness of the spring, the abundance of autumn, and the repose of winter.

[a] 1 Cor. ii. Isaiah lxiv.

The principal joy of the blessed is in the possession of God, whom they behold clearly as he is in himself; for as honourable, profitable, and delectable, are not divided in heaven, so the blessed souls have three gifts, essential and inseparable from that happy state, which correspond to those three kinds of blessings, which the learned call vision, comprehension, and fruition: the first consists in the clear and distinct sight of God, which is given to the just, by which he receives an incomparable honour, since his works and virtues are rewarded in the presence of the angels with no less a crown and recompence than is God himself: the second is the possession which the soul hath of God, as of his riches and inheritance; the third is the ineffable joy which accompanies this sight and possession; which is so great, that neither the blessed themselves, who have experience of it, nor the angels in heaven, are able to declare it. This joy hath two singular qualities, by which we may, in some sort, conceive the immensity of it; the first, that it is so powerful that it excludes all evil, pains, and grief: this only is so great a good, that many of the philosophers held it for the chief felicity of man: but herein was their error, that they judged that to be good, itself, which was but an effect or consequence of it: for so powerful is that love and joy which springs from the clear vision of God, that it is sufficient to convert hell into glory; insomuch as, if to the most tormented soul in hell were added all the torments of the rest of the damned, both men and devils, and that God should vouchsafe him but one glimpse of his knowledge, that only clear vision, though in the lowest degree, were sufficient to free him from all those evils, both of sin and pain; there is no joy in this world so intense, which can suspend the grief we suffer from a finger that is sawing off; griefs do more easily bereave us of the sense of pleasures, than pleasures do of pains; yet such is the greatness of that sovereign joy in heaven, that it alone is sufficient to drown all the grief and torments, both in earth and hell: and there is no pain in the world able to diminish the least part of it.

All those joys of the blessed, both in soul and body, which are innumerable, have their source and original from that unspeakable joy of the clear vision of God.

And how can the joy be less which proceeds from such a cause, who gives himself to be possessed by man; that joy being the very same which God enjoys, and which suffices to make God himself blessed, with a blessedness equal to himself. Therefore, not without great mystery, it is said, "Enter into the joy of thy Lord." It is not said, simply, into joy; but to determine the greatness of it, it was his own joy, that joy by which he himself becomes happy.

We are to consider, that there is nothing in this world, which hath not for its end some manner of perfection. And that those things which are capable of reason and knowledge, have, in that perfection, a particular joy and complacency; which joy is greater or lesser, according as that end is more or less perfect. Since, therefore, the Divine perfection is infinitely greater than that of all the creatures, the joy of God, which is in himself, (for he hath no end or perfection distinct from himself,) is infinitely greater than that of all things besides: this joy, out of his infinite goodness, he hath been pleased to make the holy angels and blessed souls partakers of, communicating unto the just his own felicity. Therefore, the joy of saints, which is that of the beatifical vision, wherein consists the joy and happiness of God, must needs be infinite and ineffable; and all the happiness and contents of this world, in respect of it, are bitter as aloes or wormwood. By how much a delectable object is more nearly and straitly united to the faculty, by so much greater is the joy and delight which it produces: therefore God, who is the most excellent and delightful object, being, in the beatifical vision, united to the soul with the most intimate union that can be in a pure creature, must necessarily cause a most inexplicable joy, incomparably greater than all the joys, real or imaginable, which can be produced by the creatures now existent or possible. For as the Divine perfection encloseth within itself all the perfections of things created, possible and imaginable; so the joy, which it causeth in the souls of the blessed, must be infinitely greater than all other joys, which either have or can be caused by the creature. If there were in the world a man as wise as an angel, we should all desire to see him, as the queen of Sheba did Solomon; but if to this wisdom were joined the strength of Samson, the victories of Maccabeus, the affability of David, the friendliness of Jonathan, the liberality of the emperor Titus, and to all this, the beauty and comeliness of Absalom; who would not love, and desire to live and converse with this admirable person? Why, then, do we not love the sight of God, in whom all those perfections and graces are infinitely united, and which we ourselves, if we serve him, are to enjoy, as if they were our own?

O how great and delightful a theatre shall it be to see God as he is, with all his infinite perfections, and the perfections of all creatures, which are eminently contained in the Deity! How admirable were that spectacle, where were represented all that are, or have been, pleasant or admirable in the world! If one were placed where he might behold the seven wonders of the world, the sumptuous banquets made by Ahasuerus, the rare shows exhibited by the Romans, the wealth of Crœsus, the Assyrian and Roman monarchs, and all these jointly together, who would not be transported with joy and wonder at so admirable a sight? But more happy were he, upon whom all these were bestowed, together with a thousand years of life, wherein to enjoy them: yet all these were nothing, in respect of the beatifical vision of God, in whom those, and all the perfections, that either are, or have been, or possibly can be, are contained: whatever else is great and delightful in the world, together with all the pleasure and perfections, that all the men of the world have obtained, or shall obtain to the world's end; all the wisdom of Solomon, all the sciences of Plato and Aristotle, or all the strength of Aristomenes and Milo, all the beauty of Paris and Adonis; if they

should give all these to one person, it would have no comparison, and would seem a loathsome thing, being compared only to the delight which will be enjoyed in seeing God for all eternity; because in him will be seen a theatre of bliss and greatness, wherein is comprised, as in one, the greatness of all creatures. In him will be found all the riches of gold, the delightfulness of the meadows, the brightness of the sun, the pleasantness of music, the beauty of the heavens, the comfortable smell of amber, the contentedness of all the senses, and all that can be either admired or enjoyed.

To this may be added, that this inestimable joy of the vision of God is to be multiplied into innumerable other joys; into as many as there are blessed spirits and souls, which shall enjoy the sight of God; in regard every one is to have a particular contentment of the bliss of every one; and because the blessed spirits and souls are innumerable, the joys likewise of every one will be innumerable. For, as every saint shall love another equally as himself, so he shall receive equal joy from his happiness to that of his own: and if he shall rejoice in the happiness of those equal unto himself, how much shall he rejoice in the happiness of God, whom he loves better than himself?

Let us, therefore, rejoice, who are christians, unto whom so great blessings are promised; let us rejoice that heaven was made for us, and let this hope banish all sadness from our hearts; let those grieve and be melancholy, who have no hope of heaven, and not we, unto whom Christ hath promised the blessedness of his glory. Let this hope comfort us, this joy refresh us; and let us now begin to enjoy that here, which we are ever hereafter to possess; for hope is an anticipation of joy: upon this we ought to place all our thoughts, turning our eyes from all the goods and delights of the earth. From hence I will shut up the windows of my senses; the things of the earth seeming unto me unworthy to be looked upon after the contemplation of the heavenly, in the hope whereof I will only rejoice.

THE PRAYER.

O Father of light, grant me the light of thy glory; that one day I may clearly see that, which I now believe by the light of faith. O eternal Word, bestow thyself upon me, that I may possess in heaven that which I see by hope upon earth. O Holy Ghost, make me partaker of thine infinite beauty; to the end I may one day enjoy that, which I now embrace by charity. Lord, I am wholly thine, be thou wholly mine: thou art my salvation and hope; grant, Lord, that I may praise thee everlastingly. I desire nothing in heaven or earth, but thyself; for thou art the God of my heart, and the only part which I pretend unto in the eternity of eternities.

CHAPTER V.

The Excellency and Happiness of the Souls and Bodies of the Just, in the Life Eternal.

When the Hebrews would express a blessed person, they did not call him "blessed," in the singular; but "blessings," in the abstract and plural; and so, in the first Psalm, in place of "beatus," the Hebrews say, "beatitudes;" and, certainly, with much reason; since the blessed enjoy as many blessings as they have powers or senses; blessings in their understanding, will, and memory; blessings in their sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. The understanding shall live there, with a clear and supreme wisdom: the will, with an inflamed love; the memory, with an eternal representation of the good which is past; the senses, with a continual delectation in their objects. Finally; all that is man, shall live in a perpetual joy, comfort, and blessedness.

And to begin with the life and joy of the understanding: the blessed, besides that supreme and clear knowledge of the Creator, shall know the Divine mysteries, the secrets of Providence, the frame and making of the world, the whole artifice of nature, the motions of the stars, the properties of the planets, and of all created entities; all which they shall not only know jointly and in mass, but clearly and distinctly, without confusion. This shall be the life of the understanding, which shall feast itself with so high and certain truths. The knowledge of the greatest wise men and philosophers of the world, even in things natural, is full of ignorance and deceit; because they know not the substance of things, but through the shell of accidents: so as the most simple peasant, arriving at the height of glory, shall be replenished with a knowledge, in respect of which the wisdom of Solomon and Aristotle were but ignorance and barbarism.

What content were it to behold all the wise men of the world, and the principal inventors and masters of sciences and faculties, met together in one room; Adam, Abraham, Moses, Solomon, Zoroaster, Plato, Socrates, Aristotle, Pythagoras, Homer, Trismegistus, Solon, Lycurgus, Hippocrates, Euclid, Archimedes, and all the doctors of the church! How venerable were this junto! How admirable this assembly! And what journeys would men make to behold them! If, then, to see such imperfect scraps of knowledge, divided amongst so many men, would cause so great admiration; what shall be the joy of the blessed, when each particular person shall see his own understanding furnished with that true and perfect wisdom, whereof all theirs is but a shadow? Who can express the joy they shall receive by the knowledge of so many truths? What contentment would it be to one, if at once they should show unto him whatever there is, and what is done in the whole earth; The fair buildings; the fruit-trees, of so great diversity; all living creatures, of so great variety; all the birds, the fishes, the metals so rich; all people and nations,

farthest remote? Certainly, it would be a sight of wonderful satisfaction. But what will it be to see all this; whatsoever there is in the earth, together with all that there is in heaven and above heaven? Some philosophers, in the discovery of a natural truth, or the invention of some rare curiosity, have been transported with a greater joy and content, than their senses were capable of. For this, Aristotle spent so many sleepless nights; for this, Pythagoras travelled into so many strange nations; for this, Crates deprived himself of all his wealth; and Archimedes never removed his thoughts, night nor day, from the inquisition of some mathematical demonstration. He spent many days in finding out, by his mathematical riches, how much gold would serve to gild a crown of silver; and having found it, he fetched divers skips, and cried out, "I have found it, I have found it!" If, then, the finding out of so mean a truth could so transport this great artist; what joy shall the saints receive, when God shall discover unto them those high secrets, and above all, that sublime mystery of the trinity of persons in the unity of essence? The blessed shall receive more knowledge in one instant, than the wise of the world have obtained, with all their watchings, travels, and experiences. Aristotle, for the great love he bore to knowledge, held, that the chief felicity of man consisted in contemplation. If he found so great joy in natural speculation, what shall we find in Divine, and the clear vision of God? As the understanding shall be applied to the prime truth, which is God himself; so shall the beatified will be inseparably joined to the essence of the Divine goodness. There shall the memory also live, representing unto us the Divine benefits, and rendering eternal thanks unto the Author of all. The soul, rejoicing in its own happiness, to have received so great mercies for so small merits; and, remembering the dangers from which it hath been freed by Divine favour, it shall sing that verse in the Psalm: "The snare is broken, and we are delivered." The remembrance of the acts of virtue and good works shall be a particular joy unto the blessed; both in respect they were a means of our happiness, as also of pleasing so gracious and good a Lord.

In heaven, we shall not only joy in the memory of those things wherein we have pleased God, in complying with his holy will, and in ordering and disposing our life in his service; but in the troubles, also, and dangers we have past. The memory of death is bitter to those who are to die; but unto the just, who have already passed it, and are secure in heaven, nothing can be more pleasant, who now, to their unspeakable joy, know themselves to be free from death, infirmity, and danger.

There, also, shall live the will, rejoicing to see all its desires accomplished, with the abundance and sweet society of so many felicities; being necessitated to love so admirable a beauty, as the soul enjoys and possesses in God Almighty. Love makes all things sweet; and, as it is a torment to be separated from what one loves, so it is a great joy and felicity to remain with the beloved: and, therefore, the blessed, loving God more than themselves, how unspeakable a comfort must it be to enjoy God, and the society of those whom they so much affect! The love of the mother makes her delight more in the sight of her own son, though foul and of worse conditions than that of his neighbours. The love, then, of the saints, one towards another, being greater than that of mothers to their children; and every one of them being so perfect and worthy to be beloved; and every one enjoying the sight of the same God; how comfortable must be their conversation! Seneca said, that the possession of what good soever, was not pleasing without a partner: the possession, then, of the chief good, must be much more delightful with the society of such excellent companions. If a man were to remain alone for many years in some beautiful palace, it would not please him so well as a desert with company; but the city of God is full of most noble citizens, who are all sharers of the same blessedness. This conversation, also, being with wise and holy personages, shall much increase their joy; for if one of the greatest troubles of human life be, to suffer the ill conditions, follies, and impertinences of rude and ill-bred people; and the greatest content, to converse with sweet, pious, and learned friends; what shall that Divine conversation be in heaven, where there is none ill-conditioned, none impious, none froward, but at peace, piety, love, and sweetness? Every one shall then rejoice as much in the felicity of another, as in his own ineffable joy; and shall possess as many joys as he shall find companions. There are all things which are necessary or delightful, all riches, ease, and comfort. Where God is, nothing is wanting; all there know God without error, behold him without end, praise him without weariness, love him without tediousness, and in this love repose themselves in God. Besides all this, the security which the will shall have, in the eternal possession of this felicity, is an unspeakable joy. The fear, that the good things which we enjoy are to end, or at least may end, mingles wormwood with our joys; and pleasures do not relish where there is danger: but this celestial happiness being eternal, neither shall nor can end, diminish, or be endangered; but, with this security, adds a new joy unto those others of the saints.

Besides the powers of the soul, the senses also shall live, nourished with the food of most proportionable and delightful objects; the eyes shall ever be recreated with the light of the most glorious and beautiful bodies of the saints: one sun suffices to cheer up the whole world; what joy, then, shall one of the blessed conceive, in beholding as many suns as there are saints, and in seeing himself one of them!

But, above all, with what content and admiration shall we behold the glorious body of Christ, our Redeemer; in comparison of whose splendour, that of all the saints shall be as darkness; from whose wounds shall issue forth rays of a particular brightness! Besides all this, the glory and greatness of the empyreal heaven, and the lustre of that celestial city, shall infinitely delight the blessed citizens: the ears shall be filled with most harmonious music, as

may be gathered from many places of the Scripture. If the harp of David delighted Saul so much, as it assuaged the fury of his passions, cast forth devils, and freed him of that melancholy, whereof the wicked spirit made use; and that the lyre of Orpheus wrought such wonders, both with men and beasts; what shall the harmony of heaven do? What delight then will it be, not only to hear the voice of one instrument played upon by an angel, but all the voices of thousands of angels, together with the admirable melody of musical instruments! What sweetness will it be, to hear so many heavenly musicians, those millions of angels, which will be sounding forth their hallelujahs unto the great God of heaven and earth! O how I desire to be freed from this body, that I might hear and enjoy it! Happy were I, and for ever happy, if, after death, I might hear the melody of those hymns and hallelujahs, which the citizens of that celestial habitation, and the squadrons of those blessed spirits, sing in praise of the eternal King. This is that sweet music which St. John heard in the Apocalypse, when the inhabitants of heaven sang, "Let all the world bless thee, O Lord! to thee be given all honour and dominion, for a world of worlds. Amen."

The smell shall be feasted with the odour, which issues from those beautiful bodies, more sweet than music or amber; and from the whole heaven, more fragrant than jessamines or roses.

The taste, also, in that blessed country, shall not want the delight of its proper object; for although the saints shall not there feed, which were to necessitate that happy state unto something besides itself; yet they shall have the delight of meat, without the trouble of eating, by reason of the great delicacy of this celestial taste. The glory of the saints is often signified in holy Scripture, under the names of a supper, banquet, manna. It cannot be expressed, how great shall be the delight and sweetness of taste, which eternally shall be found in heaven. If Esau sold his birth-right for a dish of lentil-pottage, well may we mortify our taste here upon earth, that we may enjoy that perfect and incomparable one in heaven.

The touch, also, shall there receive a most delightful entertainment; all they tread upon, shall seem unto the just to be flowers; and the whole dispositions of their bodies shall be ordered with a most exquisite temperature: for as the torments of the damned in hell are most expressed in that sense, so the bodies of the blessed in heaven shall, in that sense, receive a special joy and refreshment. And as the heat of that infernal fire, without light, is to penetrate even to the entrails of those miserable persons: so the brightness of the celestial light is to penetrate the bodies of the blessed, and fill them with an incomparable delight and sweetness; all and every part of the body, in general and particular, shall be sensible of a most admirable pleasure and content.

The humanity of Christ, our Redeemer, is to be the chief and principal joy of all the senses; and, therefore, as the intellectual knowledge of the divinity of Christ, is the joy and essential reward of the soul; so the sensitive knowledge of the humanity of Christ, is the chief and essential joy of the senses, and the utmost end and felicity whereunto they can aspire. This, it seems, was meant by our Saviour, in St. John; where, speaking unto the Father, he said, "This is life eternal," that is, essential blessedness, "that they know thee, the only true God," (in which is included the essential glory of the soul,) "and Him, whom thou hast sent," Jesus Christ; in which is included the essential blessedness of the senses.

It is also much to be observed, that the blessed souls shall be crowned with some particular joys, which the very angels are not capable of; for they only shall receive the crown of martyrdom, since no angel can have the glory to have shed his blood, and died for Christ; neither to have overcome the flesh, and by combats and wrestlings subjected it unto reason. Men shall have the glory of their bodies, and joy of their senses, which the angels cannot; for, as they want the one joy of the Spirit, which is the flesh, so they must want the glory of the victory. Neither shall they have this great joy of mankind, in being redeemed by Christ from sin, and from as many damnations into hell as they have committed sins; and to see themselves now freed and secure from that horrid evil, and so many enemies of the soul, which they had, which must needs produce a most unspeakable joy.

The souls of the blessed shall not only be glorious, but their very bodies shall be filled with glory, and invested with a light seven times brighter than that of the sun; for, although it be said in the gospel, "That the just shall shine as the sun;" yet Isaiah, the prophet, says, "That the sun, in those days, shall shine seven times more than it now doth." This light being the most beautiful and excellent of corporeal qualities, shall clothe the just, as with a garment of most exceeding lustre and glory. What emperor was ever clad in such a purple? What human majesty ever cast forth beams of such splendour?

Herod, upon the day of his greatest magnificence, could only clothe himself in a robe of silver, admirably wrought, which did not shine of itself, but by reflection of the sunbeams, which then, in his rising, cast his rays upon it; and yet this little glittering was sufficient to make the people to salute him as a god. What admiration shall it then cause, to behold the glorious body of a saint, not clothed in gold and purple, not adorned with diamonds or rubies, but more resplendent than the sun itself! Put all the brightest diamonds together, all the fairest rubies, all the most beautiful carbuncles; let an imperial robe be embroidered with them all; all this will be no more than as coals, in respect of a glorious body, which shall be all transparent, bright, and resplendent, far more than if it were set with diamonds. The garments which we wear here, how rich soever, are rather an affront and disgrace unto us, than an ornament; since they argue an imperfection, and a necessity of our bodies, which we are forced to supply with something of another nature. Besides, our clothes were given as a mark of Adam's fall in Paradise, and we wear them as a

penance enjoined for his sin. What fool is so sottish, as to bestow precious trimming upon a penitential garment?

But such are not the ornaments of the saints in heaven; their lustre is their own, not borrowed from their garments, but within themselves; each part of them being more transparent than crystal, and brighter than the sun. It is recounted in the Apocalypse, as a great wonder, "That a woman was seen clothed with the sun, and crowned with twelve stars." This, indeed, was far more glorious than any ornament upon earth; yet this is short of the ornament of the saints, whose lustre is proper to themselves, intrinsically their own, not taken and borrowed from something without them, as was that of the woman's. The state and majesty with which this gift of splendour shall adorn the saints, shall be incomparably greater than that of the mightiest kings. It were a great majesty in a prince, when he issues forth of his palace by night, to be attended by a thousand pages, each having a lighted torch; but were those torches stars, it were nothing to the state and glory of a saint in heaven, who carries with him a light equal to that of the sun seven times doubled; and what greater glory, than not to need the sun, which the whole world needs? Where the just is, there shall be no night; for wheresoever he goes, he carries the day along with him. St. Paul, beholding the gift of clarity in the humanity of Christ, remained for some days without sense or motion. St. John, only beholding it in the face of our Saviour, fell down as if dead; his mortal eyes being not able to endure the lustre of so great a majesty. St. Peter, because he saw something of it in the transfiguration of Christ, was so transported with the glory of the place, that he had a desire to have continued there for ever. What sight more glorious, than to behold so many saints, like so many suns, to shine with so incomparable lustre and beauty?

What light, then, will that of heaven be, proceeding from so many lights; or, to speak more properly, from so many suns? How great, then, shall the clarity of that holy city be, where many suns do inhabit! And if, by the sight of every one in particular, their joy shall be more augmented, by the sight of a number without number, what measure can that joy have which results from so beautiful a spectacle?

The bodies of the saints, endowed with this light, which they receive from the gift of clarity, are impassible, and cannot suffer from any thing. They have an agility to move from place to place with speed and subtilty, like light; to have their way free and pervious through all places, and can penetrate wheresoever they please.

By this gift of impassibility their bodies are freed from all miseries, which our bodies now suffer; the cold of winter, the heat of summer, infirmities, griefs, tears, and the necessity of eating, which one necessity includes many others: let us but consider what cares and troubles men undergo only to sustain their lives: the labourer spends his days in ploughing, sowing, and reaping; the shepherd suffers cold and heat in watching of his flock: what dangers are past in all estates, only to be sure to eat! from all which the gift of impassibility exempts the just. The care of clothing troubles us also little less than that of feeding, and that of preserving the health much more; for as our necessities are doubly increased by sickness, so are our cares; from all which he, who is impassible, is free; and not only from the griefs and pain of this life, but, if he should enter into hell, it would not burn one hair of him. The gift of agility is most great, which easily appears by the troubles and inconveniences of a long journey, which, howsoever we are accommodated, is not performed without much weariness, and oftentimes with danger, both of health and life: a king, though he pass in a coach or litter, after the most easy and commodious way of travelling, must pass over rocks, hills, and rivers, and spend much time; but with the gift of agility, the glorious bodies of the saints, in the twinkling of an eye, can traverse all the heavens, visit the earth, return unto the sun and firmament, and observe what is above the stars, in the empyreal heaven. To this noble gift of agility shall be annexed that of subtilty, by which their glorious bodies shall have their way free and pervious through all places; no impediment shall obstruct their motion; there shall be no enclosure or prison to them; they shall with greater ease pass through the middle of a rock, than an arrow through the air: Christ showed the subtilty of his glorious body, while he issued out of his tomb, not opening it; and entered into the hall where the apostles were, the gates being shut.

Finally, the servants of Christ shall be there so replenished with all goods, both of soul and body, that there shall be nothing more for them to desire. What wouldst thou then, my body? what is it thou desirest, my soul? in heaven you shall find all you desire: if you are pleased with beauty, there the just shine as the sun; if you are pleased with any delight, there is not only one, but a sea of pleasure, which God keeps in store for the blessed, wherewith it shall quench their thirst. I will then, from henceforth, raise my desires unto that place, where only they can be accomplished; I will not be ambitious after things of the earth, which cannot satisfy me, but I will look after those in heaven, which are only great, only eternal, and can only fill the capacity of my heart.

What an advantageous bargain would it be, if one could buy a kingdom for a straw? Yet so it is; for that which is no more than a straw, we may purchase the kingdom of heaven: certainly all the felicity, riches, and earthly delights are no more than a straw, compared with the glory of heaven. How foolish would he be, who, having a basket-full of chips, would not give one of them for an hundredweight of gold! This is the vanity of man, who, for earthly goods, will not receive those of heaven.

If men undergo and suffer such hazards for a kingdom, which is momentary, and that not for themselves, but for another; what ought we to do for those eternal riches, which are to be our own, and for the kingdom of heaven, wherein we expect

such immense honours, riches, and pleasures? Let us take courage; it is the kingdom of heaven we hope for; joys, riches, and honours eternal, are those which are promised us: what pity is it, that for some short pleasure, we should lose joys so great and eternal! because we will not bear some slight injury here, should be deprived of celestial honour there! for not restoring what we have unjustly taken, should forfeit the divine riches of heaven! That which the world offers in her best pleasures, is but shells, offals, and parings; but that whereunto God invites, is a full table; for which reason it is called, in Scripture, the great supper, not a dinner; because, after dinner, we use to rise and go about other occasions and employments; but after supper there are no more labours, all is rest and repose: the principal dish, which is served in at this great supper, is the clear vision of God, and all his divine perfections; after that, a thousand joys of the soul, in all its powers and faculties; then a thousand pleasures of the senses, with all the endowments of a glorified body: those latter are, as it were, the dessert of this Divine banquet; and if the dessert be such, what shall be the substance of the feast?

THE PRAYER.

My Lord, my God, when shall I see the day, the happy day, in which I shall come and appear in thy heavenly mansion, to eat and drink with thee in thy kingdom, and to sit at thy table; there to behold the majesty of thy glory, which is the only object of my eternal bliss! O thou resplendent Star of the East, let thy eternal light shine in the horizon of my soul, then all these thick vapours of terrene affections will be dispersed. Lord, I have placed all my hopes in eternity; I find no more rest here, in these short moments, than the dove of the deluge did upon the waters. O God, thou art my eternal felicity; to thee be glory, honour, and thanksgiving, for ever, for evermore. Amen.

CHAPTER VI.

Considerations of Eternal Evils, and of the miserable State of the Damned.

The evils of hell are truly evils, and so purely such, that they have no mixture of good; in that place of unhappiness, all is eternal sorrow and complaint; there is no room for comfort, there shall not be the least good which may give ease; nor shall there want a concourse of all evils which may add affliction: no good is to be found there, where all goods are wanting: neither can there be want of any evil, where all evils whatsoever are to be found; and by the want of all good, and the collection of all evils, every evil is augmented. In the creation of the world, God gave a praise to every nature, saying, "It was good:" but when all were created and joined together, he said, "they were very good;" because the conjunction of many goods, advances the good of each particular; and in the same manner, the conjunction of many evils makes them all worse: what shall heaven then be, where there is a concourse of all goods, and no evils? and what hell, where there are all evils, and no good? Certainly the one must be exceeding good, and the other exceeding evil. In hell there is the pain of loss, and that so rigorous, that, in depriving the damned soul of one only thing, they take from him all good things; for they deprive him of God, in whom they are all comprised: he who is condemned, by human laws, to the loss of his goods, may, if he live, gain others, at least in another kingdom, if he fly thither; but he who is deprived of God, where shall he find another God? and who can fly from hell? God is the greatest good, and it is, therefore, the greatest evil to be deprived of him, because evil is the privation of good; and that is to be esteemed the greatest evil, which is a privation of the greatest good, which is God; and must certainly, therefore, cause more grief and resentment in the damned, than all the punishments and torments of hell besides: and in regard there is in hell an eternal privation of God, who is the chief good; the pains of loss, whereby one is deprived for ever of the greatest of all goods, this privation will cause the greatest pain and torment. If the burning of a hand cause an insufferable pain, if a bone displaced or out of joint causeth intolerable grief; how shall he be tormented, and what pains shall he suffer, who is eternally separated from God, who is the chief end for which man was created? I dare confidently say, the loss of heaven, and the omission of glory, is far more bitter than all those pains which are to be suffered in hell: and this is such a loss that the sinner shall be deprived even of the hope of what is good, and shall be left for ever in that profound poverty and necessity, without expectation of remedy or relief; and what greater want can any one have, than to want all things, and even hope of obtaining any thing? We are amazed at the poverty of holy Job, who, from a prince and a rich man, came to lie upon a dunghill, having nothing left but a piece of a broken pot to scrape away the putrefaction from his sores; but even this shall fail the damned, who would take it for a great regale, to have a dunghill for their bed, instead of the burning coals of that eternal fire. The rich glutton in the gospel, accustomed to drink in cups of crystal, to eat in silver, and to be clothed in silks and curious linen, can tell us how far this infernal poverty extends, when he demanded, not wines of Cadiz, but a little cold water, and that not in cups of gold or crystal, but upon the finger's end of a leper: this rich glutton came to such an extremity, that he would esteem it a great felicity that they would give him one drop of water, although it was from the filthy and loathsome finger of a leper; and yet this was also wanting to him. Let the rich of the world see to what poverty they are like to come; if they trust in their riches, let them know

they shall be condemned to the loss of all which is good; let them reflect upon him who was accustomed to be clothed in precious garments, to tread upon carpets, to sleep upon down, to dwell in spacious palaces, now naked, thrown upon burning coals, and packed up in some narrow corner of that infernal dungeon.

And this poverty, or want of all good, of the damned, is accompanied with a most opprobrious infamy and dishonour, when, by public sentence, they shall be deprived, for their enormous offences, of eternal glory, and reprehended in the presence of saints and angels by the Lord of heaven and earth. A most intolerable thing is hell, and most horrible are the torments; yet if one should place a thousand hells before me, nothing could be so horrible unto me, as to be excluded from the honour of glory, to be hated of Christ, and to hear from him these words, "I know you not."

This infamy we may, in some sort, declare, under the example of a mighty king, who having no heir to succeed him in his kingdom, took up a beautiful boy at the church-door, and nourished him as his son, and, in his testament, commanded, that if at ripe years his conditions were virtuous and suitable to his calling, he should be received as lawful king, and seated in his royal throne; but if he proved vicious and unfit for government, they should punish him with infamy, and send him to the galleys: the kingdom obeyed this command, provided him excellent tutors; but he became so untoward and ill inclined, that he would learn nothing, flung away his books, spent his time amongst other boys, in making houses of dirt, and other fooleries; for which his governors chastised him, and advised him of what was fitting, and most imported him; but all did no good, only when they reprehended him, he would weep; not because he repented, but because they hindered his sport; and the next day did the same. The more he grew in age, the worse he became; and although they informed him of the king's testament, and what behoved him, all was to no purpose; until at last, all, being weary of his ill conditions, declared him unworthy to reign, despoiled him of his royal ornaments, and condemned him, with infamy, unto the galleys. What greater ignominy can there be than this, to lose a kingdom, and to be made a galley-slave?

More ignominious, and a more lamentable tragedy, is that of a christian condemned to hell; who was taken by God from the gates of death, adopted his son, with condition, that if he kept his commandments he should reign in heaven, and if not, he should be condemned to hell: but he, forgetting those obligations, without respect of his tutors or masters, who exhorted him, both by their doctrine and example, what was fitting for a child of God; yet he, neither moved by their advice, nor the chastisements of heaven, by which God overthrew his vain intentions, and thwarted his unlawful pleasures, only lamented his temporal losses, and not his offences; and, at the time of his death, was sentenced to be deprived of the kingdom of heaven, and precipitated into hell: what infamy can be greater than this of the damned soul?

If it be a great infamy to suffer death by human justice, for some crimes committed, how great an infamy will it be to be condemned by Divine justice, for a traitor and perfidious rebel to God! Besides this bitterness of pains, the damned persons shall be eternally branded with the infamy of their offences! so that they shall be scorned and scoffed at by the devils themselves; men and angels shall detest them, as infamous and wicked traitors to their King, God, and Redeemer; and as fugitive slaves are marked and cauterized with burning irons, so this infamy, by some mark of ugliness and deformity, shall be stamped upon their faces and bodies.[a] So ignominious shall be the body of a sinner, that when his soul returns to enter it, it shall be amazed to behold it so terrible, and shall wish it were rather in the same state as when it was half eaten up with worms.

And that which adds misery to their calamity, they shall be banished from heaven, and made prisoners in the profound bowels of the earth, a place most remote from heaven, and the most calamitous of all others; where they shall neither see the sun by day, nor the stars by night; where all shall be horror and darkness,[b] a land covered with the obscurity of death, a land of sulphur and burning pitch,[c] a land of pestilence and corruption: into this land of punishment and torments shall be banished the enemies of God.

What a grief will it be to see themselves deprived of the palaces of heaven, the society of saints, and that happy country of the living, where all is peace, charity, and joy; where all shines, all pleases, and all parts resound with hallelujahs! If the damned had no other punishment, than to see themselves banished amongst devils, into a place not far distant from heaven, sad as night without the sight or comfort of sun or moon for all eternity, it were a torment unsufferable.

It was a great tyranny in Alexander, after he had cut off the nose, ears, and lips of Callisthenes, to cast so worthy a person into a dungeon, only accompanied with a dog;[d] a spectacle indeed lamentable, to see so discreet a man used like a brute, and not have the company of one who might comfort him: but the damned would take it for a favour to have the company of dogs or lions, rather than that of their own parents.

The tyrants of Japonia invented a strange torment for those who confessed Christ; they hung them with their heads downwards, half their bodies into a hole digged in the earth, which they filled with snakes, lizards, and other poisonous vermin; but even those were better companions, than those infernal dragons of the pit of hell, whereunto not half, but the whole body of the miserable sinner shall be plunged. The Romans, when they punished any as a parricide, to express the heinousness of the fact, shut him up in a sack with a serpent, an ape, and a cock: what a horror shall it be in hell, when

[a] Isaiah xiii. [b] Job x. [c] Isa. xxxiv. [d] Seneç. Suidas.

a damned person shall be shut up with so many millions of devils! Here none will live near a pesthouse, or ill neighbour: think upon what neighbours there are in hell. Cato counselled those who were to take a farm, to have a special care what neighbours it had. Themistocles, being to sell a certain manor, caused the crier to proclaim, that he had good neighbours. How comes one then to purchase hell at so dear a rate as the price of his soul, having such cursed neighbours, where all will abhor him? Their disquietness and ranting will be insufferable; and the very sight and ugliness of them will affright and astonish him.

How grievous is the banishment into that place, where none wishes well unto another! where the fathers hate their sons, and the sons abhor their fathers; where the son shall say unto the father, "Cursed be thou, father, for all eternity; because, by an unjust inheritance, thou hast been the cause of my damnation:" and the father shall answer him, "Cursed be thou, son; for, to the end I might leave thee a rich inheritance, I stuck not to gain it by unjust means."

In other banishments, when parents or friends meet in a country far from home, they endeavour to comfort one another, and even enemies are then reconciled; but in this banishment of hell, friends abhor friends, and parents hate and are hated by their children.

To this may be added, that, in this banishment of the damned, the exiles are not allowed the liberty of other banished persons, who, within the isle or region of relegation, may go or move whither they please; but not so the damned in hell, because the place of their exile is also a prison, a horrid and stinking prison, wherein many millions of souls shall for ever lie fettered in chains; for chains, or something answerable unto them, shall not there be wanting. Whereupon it is observed by the learned, that the wicked spirits shall be fastened to fire, or certain fiery bodies, from which the pains which they shall receive shall be incredible: being thereby deprived of their natural liberty, as it were fettered with manacles and bolts, so as they are not able to remove from that place of misery.[e] It were a great torment to have burning irons cast upon our hands and feet; but this, and much more, shall be in hell, where those fiery bodies, which are to serve instead of shackles and fetters, are to be of terrible forms, proportionable unto their offences, and shall, with their very sight, affright them.

Besides, the bodies of the damned, after the final judgment past, shall be so straitened and crowded together in that infernal dungeon, that the holy Scripture compares them to grapes in the wine-press, which press one another till they burst. Most barbarous was that torment inflicted upon some unfortunate persons: they put certain rings of iron, stuck full of sharp points of needles, about their arms and feet, in such manner, as they could not move without pricking and wounding themselves; then they compassed them about with fire, to the end that standing still they might be burnt alive; and if they stirred the sharp points pierced their flesh with more intolerable pains than the fire. What shall then be the torment of the damned, where they shall burn eternally without dying, and without possibility of removing from the place designed them; where whatsoever they touch, shall be fire and sulphur, into which their bodies at the latter day shall be plunged? Neither shall unsavoury smells, so proper unto prisons, be wanting in that infernal dungeon: for, first, that fire of sulphur, being pent in without vent or respiration, shall send forth a poisonous scent; and if a match of brimstone be offensive here, what shall such a mass of that stuff be in hell? Secondly, the bodies of the damned shall cast forth a most horrible stink of themselves, and that more or less, according to the quality of their sins.

Actiolinus the tyrant (as Paulus Jovius writes) had many prisons, full of torments, miseries, and ill smells; insomuch as men took it for a happiness rather to die than to be imprisoned, because being loaded with irons, afflicted with hunger, and poisoned with the pestilential smell of those who died in prison, and were not suffered to be removed, they came to the end in a slow, but most cruel death. But what were those prisons to that of hell, in respect of which they may be esteemed as paradise, full of jessamine and lilies?

Whatsoever misery was suffered in Actiolinus's prison, was in this regard tolerable, because it was of no long continuance, being to last no longer than a short life, and quite vanishing away at the hour of death: but this prison of the damned is void of all comfort; the torments thereof are intolerable, because they are eternal. Death cannot enter in there, neither can those that are entered get out again; but they shall be tormented for evermore, for evermore! What a fearful thing is this! They shall be tormented for evermore!

If one were cast into some deep dungeon, without clothes, exposed to the inclemency of the cold and moisture of the place, where he should not see the light of heaven; should have nothing to feed on, but once a day some little piece of hard barley-bread; and that he were to continue there six years without speaking or seeing of any body; and not to sleep on other bed but the cold ground; what a misery were this! One week of that habitation would appear longer than a hundred years. Yet compare this with what shall be in the banishment and prison of hell, and you shall find the miserable life of that man to be a happiness; there, in all his troubles, he should not meet with any to scoff at his misfortune, none to torment, and whip him; but in hell he shall find both; the devils shall not cease to deride, whip, and cruelly torment him: there should be no horrid sights, no fearful noises of howlings, groanings, and lamentations; in hell the eyes and ears of the damned shall never be free from such affrights: there should be no flames of fire to scorch him; in hell they shall burn into his bowels: there he might move and walk; in hell, not stir a foot: there he may breathe the air with-

[e] August. de Civitat. Dei, lib. i. c. 10. Less. de Perfect. Divin. lib. xviii. c. 30.

out stink; in hell he shall suck in nothing but flames, stink, and sulphur: there he might hope for coming forth; in hell there is no redemption: there that little piece of hard bread would seem every day a dainty; but in hell, in millions of years, his eyes shall not behold a crumb of bread, nor a drop of water, but shall eternally rage with hunger and a burning thirst: this is to be the calamity of that land of darkness.

THE PRAYER.

O Divine Eternity, O Eternal Divinity, who hast in thy hands the extremities of the earth, and who keepest the keys of eternal life and death; I am in thy hands, as clay in the hands of the potter; dispose of me as thou pleasest; I love thee entirely; I cannot love thee more, if I had the whole universe to boot; for all that which is out of thee, my God, and is not God, is as nothing to me. I love not Paradise itself, but because thou, my God, art there beloved; I know not how to love the Paradise of God, but only the God of Paradise: and I put no less rate upon the Calvary, where my Saviour was crucified, than the heaven where he is glorified. O my God, thou art he whom I seek for, to thee only it is that I aspire; yet henceforth I will not so much love the eternity of God, as the God of eternity, though it be the same eternity, and that same eternity be God himself: to whom be glory, and honour, for ever and ever. Amen.

CHAPTER VII.

Of the Slavery and Pains Eternal.

THE slavery of the damned in hell is such, that all their senses, and powers of the soul and body, are subject unto eternal pains and torments; with their touch, they are to serve that burning and never-consuming fire; with their taste, hunger and thirst; with their smell, stink; with their sight, those horrid and monstrous shapes which the devils shall assume; with their hearing, scorns and affronts; with their imagination, horror; with their will, loathsomeness and detestation; with their memory, despair; with their understanding, confusion; with such a multitude of other punishments, as they shall want eyes to weep for them.

Ælian writes of Trizus the tyrant, that he commanded his subjects not to speak together; and when they used signs instead of words, he also forbade those; whereupon the afflicted people met in the market-place at least to weep for their misfortunes, but neither was that permitted: greater shall be the rigour in hell, where they shall neither be suffered to speak a word of comfort, nor move hand or foot, nor ease their hearts with weeping. Jeremias the prophet lamented with floods of tears, that Jerusalem, which was the queen of nations, should be made a slave and tributary; what tears are sufficient to lament the damnation of a poor soul, who, from an heir and prince of the kingdom of heaven, hath made himself a slave to the devil, and those eternal punishments in hell, unto which he is to pay as many tributes as he hath senses, powers, and members.

As the slaves of the earth are whipped and punished by their masters, so the slaves of hell are tormented by the devils, who have power and dominion over them: children, as slaves, are whipped and chastised by their masters; so the tormentors, making the damned as their slaves, lay upon them a thousand afflictions, griefs, and miseries: every member of their body shall suffer greater pain and torment, than if it were torn from the body. If one cannot tell how to suffer a toothach, headach, or the pain of the colic, what will it be when there shall not be any joint, or the least part of the body, which shall not cause him an intolerable pain? Not only the head, or teeth, but also the breasts, sides, shoulders, the back, the heart, and all the parts of the body, even to the very bones and marrow. Who can express the number and greatness of their torments, since all their powers and senses, soul and body, are to suffer in a most violent manner? Besides this, every sense from his particular object shall receive a particular punishment.

The eyes shall not only be grieved with a scorching heat, but shall be tormented with monstrous and horrible figures: many are affrighted very much, passing through a church-yard, only for fear of seeing a fantasm; in what a fright will be a miserable damned soul, which shall see so many, and of so horrid shapes! Their sight also shall be tormented with beholding the punishment of their friends and kindred. Hegesippus writes, that Alexander, the son of Hyrcanus, resolving to punish certain persons with exemplary rigour, caused eight hundred to be crucified; and whilst they were yet alive, caused their wives and children to be murdered before their eyes; that so they might die not once, but many deaths. This rigour shall not be wanting in hell, where fathers shall see their sons, and brothers their brothers, tormented. The torment of the eyes shall be also very great, in regard that those which have given others scandal, and made others fall into sin, shall see themselves, and those others, in that abyss of torments. To the sight of those dreadful apparitions shall be added the horror and fearful darkness of the place. The darkness of Egypt was said to be horrible, because there the Egyptians beheld fearful figures, and fantasms, which terrified them. In the like manner, in that infernal darkness, the eyes shall be tormented with the monstrous figures of the wicked spirits, which shall appear much more dreadful, by reason of the obscurity and sadness of that eternal night.

The hearing shall not only be afflicted by an intolerable pain, caused by that ever-burning and penetrating fire, but also with the fearful and amazing noises of thunders, howlings, clamours, groans,

curses, and blasphemies. Sylla, being dictator, caused six thousand persons to be enclosed in the circus; and then appointing the senate to meet in a temple close by, where he intended to speak unto them about his own affairs, to strike the greater terror into them, and make them know he was their master, he gave order, that, so soon as he began his oration, the soldiers should kill this multitude of people, which was effected: upon which were heard such lamentations, outcries, groans, clashing of armour, and blows of those merciless homicides, that the senators could not hear a word, but stood amazed with terror of so horrid a fact. What shall be the harmony of hell, where the ears shall be deafened with the cries and complaints of the damned! What confusion and horror shall it breed, to hear all lament, all complain, all curse and blaspheme, through the bitterness of the torments which they suffer!

But the damned shall principally be affrighted, and shall quake, to hear the thunder-clap of the wrath of God, which shall continually resound in their ears! "Whereas the just," saith the royal prophet, "shall be in the eternal memory of God, and shall not fear the dreadful crack of his wrath."

The smell shall also be tormented with a most pestilential stink. Horrible was that torment used by Mezentius, to tie a living body to a dead, and there to leave them, until the infection and putrified exhalations of the dead had killed the living. What can be more abominable, than for a living man to have his mouth laid close to that of a dead one, full of grubs and worms, where the living must receive all those pestilential vapours, breathed forth from a corrupt carcass, and suffer such loathsomeness and abominable stink? But what is this in respect of hell, when each body of the damned is more loathsome and unsavoury than a million of dead dogs, and all those pressed and crowded together in so strait a compass? Bonaventure goes so far as to say, that if one only of the damned were brought into this world, it were sufficient to infect the whole earth. Neither shall the devils send forth a better smell; for although they are spirits, yet those fiery bodies, unto which they are fastened and confined, shall be of a more pestilential savour.

Hell is the world's sink, and the receptacle of all the filth in this great frame, and withal a deep dungeon, where the air hath no access. How great must the stink and infection needs be of so many corruptions heaped one upon another! and how insufferable the smell of that infernal brimstone, mixed with so many corrupted matters! O gulf of horror! O infernal grave! without vent or breathing place! Eternal grave of such as die continually and cannot die, with what abominable filth art thou not filled!

What shall I then say of the tongue, which is the instrument of so many ways of sinning, flattery, lying, murmuring, and calumniating, gluttony, and drunkenness. Who can express that bitterness, which the damned shall suffer, greater than that of aloes or wormwood? The Scripture tells us, the gall of dragons shall be their wine; and they shall taste the poison of asps for all eternity, unto which shall be joined an intolerable thirst, and dog-like hunger: conformable to which David said, "they shall suffer hunger as dogs." Famine is the most pressing of all necessities, and most deformed of all evils; plagues and wars are happinesses in respect of it. If, then, a famine of eight days be the worst of temporal evils, what shall that famine be which is eternal? Let our epicures hear what the Son of God prophesies: "Woe unto you who are full;"[a] for you shall be an hungred, and with such an hunger as shall be eternal. Hunger in this life doth bring men to such extremity, that not only they come to desire to eat dogs, cats, rats, and mice, but also mothers come to eat their own children, and men the flesh of their own arms, as it fell out to Zeno the emperor. If hunger be so terrible a mischief in this life, how will it afflict the damned in the other! Without all doubt, the damned would rather tear themselves in pieces than suffer it; all the most horrible famines that Scripture histories propose unto us, are but weak pictures to that which the damned suffer in this unfortunate residence of eternal miseries; neither shall thirst torment them less.

The sense of touching, as it is the most extended sense of all the rest, so it shall be the most tormented in that burning fire; all the torments which the Scripture doth exhibit to us, as prepared for the reprobate, seem to fall upon this only sense: "They shall pass," saith Job, "from extremity of cold to intolerable heats," whole floods of fire and brimstone, which shower down upon those unfortunate wretches; all this belongs unto the sense of touching. We are amazed to think of the inhumanity of Phalaris, who roasted men alive in his brazen bull: this was a joy in respect of that fire of hell, which penetrates the very entrails of the body without consuming them. The burning of a finger only does cause so great a torment, that it is insufferable; but far greater were it to burn the whole arm; and far greater were it, besides the arms, to burn the legs; and far more violent torment would it be to burn the whole body. This torment is so great that it cannot be expressed, since it comprises as many torments as the body of man hath joints, sinews, arteries, &c.; and especially being caused by that penetrating and real fire, of which this temporal fire is but a painted fire in respect of that in hell.

Amongst all the torments which human justice hath invented for the punishment of crimes, there is none held more rigorous than that of fire, by reason of the great activity of that element. What shall the heat of that fire be, which shall be the executioner of the justice of the God of vengeance! whose zeal shall be inflamed against the wicked, and shall kindle the fire, which shall eternally burn in the extremities of hell! Such are the torments and miseries of hell, that if all the trees in the world were put in one heap, and set on fire, I would rather burn there till the day of judgment, than suffer, only for the space of one hour, that fire of hell. What a miserable unhappiness will it be, to burn in those

[a] Luke vi.

flames of hell, not only for an hour, but till the day of judgment! yea, even for all eternity, and world without end! Who would not esteem it a hideous torment, if he were to be burnt alive a hundred times, and his torment was to last every time for the space of an hour? with what compassionate eyes would all the world look upon such a miserable wretch! Nevertheless, without all doubt, any of the damned in hell would receive this as a great happiness to end his torments with those hundred times burning: for what comparison is there betwixt a hundred hours burning, with some space of time betwixt every hour, and to burn a hundred years of continual torment? And what comparison will there be betwixt burning for a hundred years' space, and to be burning without interruption, as long as God is God?

Who can express the strange and horrible confusion which shall inhabit the appetite of these wretched creatures? If all the disorders of man's life spring from his passions, what disorder must those miserable souls needs feel in that part, what convulsions, what rage, what fury! Alas! that noble passion, love, the queen of all the rest, the sun of life, that passion which might have made them happy for ever, if they had turned it towards God; that amiable object being razed out of them, the perpetual aversion they have to love shall eternally afflict them, the passion of hatred shall be outrageous in the damned, whence shall proceed their continual blasphemies against God, and the perpetual curses and imprecations which they shall make against the creatures; and if they have any desires, they shall be desirous to see all the world partaker of their pains; their aversion from all good shall be as much tormenting, as in itself it is execrable: of joy there must no mention be made in that place of dolour; but contrariwise of incredible sadness, which shall oppress them without any consolation. The heat of anger shall redouble the heat of their flames: hope banished from their hearts shall leave the place void to despair, which shall be one of their fiercest tormentors. And though their bodies be within hell's bosom, yet shall they bear about them another hell in their own bosoms.

Consider now, my soul, whether thou art able to live in this devouring fire, whether thou wilt make choice of thy habitation in eternal flames. This fire is prepared for the devil and his angels; consider whether thou wilt enter into this cursed crew, and take part of the dregs of their chalice. There is no medium; either thou must forsake thy sins, or else thou must be given up a prey to this eternal torment. I doubt not, thou wilt make a happy choice; and, to escape so dangerous a gulf, cast thyself into the arms of Divine mercy, which only admits the penitent, and say thus: "O great God, who art a consuming fire, and makest the fire of thy Divine justice issue from amongst the thorns, to burn the tallest cedars in Lebanon; let the fire, which walks before thee as executioner of thy justice, never depart from our memory; may it be unto us a pillar of light in the darkness of our errors, a lamp unto our feet, and a lantern to our ways, whereby we may discover this infernal gulf, which is ready to swallow us up. Thou, O Lord, who didst deliver the three children out of the Babylonian furnace, preserve us from those eternal flames, and exempt us from the burning ones of thy wrath; place us in the light and bright one of thy love, where, like Pyratides and sacred Salamanders, we shall live happy, without pain or torment, singing honour, praise, and benediction unto thee, our God, for ever and ever. Amen."

CHAPTER VIII.

The Pains of the Powers of a damned Soul.

The imagination shall afflict those miserable offenders, increasing the pains of the senses by the liveliness of its apprehension: if, in this life, the imagination is sometimes so vehement, that it hurts more than real evils; in the other, the torment which it causes will be excessive. Baptista Fulgosus recounts, as an eye-witness, that being a judge in a duel, one of the competitors made the other fly, but instantly fell down dead himself, without any other cause than an imagination that he was hurt to death; for he neither received wound or blow, neither was the sign of any found upon his dead body. If, in this life, the imagination be so powerful in men who are in health, as to cause a sense of pain, where none hurts; grief, where none molests; and death, where none kills; what shall it be in hell, where so many devils punish and afflict with torments, preserving only life, that the pain of death may live eternally? And if we see some timorous people with an imaginary fear tremble and remain half dead, there is no doubt but the imagination of those miserable persons, joined with the horror of the place where they are, will cause a thousand pains and torments.

Frame a judgment of it, by that which happens to such, as in this life, finding themselves guilty of grievous crimes, fear to fall into temporal justice: they may indeed sometimes be in a secure place, but never in security; they may be hid from the eyes of men, and be placed out of their reach; but never shall they be able to hide themselves from themselves, or escape the assault of their own consciences. While they wake, they are tortured with fears and suspicions; their sleep is interrupted with wicked dreams; dread doth still follow them; at each one's approach they quake with fear, and the furies, having seized upon them, grant them neither peace nor truce; their troubled thoughts put their hearts upon the rack. Now, if the apprehension of human justice, which hath power only over the body, gives so dreadful alarms to the imagination, what will the sense of the darts of the Divine justice do, which are so many instruments of death, and burning arrows shot at the damned souls?

The will shall be tormented with an eternal ab-

horring and rage against itself, against all creatures, and against God, the Creator of all; and shall, with an intolerable sadness, anger, grief, and disorder of all the affections, violently desire things impossible, and despair of all that is good. If joy consists in the possession of what one loves, and pain in the want of that which is desired, and being necessitated to what is abhorred; what greater pain and torment, than to be ever desiring that which shall never be enjoyed, and ever abhorring that which we can never be quit of? That which he desires, he shall never obtain, and what he desires not, eternally suffer; and from hence shall spring that raging fury which David speaks of: "The sinner shall see, and be raging; he shall gnash his teeth, and be consumed." This rage and madness shall be increased by the despair, which shall be joined unto it, which must needs be most terrible unto the damned; for as the greatest evil is eased by hope, so the least is made grievous by despair. Hope in afflictions is supported by two things; one is, the fruit which may result from suffering; the other is, the end and conclusion of the evil suffered: but in regard the despair of the damned is of so great evils, the despair itself will be a most horrible one.

If one suffers and reaps fruit by it, it is a comfort unto him, and the grief is recompensed by the joy of the benefit thereof; but when the suffering is without fruit or profit, then it comes to be heavy indeed: the hope of a good harvest makes the labourer with cheerfulness endure the toil of ploughing and sowing; but if he were certain to reap no profit, every pace he moved would be grievous and irksome unto him. Though in temporal afflictions this hope of recompence should fail, yet the hope that they should sometimes cease and have an end, would afford some comfort and ease unto the sufferers: but in hell both those are wanting; the damned shall never receive reward for their sufferings, nor shall their torments ever have an end.

O let us consider how great a recompence attends the least of our sufferings here in God's service; and how vain and unprofitable shall all our sufferings be hereafter: here some few penitent ejaculations may gain eternal glories; there the most intense pains and torments, both in soul and body, cannot deserve a drop of cold water, nor so much ease as to turn from one side to the other. In this raging despair end the vain hopes of sinners: hell is full of those who hoped they should never enter into it, and full of those who despair of getting out of it; they offended with a presumptuous hope they should not die in sin, and that proving false, are fallen into eternal desperation; there is no hope can excuse the falling into so great a danger. Let us therefore secure heaven, and not sin.

The memory shall be another cruel tormentor of those miserable sinners, converting all they have done, good or bad, into torments: the good, because they have lost their reward; the bad, because they have deserved their punishment: the delights also which they have enjoyed, and all the happiness of this life, in which they have triumphed, (seeing that for them they fell into this misery,) shall be a sharp sword which shall pierce their hearts; they shall be full of affliction, when they shall compare the shortness of their past pleasures with the eternity of their present torments. What groans, what sighs, will they pour out, when they see that those delights, which hardly lasted an instant, and that the pains they suffer for them, shall last for ages and eternities; all that is past appearing but as a dream. Let us tremble at the pleasures and felicity of this life, since they may turn into arsenic or wormwood. The miserable wretch shall, with great grief, remember, how often he might have gained heaven, and did not, but is now tumbled into hell; and shall say unto himself, "How many times might I have prayed, and spent that time in play! but now I pay for it. How many times ought I to have fasted, and left it, to satisfy my greedy appetite! How many times might I have given alms, and spent it in sin! How many times might I have pardoned my enemies, and chose rather to be revenged! How many times might I have frequented the sacraments, and forbore them, because I would not quit the occasion of sinning! There never wanted means of serving God; but I never made use of them, and am, therefore, justly paid for all. Behold, wretched soul, that, entertaining thyself in pleasures, thou hast for toys and fooleries lost heaven. If thou wouldst, thou mightest have been a companion for angels; if thou wouldst, thou mightest have been in eternal joy, and thou hast left all for the pleasure of a moment. 'O accursed and miserable creature, thy Redeemer courted thee with heaven, and thou despisedst him for a base trifle. This was thy fault, and now thou sufferest for it; and since thou wouldst not be happy with God, thou shalt now be eternally cursed by him and his angels.'"

The understanding shall torment itself with discourses of great bitterness, discoursing of nothing but what may grieve it. Aristotle shall not then take delight in his wisdom, nor Seneca comfort himself with his philosophy; Galen shall find no remedy in his physic, nor the profoundest scholar in his divinity.

Besides these miseries and calamities, in this power of the soul is engendered the worm of conscience; which is so often proposed unto us in holy Scripture, as a most terrible torment, and greater than that of fire. Only in one sermon, Christ, our Redeemer, three times menaces us "with that worm which gnaws the consciences, and tears in pieces the hearts of the damned;" admonishing us often, "that their worm shall never die, nor their fire be quenched." For as the worm which breeds in dead flesh, or that which breeds in woods, eats and gnaws that substance of which they are engendered; so the worm which is bred from sin, is in perpetual enmity with it, gnawing and devouring the heart of the sinner, with raging and desperate grief; still putting him in mind, that, by his own fault, he lost that eternal glory, which he might so easily have obtained, and is now fallen into eternal torments, from whence there is no redemption. And, certainly, this resentment of the loss of heaven shall

more torment him than the fire of hell; it is a hell in hell, worse than a thousand hells.

Certainly it were a great rigour, if a father should be forced to be present at the execution of his son; but more, if he should be compelled to be the hangman; and yet greater if the gallows should be placed before his own door, so that he could neither go in nor out without beholding the affront: but far greater cruelty, if they should make the guilty person to execute himself, and that by cutting his body in pieces, member after member, or tearing off his flesh with his own teeth. This is the cruelty and torment of an evil conscience, with which a sinner is racked and tortured amongst those eternal flames, not being able to banish his faults from his memory, nor their punishment from his thoughts: the envy, also, which they shall bear towards those who have gained heaven, by as small matters as they have lost it, shall much add to their grief. Those who are hungry, if they see others, meaner than they, feed at some splendid and plentiful table, and cannot be admitted themselves, become more hungry; so shall it fare with the damned, who shall be more afflicted by beholding others, sometime less than themselves, enjoy that eternal happiness, which they, through want of care, are deprived of. What lamentations shall the damned send forth, when they shall see that the just have gained the benediction of God, and that they lost it through their own neglect!

After all this, there shall not want in hell the pains of death, which amongst human punishments is the greatest; that of hell is a living death. The death which men give, together with death, takes away the pain and sense of dying; but the eternal death of sinners is with sense; and by so much greater, as it hath more of life, recollecting within itself the worst of dying, which is to perish; and the most intolerable of life, which is to suffer pain. In hell there shall be, unto the miserable, a death without death, and an end without end; for their death shall ever live, and their end shall never begin.

See how the rack compels them, at length, to confess the truth. What hath pride profited us? What advantage have we gotten by the vanity of riches? All that is past as a shadow, as a ship sailing on the sea under full sails, leaving behind her no marks of her passage; as a bird flying in the air, whose trace is not found. So have our days run by, without having any mark of virtue; we have spent in malice all the time, which was liberally bestowed upon us, "to work out our salvation in fear and trembling;" we have passed the course of our age in appearances, and in the vanities and follies of the world; and in an instant we are fallen into hell. In this sort do those wretches, gnawn with a continual sorrow, unprofitably repent themselves, and groan under the pressure and affliction of heart, which is the hell of their hell.

Even here, amongst us, if there should be a condition, in which we might be sensible but of some part of that which death brings along with it, it would be esteemed a greater evil than death itself. Who doubts, but if one, after burial, should find himself alive and sensible under the earth, where he could speak with nobody, see nothing but darkness, hear nothing but those who walk above him, smell nothing but the rotten stink of their bodies, eat nothing but his own flesh, nor feel any thing but the earth which oppresses him, or the cold pavement of the vault where he lay; who doubts, I say, but that this estate were worse than to be wholly dead, since life only served to feel the pain of death? What sepulchre is more terrible than that of hell, which is eternally shut upon those who are in it, where the miserable damned remain, not only under the earth, but under fire, having sense for nothing but to feel death, darkness, and pain? This death of hell may be called a double death, in respect it contains both the death of sin and the death of pain; those unfortunate wretches standing condemned, never to be freed from the death of sin, and for ever to be tormented with death of pain. There is no greater death than that of the soul, which is sin; in which the miserable are to continue whilst God is God, with that infinite evil, and that ugly deformity, which sin draws along with it; which is worse than to suffer that eternal fire, which is but the punishment of it. After sin, what pains should there be greater, than that of sin itself? Who trembles not with the only memory, that he is to die, remembering that he is to cease to be; that the feet, whereon he walks, are no more to bear him; that his hands are no more to serve him, nor his eyes to see? Why then do we not tremble at the thought of hell, in respect of which the first death is no punishment, but a reward and happiness; there being no damned in hell, but would take that death, which we here inflict for offences, as an ease of his pains? They shall desire death, and death shall fly from them; for unto all their evils and miseries, this, as the greatest, is adjoined, that neither they nor it shall ever die. This circumstance of being eternal, doth much augment the torments of hell. Let us suppose, that one had but a gnat that should sting his right hand, and a wasp at the left; and that one foot should be pricked with a thorn, and the other with a pin: if this only were to last for ever, it would be an intolerable pain. What will it then be, when hands, feet, arms, head, and all the members, are to burn for all eternity? They shall always burn, but never to be consumed; they shall seek for death in the flames, but shall not find it. Therefore, justly doth one cry out, "O, woe eternal, that never shall have end! O end without end! O death, more grievous than all death; always to die, and never to be quite dead."

The torments in hell are so many in number, that they cannot be numbered; so long in continuance, that they cannot be measured; so grievous for quality, that they cannot be endured, but with such infinite pain, that every minute of an hour shall seem a whole year. "O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy displeasure: unless thou wilt have mercy, O God, I must needs perish." In this life we have hope for our comforter, in all distresses; which hath a sovereign virtue, to mitigate all pains and sorrows. And God, of his great mercy, for the most part, in all adversities,

still leaveth a man some hope of help and succour. The sick man, as long as he lives, he still lives in hope; as long as there is life, there is hope; but after this life endeth, there remaineth to the damned no more any hope of comfort: hope, the last comforter of all, taketh her flight, and eternal desperation seizeth upon them.

If an angel should promise thee to be made an emperor, so you would lie in your bed one night in the same posture, looking upwards towards heaven, without moving or turning yourself all night; if you have a mind to turn on one side, it will be a trouble to you not to do it, and you will persuade yourself, that you never lay so uneasy in your whole life before; and will say unto yourself, "My bed is good and soft, I am well, what is wanting to me? Nothing is wanting, but only to turn me from one side to the other." How comes this to pass, that thou canst not rest one single night; it being such a torture to be still, without turning thyself? What would it be, if thou wert to remain in one posture three or four nights? Thou hast little patience, since a thing so small doth grieve thee; what would it be, if thou hadst the colic, or wert tormented with the stone or sciatica? Far greater evils than these are prepared for thee in hell, whither thou postest, by running into so many sins. Consider what a couch is prepared for thee in that abyss of misery; what feather-bed; what Holland sheets! Thou shalt be cast upon burning coals, flames and sulphur shall be thy coverlets. Mark well, whether this bed be for one night only. Yea, nights, days, months, and years, for ages and eternities, thou art to remain on that side thou fallest on, without having the least relief to turn thyself unto the other. That fire shall never die, neither shalt thou ever die, to the end its torments may last eternally. After a hundred years, add after a hundred thousand of millions of years, they shall be as lively and as vigorous as at the first day. See what thou dost, by not fearing eternal death; by making no account of eternity; by setting so much of thy affection on a temporal life. Thou dost not walk the right way: change thy life, and begin to serve thy Creator.

THE PRAYER.

Blessed Lord, eternal God, my heart is naked and open before thee; I send up my sighs, as humble orators before thee. I know not what to ask, nor how; only this one thing I beg at thy hands, that thou wilt not suffer me to die an eternal death. Correct me here as thy child, that I may be saved hereafter. Lord, thou knowest that I love thee; and that I desire to be with thee, that I may sing eternal praises unto thee. Lord, have mercy upon me, and grant me my request, for thy great mercy's sake.

CHAPTER IX.

The Fruit which may be drawn from the Consideration of Eternal Evils.

All which hath been said of the pains in hell, is far short of that which really they are. There is great difference betwixt the knowledge we have by relation, and that which we learn by experience. The Maccabees knew, that the temple of the Lord was already profaned and destroyed; they had heard of it, and lamented it. But when they saw with their eyes the sanctuary lie desolate, the altar profaned, and the gates burnt, there was then no measure of their tears; they tore their garments, cast ashes upon their heads, threw themselves upon the ground, and their complaints ascended as high as heaven. If, then, the relation and discourse of the pains of hell make us tremble; what shall be sight and experience? The consideration of what hath been said, may help us to form some conception of the terror and horror of that place of eternal sorrow. Let us descend into hell whilst we live, that we may not descend there when we are dead. Let us draw some fruit from thence, during our lives, from whence nothing but torment is to be had after death.

The principal fruit which may be drawn from that consideration, are these. In the first place, an ardent love and sincere gratitude towards our Creator; that having so often deserved hell, he hath not yet suffered us to fall into it. How many be there now in hell, who for their first mortal sin, and only for that one, have been sent thither! and we, notwithstanding the innumerable sins which we have committed, are yet spared. What did God find in us, that he should use a mercy towards us for so many sins, which he did not afford to others for so few? Why are we not then more grateful for so many benefits, which we have no ways deserved? How grateful would a damned person be, if God should free him from those flames, wherein he is tormented, and place him in the same condition we now are! What a life would he lead, and how grateful would he be unto so merciful a Benefactor! He hath done no less for us, but much more; for if he hath not drawn us out of hell, he hath not thrown us into it, as we deserved: which is the greater favour? Tell me, if a creditor should cast that debtor into prison, who owed him a thousand ducats, and after the enduring of much affliction, at last release him; or should suffer another, who owed fifty thousand ducats, to go up and down free, without touching a thread of his garment; whether of the debtors received the greater benefit? I believe thou wilt say, "The latter." More, then, we are indebted to God Almighty; and, therefore, ought to serve him better. Consider how a man would live, who should be restored to life after he had been in hell. Thou shouldst live better, since thou art more indebted to Almighty God.

Secondly: We are taught to exercise our pa-

tience, in suffering the afflictions and troubles of this life; that, by enduring of these thankfully, we may escape those of the other. He who shall consider the eternity of those torments, which he deserves, will not be troubled at the pains of this life, how bitter soever. There is no state or condition upon earth, how miserable soever, which the damned would not endure, and think it an infinite happiness if they might change with it; neither is there any course of life so unhappy, which he, who had once experienced those burning flames, if he might live again, would not willingly undergo. He, who hath once deserved eternal torments, let him never murmur against the crosses and petty injuries offered him in this life. If thou goest into a bath, and shalt find it excessive hot, think on hell. If thou art tormented with the heat of some violent fever, pass unto the consideration of those eternal flames, which burn without end; and think, that if a bath or calenture so afflict, how shalt thou endure that river of fire? When thou shalt see any thing great in this present life, think presently of the kingdom of heaven, and so thou shalt not value it much; and when thou shalt see any thing terrible, think on hell, and thou wilt not be much moved. When the desire of any temporal thing shall afflict thee, think that the pleasure of it is of no estimation; if the fear of laws, which are enacted here upon earth, be of that force, that they are able to deter us from evil actions; much more ought the thoughts of eternal pain to affright us. If we often think of hell, we shall never fall into it.

We ought often to call to mind the evils of the next life, that we may the more despise the pleasures of this; because temporal felicity uses often to end in eternal misery. All that is precious in this world, honour, wealth, fame, pleasure, all the splendour of the earth, is but a shadow, if we compare the small duration of them with the eternity of those torments in the other world.

Put all the silver in the world together in one heap; all the gold, all the precious stones, diamonds, emeralds, with all other the richest jewels; all the triumphs of the Romans, all the rarities and dainties of the Assyrians, &c. all would deserve to be of no other value than dirt, if to be possessed with hazard of falling at last into the pit of hell. Let us call to mind that sentence of our blessed Saviour: "What will it avail a man to gain the whole world, if he lose his soul?" If they should make us lords and masters, I say, not of great wealth, but of the whole world, we should not admit of it with the least hazard of being damned for ever. Let one enjoy all the contents and regales imaginable; let him be raised to the highest pitch of honour; let him triumph with all the greatness in the world. All this is but a dream, if, after this mortal life, he finds himself at length plunged into hell fire.

You may look upon a wheel of squibs and fireworks, which, whilst it moves, casts forth a thousand lights and splendours, with which the beholders are much taken; but all, at last, ends in a little smoke and burnt paper. So it is, whilst the wheel of felicities was in motion, according to the style of St. James; that is to say, whilst our life lasts, its fortune and prosperity appears most glorious; but ceasing, all comes to end in smoke, and he that fares best in it, at last finds himself plunged into hell.

When a fever, or some great unexpected change in a man's estate, happens to him, it makes him to forget all his former contents in health and wealth; his sickness and adversity so taking up the whole man, as that he hath no leisure to employ his thoughts upon any thing else; and if, perhaps, any passage of his former condition chance to come to his mind, it gives him no satisfaction, but rather augments his pain; wherefore if temporal evils, though very short, are sufficient to make former felicities of many years vanish; what impression will temporal goods make in us, if we employ our thoughts upon eternal evils? Besides, those torments, which are to be suffered hereafter without profit, may move in us to husband the short time of this life most to our advantage. How many miserable souls now suffer those eternal pains, for not employing one day in the service of God! What would a damned soul give for one quarter of an hour out of so many days and years which are lost, and shall not have one instant allowed him? Thou, who now livest and hast time, lose not that which imports thee so much, and once lost can never be recovered. O miserable creatures! who, for having lost a short space of time, lose an eternity of felicity; they come to know too late the importance of that which they have lost, and shall never come to regain it; let us now make use of that time, whilst we may gain eternity, and let us not lose that with pleasure, which cannot be recovered with grief.

Lastly, let us draw, from the consideration of hell, a perfect hatred to all mortal sin, since from the evil of sin proceeds that evil of pain: terrible is the evil of sin, since it cannot be satisfied even with eternal flames.

CHAPTER X.

The Infinite Guilt of Mortal Sin, by which we lose the Felicity of Heaven, and fall into Eternal Evils.

So foul and horrid is a mortal sin in its own nature, that though it passed only in thought, and none knew it but God, and he who committed it, and which endured no longer than an instant, yet it deserves the torments of hell for all eternity; for by how much greater is the majesty of God, which is despised, by so much greater is the injury offered him; and therefore as the majesty of God, which is despised by sin, is infinite, so the despite of it must contain, in itself, a certain kind of infinity: by how much greater is the reverence due to a person, by so much greater is the disrespect and affront

offered him. And as to God there is due an infinite reverence, so the injury done him is of an inexplicable malice, which by no good works of a mere creature, how many and great soever, can be expiated. So great is the malignity of a mortal sin, that, being put into the balance of Divine justice, it would outweigh all the good works of all the saints, although they were a thousand times more and greater than they are; because the good works with which God is honoured by his saints, although in themselves great in value, yet in respect of God, unto whom they add nothing, and who is nothing bettered by them, they are not valuable; unto whose divine goodness, not only they, but infinitely more, and greater, are but a debt: but for God to be despised by his creature, who, by infinite titles, is obliged to serve him, and ought to reverence him with an infinite honour, is a thing so highly repugnant to his majesty, that, if God were capable of grief, it would more afflict him than all the pious actions of the saints content him: certainly, amongst men, the honour which is given to one who deserves it, takes not so much, as a contempt done unto him who merits it not: a king values not much the honour which is given him by his vassals, because he takes it not for a courtesy, but a duty; but to be affronted and scorned by one, especially whom he had favoured with his benefits, sticks near unto his heart; for not only kings, but all men, think honour due unto them, and disrespect an injury. There is no resentment among men so quick as that of dishonour; nor any thing which causes more grief and vexation. If some person of quality should have his hat plucked off from his head in scorn, and receive a dozen of bastinadoes from some base fellow, that affront would not be recompensed, although a thousand should put off their caps to him, and kiss his hand.

By this may appear the irreverence and great incivility towards God in a mortal sin: insomuch as St. Paul calls it "kicking, or spurning, the Son of God;" this is the reason why it was necessary that God should become man, being the Divine justice could not be appeased with less than the satisfaction of a Divine person: let those, therefore, cease to marvel, that a momentary sin should be punished with eternal torments, who see that, for sin, God was made man, and died for man; and certainly, it is a far greater wonder, that God should die for the sin of another, than that man should, for his own sin, suffer an eternal punishment: and if the malice of sin be so exorbitant, that nothing could satisfy for it less than God; it is nothing strange, that that which hath no limit, nor bound in evil, should have no limit in punishment, but should exceed all time, and be eternal. And if a treason committed against a temporal prince be chastised with loss of life and goods of the traitor, and with the punishment also of his posterity, which, inasmuch as concerns the prince, is eternal; why should not the offence of a vile worm, against his Creator, be tormented with eternal pains? The greatness of honour decreases and grows less, according to the height and dignity of the person honoured; so as that honour which, done to an ordinary person, would seem excessive, given unto a prince is nothing: and on the contrary, the greatness of an injury rises and grows higher, according to the worth of him who is injured; so as God, who is infinite, being the person offended, deserves that the injury done unto him should be chastised with a punishment equal to the duration of his being, and needs that he, who satisfies for it, should be a person of infinite worth and perfection, voluntarily undertaking to put himself into the sinner's place, and to suffer in his stead.

And as sin is grievous in its own nature, so it is much engreatened by the circumstances which attend it: let us consider who it is that sins; it is a most vile and wretched man, who presumes to lift up his hands against his Creator: and what is man but a vessel of dung, a stink of corruption, and, by birth, a slave of the devil? and yet he dares offend his Maker. An offence against God were more grievous, though from another god (if it were possible) infinite and equal to himself; but that this creature should be so insolent against his omnipotent Lord, is beyond amazement. But what is that which a sinner does, when he offends? It is, according to St. Anselm, an endeavour to pluck the crown from the head of God, and place it upon his own; it is, according to the apostle, to "crucify again the Lord of life." If any of these things were attempted against a majesty upon earth, it were enough to make the offender's flesh to be plucked off with pincers, to have him torn in pieces with wild horses, to pull down his house, and sow the place with salt, and make his whole lineage infamous. If such an offence were committed by one man against another; betwixt whom the difference is not great, being both equal in nature, it were very heinous; what shall it deserve, being committed against God, the Lord and Creator of all, whose immense greatness is infinitely distant from the nature of his creature? O good God! who is able to express what a sinner doth against thee and himself? He despises thy majesty, razes out thy law from his heart, contemns thy justice, scorns thy threats, despises thy promises, makes a solemn renunciation of thy glory, thou hast promised him; and all to bind himself an eternal slave to Satan, desiring rather to please thine enemy than thee, who art his Father, his Friend, and all his good, desiring rather to die eternally, by displeasing thee, than to enjoy heaven for ever, by serving thee.

Let us now see where, and in what place, a sinner presumes to sin, and be a traitor unto God; it is even in his own world, in his own house; and knowing that his Creator looks upon him, he offends him: if a sin were committed where God could not see it, it were yet an enormous fault; but to do an injury to his Creator, before his face, what an unspeakable impudence is it! If he who sins could go into another world, where God did not inhabit, and there, in secret under the earth, should sin after such a manner, as only himself should know it, yet it were a great boldness; but to sin in his own house, which is this world, what hell doth it not deserve? For a man only to lay his hand upon his sword, in the palace

of a king, is capital, and deserves death. For a sinner then, by his sins, to spurn and crucify the Son of God, in the house of his Father, and before his face, what understanding can conceive the greatness of such a malice? And therefore David, with reason, dissolved himself into tears, because he had sinned in the presence of God, and with a grief which pierced his heart, cried out, "I have done evil before thee." Besides this, we not only sin against God in his own house, but even in his arms, whilst we are upheld by his omnipotence: if there were a son so wicked, who, whilst he was cherished in his mother's bosom, should strike her, and endeavour to kill her, every one would think that a most impious child: how, then, dares man offend God, who sustains, preserves, and hath redeemed him?

The heinousness of this malice in sin is much augmented, by the helps which a sinner uses to effect it; for he turns those very divine benefits, which he hath received from God, against him who gave them. The sense which men usually have of ingratitude, is most apprehensive; if to forget a benefit be ingratitude, to despise it is an injury; but to use it against the benefactor, I know not what to call it: this does he who sins, making use of those creatures, which God created for his service, to offend him; and converts his divine benefits into arms against God himself! What could we say, if a king, to honour his soldier, should make him a knight, arm him with his own arms, should gird his sword about him with his own hands, and that the soldier, so soon as he was possessed of the sword, should draw it against the king, and murder him? This wickedness, which seems impossible amongst men, is ordinary in man towards God; who, being honoured so many ways by his Creator, and enriched with so many benefits, as much as in him lies bereaves God of his honour, and desires to bereave him of his life: his understanding, which he received from God, he uses in finding out a way to execute his sin; with his hands he performs it, and, with all his power, offends him who gave them.

But if we shall consider why man does this, it is a circumstance which will amaze us at the malice of it. Why doth a sinner thus offend against his God? Wherefore does he despise his Creator? Wherefore is he a traitor unto the Lord of the world? Wherefore doth he abhor his Redeemer? What reason hath he for so monstrous a wickedness? It is only for a base and filthy pleasure, for a foolish fancy of man, because he will, and no more. O horrid insolence! O mad fury of men, which, without a cause, so grievously offend their Creator; and, by their sins, provoke so good and gracious a God!

The manner also of our sinning would astonish any who should seriously consider it; it is with so much impudence, pride, and contempt of God, after having heard so many examples of his chastisements executed upon sinners, after having seen that the most beautiful and glorious of all the angels, and, with him, innumerable others, were thrown from heaven, and made fire-brands in hell, for one sin, and that only in thought; after having seen the first man, for one sin, banished from the Paradise of pleasure, into this valley of tears, despoiled of so many supernatural endowments, and condemned to death; after having known that so many have been damned for their offences; after that the Son of God had suffered upon the cross for our sins; after all this, to sin is an impudence never heard of, and an intolerable contempt of the Divine justice.

Besides, what greater scorn and contempt of God than this; that God, who is worthy of all honour and love, and the devil, who is our professed enemy, pretending both to our souls, the one to save them, the other to torment them in eternal flames, yet we adhere to Satan, and prefer him before Christ, our Saviour and Redeemer; and that so much to our prejudice, as by the loss of eternal glory, and captivating ourselves unto eternal torments and slavery! The manner also of sinning aggravates the sin, as the sinner doth, by losing thereby eternal happiness; though he who sins much, lost nothing, yet the offence against God were great; but well knowing the great damages and punishments likewise that attend sin, and the evident hazard he runs, and yet to sin, is a strange impudence. If we shall consider when it is that we sin, we shall find this circumstance no less to aggravate our offences than the former: because we now sin, when we know that the Son of God was nailed unto the cross that we should not sin; when we know that God was incarnate for us, humbled himself to be made man, and subjected himself unto death, even the death of the cross, for our redemption: to sin after we had seen God so good and obliging unto us, with those not to be imagined favours, is a circumstance which ought much to be pondered in our hearts, and might make us forbear the offending of so loving a Father. And that christian, who sins after all this, is to be esteemed worse than a devil; for the devil never sinned against that God, who had shed his blood for him, or who had pardoned so much as one sin of his. When those sinned who were under the law of nature, they had not seen the Son of God die for their salvation, as a christian hath; and there is no doubt but christians will deserve new torments, and greater than those who have not had the knowledge of God, nor received so many benefits from him.

Let us consider about what sin is committed, and we do offend God. It is about complying with a sensual gust, which, in the end, bereaves us of health, of honour, of substance, and even of pleasure itself; suffering many days of grief for a moment of delight; about things of the earth, which are vile and transitory; and about goods of the world, which are false, short, and deceitful. What would we say, if, for a thing of so small value as a straw, one man should kill another? No more than a straw are all the felicities of the world, in respect of those of heaven; and for a thing of so small consideration, we are traitors to God, and crucify Christ again; and that a thousand times, as often as we sin mortally against him.

Lastly: consider whom we offend; it is God,

who is most perfect, most wise, immense, omnipotent, and infinite. We sin against him who infinitely loves us, who suffers us, who heaps his benefits and rewards upon us; to do evil to those who make much of them, even wild beasts abhor it; what is it then for thee to injure him, who loved thee more than himself; who hath done thee all good, that thou shouldst do no evil? Fear then this Lord, reverence his majesty, love his goodness, and offend him no more. Sin is so evil, that it is every way evil; behold it on every side, it still seems worse. It is not only evil, as it is an injury to God, but it is evil in itself, in its own nature; for if there were no God, or that God were not offended with it, yet it were a most horrid evil, the greatest of all evils, and the cause of all evils. In regard of this deformity and filthiness of sin, the philosophers judged it to be abhorred above all things, and those who denied the immortality of the soul, and the providence of God, affirmed that nothing should make them commit it; and there have been some amongst them who have suffered great extremities, to avoid a vicious act: Damocles, as Plutarch writes, chose rather to be boiled in scalding water than to consent to a filthy act; for which reason is Hippo celebrated amongst the Greek matrons, who chose rather to die than offend. These were gentiles, who saw not hell open for the punishment of sinners, nor fled from sin, because it was an offence unto God, but only for the enormity and filthiness it had in itself: this made them endure prisons and tortures, rather than admit it. What should christians then do, who know how much sin is offensive to God? Certainly they ought rather to give a thousand lives, than once to injure their Creator by committing an offence, which not only gentiles, but even nature, hath in horror, which hath planted in brute beasts, although they cannot sin, yet a natural aversion from that which looks like sin.

Pliny admires the force of lightning, which melts the gold and silver, and leaves the purse which contains it untouched: such is sin, which kills the soul, and leaves the body sound and active; it is a flash of lightning sent from hell, and such leaves the soul which it hath blasted.

Sin, though it were the best thing of the world, yet, for the evil effects it produces, it ought to be avoided more than death; it bereaves the soul of grace, banishes the Holy Ghost, deprives it of the right of heaven; makes him unworthy of Divine protection, and condemns a sinner unto eternal torments in the other world, and in this to many disasters; for there is neither plague, war, famine, nor infirmity of body, whereof sin hath not been in some sort the occasion. And therefore those who weep for their afflictions, let them change the object of their tears, and weep for the cause, which is their sin.

I will therefore from henceforth resolve, that although I were certain that men should not know my sins, and that God would pardon them; yet I will not offend for the very filthiness of sin.

THE

RULES AND EXERCISES

OF

HOLY LIVING, &c.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE AND TRULY NOBLE

RICHARD LORD VAUGHAN,

EARL OF CARBERY, KNIGHT OF THE HONOURABLE ORDER OF THE BATH.

My Lord,

I have lived to see religion painted upon banners, and thrust out of churches, and the temple turned into a tabernacle, and that tabernacle made ambulatory, and covered with skins of beasts and torn curtains, and God to be worshipped, not as he is, "the Father of our Lord Jesus," (an afflicted Prince, the King of sufferings,) nor as the "God of peace" (which two appellatives God newly took upon him in the New Testament, and glories in for ever): but he is owned now rather as "the Lord of hosts," which title he was pleased to lay aside, when the kingdom of the gospel was preached by the Prince of peace. But when religion puts on armour, and God is not acknowledged by his New-Testament titles, religion may have in it the power of the sword, but not the power of godliness; and we may complain of this to God, and amongst them that are afflicted, but we have no remedy but what we must expect from the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, and the returns of the God of peace. In the mean time, and now that religion pretends to stranger actions upon new principles, and men are apt to prefer a prosperous error before an afflicted truth, and some will think they are religious enough, if their worshippings have in them the prevailing ingredient; and the ministers of religion are so scattered, that they cannot unite to stop the inundation, and from chairs or pulpits, from their synods or tribunals, chastise the iniquity of the error, and the ambition of evil guides, and the infidelity of the willingly-seduced multitude, and that those few good people, who have no other plot in their religion but to serve God and save their souls, do want such assistances of ghostly counsel, as may serve their emergent needs, and assist their endeavours in the acquist of virtues, and relieve their dangers when they are tempted to sin and death; I thought I had reasons enough inviting me to draw into one body those advices, which the several necessities of many men must use at some time or other, and many of them daily: that by a collection of holy precepts they might less feel the want of personal and attending guides, and that the rules for conduct of souls might be committed to a book, which they might always have; since they could not always have a prophet at their needs, nor be suffered to go up to the house of the Lord to inquire of the appointed oracles.

I know, my Lord, that there are some interested persons, who add scorn to the afflictions of the church of England, and because she is afflicted by men, call her "forsaken of the Lord;" and because her solemn assemblies are scattered, think that the religion is lost, and the church divorced from God, supposing Christ (who was a man of sorrows) to be angry with his spouse when she is like him [for that is the true state of the error;] and that he, who promised his Spirit to assist his servants in their troubles, will, because they are in trouble, take away the Comforter from them; who cannot be a comforter, but while he cures our sadnesses, and relieves our sorrows, and turns our persecutions into joys, and crowns, and sceptres. But concerning the present state of the church of England, I consider, that because we now want the blessings of external communion in many degrees, and the circumstances of a prosperous and unafflicted people, we are to take estimate of ourselves with single judgments, and every man is to give

sentence concerning the state of his own soul by the precepts and rules of our law-giver, not by the after-decrees and usages of the church; that is, by the essential parts of religion, rather than by the uncertain significations of any exterior adherencies: for though it be uncertain, when a man is the member of a church, whether he be a member to Christ or no, because in the church's net there are fishes good and bad; yet we may be sure, that, if we be members of Christ, we are of a church to all purposes of spiritual religion and salvation; and, in order to this, give me leave to speak this great truth—

That man does certainly belong to God, who, 1. Believes and is baptized into all the articles of the christian faith, and studies to improve his knowledge in the matters of God, so as may best make him to live a holy life. 2. He that, in obedience to Christ, worships God diligently, frequently, and constantly, with natural religion, that is of prayer, praises, and thanksgiving. 3. He that takes all opportunities to remember Christ's death by a frequent sacrament (as it can be had); or else by inward acts of understanding, will, and memory, (which is the spiritual communion,) supplies the want of the external rite. 4. He that lives chastely; 5. And is merciful; 6. And despises the world, using it as a man, but never suffering it to rifle a duty; 7. And is just in his dealing, and diligent in his calling. 8. He that is humble in his spirit, 9. And obedient to government, 10. And content in his fortune and employment. 11. He that does his duty because he loves God; 12. And especially, if, after all this, he be afflicted, and patient, or prepared to suffer affliction for the cause of God: the man that hath these twelve signs of grace and predestination, does as certainly belong to God, and is his son, as surely as he is his creature.

And if my brethren in persecution, and in the bonds of the Lord Jesus, can truly show these marks, they shall not need be troubled, that others can show a prosperous outside, great revenues, public assemblies, uninterrupted successions of bishops, prevailing armies, or any arm of flesh, or less certain circumstance. These are the marks of the Lord Jesus, and the characters of a christian: this is a good religion; and these things God's grace hath put into our powers, and God's laws have made to be our duty, and the nature of men, and the needs of commonwealths, have made to be necessary. The other accidents and pomps of a church are things without our power, and are not in our choice; they are good to be used, when they may be had, and they help to illustrate or advantage it; but if any of them constitute a church in the being of a society and a government, yet they are not of its constitution, as it is christian, and hopes to be saved.

And now the case is so with us, that we are reduced to that religion, which no man can forbid; which we can keep in the midst of a persecution; by which the martyrs, in the days of our fathers, went to heaven; that, by which we can be servants of God, and receive the Spirit of Christ, and make use of his comforts, and live in his love, and in charity with all men; and they that do so, cannot perish.

My Lord, I have now described some general lines and features of that religion, which I have more particularly set down in the following pages: in which I have neither served nor disserved the interest of any party of christians, as they are divided by uncharitable names from the rest of their brethren; and no man will have reason to be angry with me for refusing to mingle in his unnecessary or vicious quarrels; especially while I study to do him good by conducting him in the narrow way to heaven, without intricating him in the labyrinths and wild turnings of questions and uncertain talkings. I have told what men ought to do, and by what means they may be assisted; and in most cases, I have also told them why: and yet with as much quickness, as I could think necessary to establish a rule, and not to engage in homily or discourse. In the use of which rules, although they are plain, useful, and fitted for the best and worst understandings, and for the needs of all men, yet I shall desire the reader to proceed with the following advices.

1. They that will with profit make use of the proper instruments of virtue, must so live, as if they were always under the physician's hand. For the counsels of religion are not to be applied to the distempers of the soul, as men used to take hellebore; but they must dwell together with the spirit of a man, and be twisted about his understanding for ever: they must be used like nourishment, that is, by a daily care and meditation; not like a single medicine, and upon the actual pressure of a present necessity. For counsels and wise discourses, applied to an actual distemper, at the best are but like strong smells to an epileptic person; sometimes they may raise him, but they never cure him. The following rules, if they be made familiar to our natures and the thoughts of every day, may make virtue and religion become easy and habitual; but when the temptation is present, and hath already seized upon some portions of our consent, we are not so apt to be counselled, and we find no gust or relish in the precept; the lessons are the same, but the instrument is unstrung or out of tune.

2. In using the instruments of virtue, we must be curious to distinguish instruments from duties, and prudent advices from necessary injunctions; and if by any other means the duty can be secured, let there be no scruples stirred concerning any other helps: only, if they can, in that case, strengthen and secure the duty, or help towards perseverance, let them serve in that station, in which they can be placed. For there are some persons, in whom the Spirit of God hath breathed so bright a flame of love, that they do all their acts of virtue by perfect choice and without objection, and their zeal is warmer, than that it will be allayed by temptation: and to such persons mortification by philosophical instruments, as fasting, sackcloth, and other rudenesses to the body, is wholly useless; it is always a more uncertain means to acquire any virtue, or secure any duty; and if love hath filled all the corners of our soul, it alone is able to do all the work of God.

3. Be not nice in stating the obligations of religion; but where the duty is necessary, and the means very reasonable in itself, dispute not too busily, whether, in all circumstances, it can fit thy particular; but "super totam materiam," upon the whole, make use of it. For it is a good sign of a great religion, and no imprudence, when we have sufficiently considered the substance of affairs, then to be easy, humble, obedient, apt, and credulous in the circumstances, which are appointed to us, in particular, by our spiritual guides; or, in general, by all wise men in cases not unlike. He that gives alms, does best not always to consider the minutes and strict measures of his ability, but to give freely, incuriously, and abundantly. A man must not weigh grains in the accounts of his repentance; but for a great sin have a great sorrow, and a great severity, and in this take the ordinary advices; though, it may be, a less rigour might not be insufficient: *ἀκριβοδίκαιον*, or arithmetical measures, especially of our own proportioning, are but arguments of want of love and of forwardness in religion; or else are instruments of scruple, and then become dangerous. Use the rule heartily and enough, and there will be no harm in thy error, if any should happen.

4. If thou intendest heartily to serve God, and avoid sin in any one instance, refuse not the hardest and most severe advice, that is prescribed in order to it, though possibly it be a stranger to thee; for whatsoever it be, custom will make it easy.

5. When many instruments for the obtaining any virtue, or restraining any vice, are propounded, observe which of them fits thy person, or the circumstances of thy need, and use it rather than the other; that by this means thou mayest be engaged to watch, and use spiritual arts and observation about thy soul. Concerning the managing of which, as the interest is greater, so the necessities are more, and the cases more intricate, and the accidents and dangers greater and more importunate; and there is greater skill required, than in the securing an estate, or restoring health to an infirm body. I wish all men in the world did heartily believe so much of this, as is true; it would very much help to do the work of God.

Thus, my Lord, I have made bold by your hand to reach out this little scroll of cautions to all those, who, by seeing your honoured names set before my book, shall, by the fairness of such a frontispiece, be invited to look into it. I must confess, it cannot but look like a design in me, to borrow your name and beg your patronage to my book, that, if there be no other worth in it, yet at least it may have the splendour and warmth of a burning-glass, which, borrowing a flame from the eye of Heaven, shines and burns by the rays of the sun its patron. I will not quit myself from the suspicion: for I cannot pretend it to be a present either of itself fit to be offered to such a personage, or any part of a just return; but I humbly desire, you would own it for an acknowledgment of those great endearments and noblest usages, you have past upon me: but so, men in their religion give a piece of gum, or the fat of a cheap lamb, in sacrifice to Him, that gives them all that they have or need: and unless He, who was pleased to employ your Lordship, as a great minister of his providence, in making a promise of his good to me, the meanest of his servants, "that he would never leave me nor forsake me," shall enable me, by greater services of religion, to pay my great debt to your honour, I must still increase my score; since I shall now spend as much in my needs of pardon for this boldness, as in the reception of those favours, by which I stand accountable to your Lordship in all the bands of service and gratitude; though I am, in the deepest sense of duty and affection,

My most honoured Lord,

Your Honour's most obliged,

And most humble Servant,

JER. TAYLOR.

CHAPTER I.

CONSIDERATION OF THE GENERAL INSTRUMENTS AND MEANS SERVING TO A HOLY LIFE, BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION.

IT is necessary that every man should consider, that, since God hath given him an excellent nature, wisdom and choice, an understanding soul, and an immortal spirit, having made him lord over the beasts, and but a little lower than the angels; he hath also appointed for him a work and a service great enough to employ those abilities, and hath also designed him to a state of life after this, to which he can only arrive by that service and obedience. And therefore, as every man is wholly God's own portion by the title of creation, so all our labours and care, all our powers and faculties, must be wholly employed in the service of God, and even all the days of our life; that, this life being ended, we may live with him for ever.

Neither is it sufficient, that we think of the service of God as a work of the least necessity, or of small employment, but that it be done by us as God intended it; and that it be done with great earnestness and passion, with much zeal and desire; that we refuse no labour, that we bestow upon it much time; that we use the best guides, and arrive at the end of glory by all the ways of grace, of prudence, and religion.

And indeed, if we consider how much of our lives is taken up by the needs of nature; how many years are wholly spent, before we come to any use of reason; how many years more, before that reason is useful to us to any great purposes; how imperfect our discourse is made by our evil education, false principles, ill company, bad examples, and want of experience; how many parts of our wisest and best years are spent in eating and sleeping, in necessary businesses and unnecessary vanities, in worldly civilities and less useful circumstances, in the learning arts and sciences, languages or trades; that little portion of hours, that is left for the practices of piety and religious walking with God, is so short and trifling, that, were not the goodness of God infinitely great, it might seem unreasonable or impossible for us to expect of him eternal joys in heaven, even after the well spending those few minutes, which are left for God and God's service, after we have served ourselves and our own occasions.

And yet it is considerable, that the fruit, which comes from the many days of recreation and vanity, is very little; and, although we scatter much, yet we gather but little profit: but from the few hours we spend in prayer and the exercises of a pious life, the return is great and profitable; and what we sow in the minutes and spare portions of a few years, grows up to crowns and sceptres in a happy and a glorious eternity.

1. Therefore, although it cannot be enjoined, that the greatest part of our time be spent in the direct actions of devotion and religion, yet it will become, not only a duty, but also a great providence, to lay aside for the services of God and the businesses of the Spirit, as much as we can; because God rewards our minutes with long and eternal happiness; and the greater portion of our time we give to God, the more we treasure up for ourselves; and "No man is a better merchant than he, that lays out his time upon God, and his money upon the poor."

2. Only it becomes us to remember, and to adore God's goodness for it, that God hath not only permitted us to serve the necessities of our nature, but hath made them to become parts of our duty; that if we, by directing these actions to the glory of God, intend them as instruments to continue our persons in his service, he, by adopting them into religion, may turn our nature into grace, and accept our natural actions as actions of religion. God is pleased to esteem it for a part of his service,[a] if we eat or drink; so it be done temperately, and as may best preserve our health, that our health may enable our services towards him: and there is no one minute of our lives, (after we are come to the use of reason,) but we are or may be doing the work of God, even then when we most of all serve ourselves.

3. To which if we add, that in these and all other actions of our lives we always stand before God, acting, and speaking, and thinking in his presence, and that it matters not that our conscience is sealed with secrecy, since it lies open to God; it will concern us to behave ourselves carefully, as in the presence of our Judge.

These three considerations rightly managed, and applied to the several parts and instances of our lives, will be, like Elisha stretched upon the child, apt to put life and quickness into every part of it, and to make us live the life of grace, and do the work of God.

I shall therefore, by way of introduction, reduce these three to practice, and show how every christian may improve all and each of these to the advantage of piety, in the whole course of his life: that if he please to bear but one of them upon his spirit, he may feel the benefit, like an universal instrument, helpful in all spiritual and temporal actions.

[a] Πυθομένου τινὸς, πῶς ἐσθίειν ἀρεστῶς θεοῖς; εἰ δικαίως ἐστὶν, ἔφη, καὶ εὐγνωμόνως, καὶ ἴσως, καὶ ἐγκρατῶς, καὶ κοσμίως, οὐκ ἔστι καὶ ἀρεστῶς τοῖς θεοῖς;—ARRIAN. Epist. l. i. c. 13.

SECTION I.

The first general Instrument of holy Living, Care of our Time.

HE that is choice of his time, will also be choice of his company, and choice of his actions: lest the first engage him in vanity and loss; and the latter, by being criminal, be a throwing his time and himself away, and a going back in the accounts of eternity.

God hath given to man a short time here upon earth, and yet upon this short time eternity depends: but so, that for every hour of our life (after we are persons capable of laws, and know good from evil) we must give account to the great Judge of men and angels. And this is it which our blessed Saviour told us, that we must account for every idle word; not meaning, that every word which is not designed to edification, or is less prudent, shall be reckoned for a sin; but that the time, which we spend in our idle talking and unprofitable discoursings, that time, which might and ought to have been employed to spiritual and useful purposes, that is to be accounted for.

For we must remember, that we have a great work to do, many enemies to conquer, many evils to prevent, much danger to run through, many difficulties to be mastered, many necessities to serve, and much good to do, many children to provide for, or many friends to support, or many poor to relieve, or many diseases to cure, besides the needs of nature and of relation, our private and our public cares, and duties of the world, which necessity and the providence of God have adopted into the family of religion.

And that we need not fear this instrument to be a snare to us, or that the duty must end in scruple, vexation, and eternal fears, we must remember that the life of every man may be so ordered, (and indeed must,) that it may be a perpetual serving of God: the greatest trouble and most busy trade and worldly encumbrances, when they are necessary, or charitable, or profitable in order to any of those ends which we are bound to serve, whether public or private, being a doing God's work. For God provides the good things of the world to serve the needs of nature, by the labours of the ploughman, the skill and pains of the artisan, and the dangers and traffic of the merchant: these men are, in their calling, the ministers of the Divine Providence, and the stewards of the creation, and servants of a great family of God, the world, in the employment of procuring necessaries for food and clothing, ornament and physic. In their proportions, also, a king, and a priest, and a prophet, a judge and an advocate, doing the works of their employment according to their proper rules, are doing the work of God, because they serve those necessities which God hath made, and yet made no provisions for them but by their ministry. So that no man can complain, that his calling takes him off from religion: his calling itself and his very worldly employment in honest trades and offices is a serving of God; and, if it be moderately pursued, and according to the rules of christian prudence, will leave void spaces enough for prayers and retirements of a more spiritual religion.

God hath given every man work enough to do, that there shall be no room for idleness; and yet hath so ordered the world, that there shall be space for devotion. He, that hath the fewest businesses of the world, is called upon to spend more time in the dressing of his soul; and he, that hath the most affairs, may so order them, that they shall be a service of God; whilst, at certain periods, they are blessed with prayers and actions of religion, and all day long are hallowed by a holy intention.

However, so long as idleness is quite shut out from our lives, all the sins of wantonness, softness, and effeminacy, are prevented, and there is but little room left for temptation; and therefore, to a busy man, temptation is fain to climb up together with his businesses, and sins creep upon him only by accidents and occasions: whereas, to an idle person, they come in a full body, and with open violence, and the impudence of a restless importunity.

Idleness is called "the sin of Sodom and her daughters," [b] and indeed is "the burial of a living man;" [c] an idle person being so useless to any purposes of God and man, that he is like one that is dead, unconcerned in the changes and necessities of the world; and he only lives to spend his time, and eat the fruits of the earth: like a vermin or a wolf, when their time comes, they die and perish, and in the mean time, do no good; they neither plough nor carry burthens; all that they do, either is unprofitable or mischievous.

Idleness is the greatest prodigality in the world: it throws away that, which is invaluable in respect of its present use, and irreparable when it is past, being to be recovered by no power of art or nature. But the way to secure and improve our time we may practise in the following rules.

Rules for employing our Time.

1. In the morning, when you awake, accustom yourself to think first upon God, or something in order to his service; and at night also, let him close thine eyes: and let your sleep be necessary and healthful, not idle and expensive of time, beyond the needs and conveniences of nature; and sometimes be curious to see the preparation, which the sun makes when he is coming forth from his chambers of the east.

2. Let every man that hath a calling, be diligent in pursuance of its employment, so as not lightly or without reasonable occasion to neglect it in any of those times, which are usually, and by the custom of prudent persons and good husbands, employed in it.

3. Let all the intervals or void spaces of time be employed in prayers, reading, meditating, works of nature, recreation, charity, friendliness, and neigh-

[b] Ezek. xvi. 49.

[c] Senec.

bourhood, and means of spiritual and corporal health: ever remembering so to work in our calling, as not to neglect the work of our high calling; but to begin and end the day with God, with such forms of devotion as shall be proper to our necessities.

4. The resting days of christians, and festivals of the church, must, in no sense, be days of idleness; for it is better to plough upon holy days, than to do nothing, or to do viciously: but let them be spent in the works of the day, that is, of religion and charity, according to the rules appointed.[d]

5. Avoid the company of drunkards and busybodies, and all such as are apt to talk much to little purpose: for no man can be provident of his time, that is not prudent in the choice of his company; and if one of the speakers be vain, tedious, and trifling, he that hears, and he that answers, in the discourse, are equal losers of their time.

6. Never walk with any man, or undertake any trifling employment, merely to pass the time away:[e] for every day well spent may become a "day of salvation," and time rightly employed is an "acceptable time." And remember, that the time thou triflest away, was given thee to repent in, to pray for pardon of sins, to work out thy salvation, to do the work of grace, to lay up against the day of judgment a treasure of good works, that thy time may be crowned with eternity.

7. In the midst of the works of thy calling, often retire to God[f] in short prayers and ejaculations; and those may make up the want of those larger portions of time, which, it may be, thou desirest for devotion, and in which thou thinkest other persons have advantage of thee; for so thou reconcilest the outward work and thy inward calling, the church and the commonwealth, the employment of the body and the interest of thy soul: for be sure, that God is present at thy breathings and hearty sighings of prayer, as soon as at the longer offices of less busied persons; and thy time is as truly sanctified by a trade, and devout though shorter prayers, as by the longer offices of those, whose time is not filled up with labour and useful business.

8. Let your employment be such, as may become a reasonable person; and not be a business fit for children or distracted people, but fit for your age and understanding. For a man may be very idly busy, and take great pains to so little purpose, that, in his labours and expense of time, he shall serve no end but of folly and vanity. There are some trades, that wholly serve the ends of idle persons and fools, and such as are fit to be seized upon by the severity of laws and banished from under the sun: and there are some people, who are busy; but it is as Domitian was, in catching flies.

9. Let your employment be fitted to your person and calling. Some there are, that employ their time and affairs infinitely below the dignity of their person; and being called by God, or by the republic, to help to bear great burdens, and to judge a people, do enfeeble their understandings, and disable their persons by sordid and brutish business. Thus Nero went up and down Greece, and challenged the fiddlers at their trade. Æropus, a Macedonian king, made lanterns. Harcatius, the king of Parthia, was a mole-catcher: and Biantes, the Lydian, filed needles. He, that is appointed to minister in holy things, must not suffer secular affairs and sordid arts to eat up great portions of his employment: a clergyman must not keep a tavern, nor a judge be an innkeeper; and it was a great idleness in Theophylact, the patriarch of C. P. to spend his time in his stable of horses, when he should have been in his study, or the pulpit, or saying his holy offices. Such employments are the diseases of labour, and the rust of time, which it contracts, not by lying still, but by dirty employment.

10. Let our employment be such as becomes a christian; that is, in no sense, mingled with sin; for he that takes pains to serve the ends of covetousness, or ministers to another's lust, or keeps a shop of impurities or intemperance, is idle in the worst sense; for every hour, so spent, runs him backward, and must be spent again in the remaining and shorter part of his life, and spent better.

11. Persons of great quality, and of no trade, are to be most prudent and curious in their employment and traffic of time. They are miserable, if their education hath been so loose and undisciplined, as to leave them unfurnished of skill to spend their time: but most miserable are they, if such misgovernment and unskilfulness make them fall into vicious and baser company, and drive on their time by the sad minutes and periods of sin and death. They that are learned, know the worth of time, and the manner how well to improve a day; and they are to prepare themselves for such purposes, in which they may be most useful in order to arts or arms, to counsel in public, or government in their country: but for others of them, that are unlearned, let them choose good company, such as may not tempt them to a vice, or join with them in any; but that may supply their defects by counsel and discourse, by way of conduct and conversation. Let them learn easy and useful things, read history and the laws of the land, learn the customs of their country, the condition of their own estate, profitable and charitable contrivances of it: let them study prudently to govern their families, learn the burdens of their tenants, the necessities of their neighbours, and in their proportion supply them, and reconcile their enmities, and prevent their law-suits, or quickly end them; and in this glut of leisure and disemployment, let them set apart greater portions of their time for religion and the necessities of their souls.

12. Let the women of noble birth and great fortunes do the same things in their proportions and capacities; nurse their children, look to the affairs of the house, visit poor cottages, and relieve their necessities, be courteous to the neighbourhood, learn

[d] See chap. iv. sect. 6.
[e] S. Bern. de Triplici Custodia.
[f] Laudatur Cæsar apud Lucanum,
——media inter prælia semper
Stellarum cœlique plagis, superisque vacavi.—x. 186.

in silence of their husbands or their spiritual guides, read good books, pray often and speak little, and "learn to do good works for necessary uses;" for, by that phrase, St. Paul expresses the obligation of christian women to good housewifery, and charitable provisions for their family and neighbourhood.

13. Let all persons of all conditions avoid all delicacy and niceness in their clothing or diet, because such softness engages them upon great mispendings of their time, while they dress and comb out all their opportunities of their morning devotion, and half the day's severity, and sleep out the care and provision for their souls.

14. Let every one of every condition avoid curiosity, and all inquiry into things that concern them not. For all business in things that concern us not, is an employing our time to no good of ours, and therefore not in order to a happy eternity. In this account our neighbour's necessities are not to be reckoned; for they concern us, as one member is concerned in the grief of another; but going from house to house, tattlers and busybodies, which are the canker and rust of idleness, as idleness is the rust of time, are reproved by the apostle in severe language, and forbidden in order to this exercise.

15. As much as may be, cut off all impertinent and useless employments of your life, unnecessary and fantastic visits, long waitings upon great personages, where neither duty, nor necessity, nor charity obliges us; all vain meetings, all laborious trifles, and whatsoever spends much time to no real, civil, religious, or charitable purpose.

16. Let not your recreations be lavish spenders of your time; but choose such which are healthful, short, transient, recreative, and apt to refresh you; but at no hand dwell upon them, or make them your great employment: for he that spends his time in sports, and calls it recreation, is like him, whose garment is all made of fringes, and his meat nothing but sauces; they are healthless, chargeable, and useless. And therefore avoid such games, which require much time or long attendance; or which are apt to steal thy affections from more severe employments. For to whatsoever thou hast given thy affections, thou wilt not grudge to give thy time. Natural necessity and the example of St. John, who recreated himself with sporting with a tame partridge,[g] teach us, that it is lawful to relax and unbend our bow, but not to suffer it to be unready or unstrung.

17. Set apart some portions of every day for more solemn devotion and religious employment, which be severe in observing: and if variety of employment, or prudent affairs, or civil society press upon you, yet so order thy rule, that the necessary parts of it be not omitted; and though just occasions may make our prayers shorter, yet let nothing, but a violent, sudden, and impatient necessity, make thee, upon any one day, wholly to omit thy morning and evening devotions; which if you be forced to make very short, you may supply and lengthen with ejaculations and short retirements in the day-time, in the midst of your employment or of your company.

18. Do not the[h] "work of God negligently" and idly: let not thy heart be upon the world, when thy hand is lift up in prayer: and be sure to prefer an action of religion, in its place and proper season, before all worldly pleasure, letting secular things, that may be dispensed with in themselves, in these circumstances wait upon the other; not like the patriarch, who ran from the altar in St. Sophia to his stable, in all his pontificals, and in the midst of his office, to see a colt newly fallen from his beloved and much valued mare Phorbante.• More prudent and severe was that of Sir Thomas More, who, being sent for by the king when he was at his prayers in public, returned answer, he would attend him when he had first performed his service to the King of kings. And it did honour to Rusticus,[i] that, when letters from Cæsar were given to him, he refused to open them, till the philosopher had done his lecture. In honouring God and doing his work, put forth all thy strength; for of that time only thou mayest be most confident that it is gained, which is prudently and zealously spent in God's service.

19. When the clock strikes, or however else you shall measure the day, it is good to say a short ejaculation every hour, that the parts and returns of devotion may be the measure of your time: and do so also in all the breaches of thy sleep; that those spaces, which have in them no direct business of the world, may be filled with religion.

20. If, by thus doing, you have not secured your time by an early and fore-handed care, yet be sure by a timely diligence to redeem the time, that is, to be pious and religious in such instances,[k] in which formerly you have sinned, and to bestow your time especially upon such graces, the contrary whereof you have formerly practised, doing actions of chastity and temperance with as great a zeal and earnestness, as you did once act your uncleanness; and then, by all arts, to watch against your present and future dangers, from day to day securing your standing: this is properly to redeem your time, that is, to buy your security of it at the rate of any labour and honest arts.

21. Let him, that is most busied, set apart some[l] "solemn time every year," in which, for the time, quitting all worldly business, he may attend wholly to fasting and prayer, and the dressing of his soul by confessions, meditations, and attendances upon God; that he may make up his accounts, renew his vows, make amends for his carelessness, and retire back again, from whence levity and the vanities of the world, or the opportunity of temptations, or the distraction of secular affairs, have carried him.

22. In this we shall be much assisted, and we shall find the work more easy, if, before we sleep, every night[m] we examine the actions of the past

[g] Cassian, Collat. 24. c. xxi.
[h] Jer. xlviii. 10.
[i] Plutarch. de Curiosit. c. xv.
[k] Οἱ ἐν αὐτοῖς εὐδοκιμοῦντες, οἷς ἥμαρτον, εὐπρεπεστέραν τὴν ἀπολογίαν εἰσ αεὶ φέρονται.—Procop. 2. Vandal.
[l] 1 Cor. vii. 5.
[m] Μηδ' ὕπνον μαλακοῖσιν ἐπ' ὄμμασι προσδέξασθαι, Πρὶν τῶν ἡμερινῶν ἔργων τρὶς ἕκαστον ἐπελθεῖν· Πῇ παρέβην; τί δ' ἔρεξα; τί μοι δέον οὐκ ἐπελέσθη;—PYTHAGOR. Aur. Carm.

day with a particular scrutiny, if there have been any accident extraordinary; as long discourse, a feast, much business, variety of company. If nothing but common hath happened, the less examination will suffice: only let us take care, that we sleep not without such a recollection of the actions of the day, as may represent any thing that is remarkable and great, either to be the matter of sorrow or thanksgiving: for other things a general care is proportionable.

23. Let all these things be done prudently and moderately, not with scruple and vexation. For these are good advantages, but the particulars are not Divine commandments; and therefore are to be used as shall be found expedient to every one's condition. For, provided that our duty be secured, for the degrees and for the instruments every man is permitted to himself, and the conduct of such who shall be appointed to him. He is happy, that can secure every hour to a sober or a pious employment: but the duty consists not scrupulously in minutes and half hours, but in greater portions of time; provided that no minute be employed in sin, and the great portions of our time be spent in sober employment, and all the appointed days, and some portions of every day, be allowed for religion. In all the lesser parts of time, we are left to our own elections and prudent management, and to the consideration of the great degrees and differences of glory, that are laid up in heaven for us, according to the degrees of our care, and piety, and diligence.

The benefits of this exercise.

This exercise, besides that it hath influence upon our whole lives, it hath a special efficacy for the preventing of, 1. beggarly sins, that is, those sins, which idleness and beggary usually betray men to; such as are lying, flattery, stealing, and dissimulation. 2. It is a proper antidote against carnal sins, and such as proceed from fulness of bread and emptiness of employment. 3. It is a great instrument of preventing the smallest sins and irregularities of our life, which usually creep upon idle, disemployed, and curious persons. 4. It not only teaches us to avoid evil, but engages us upon doing good, as the proper business of all our days. 5. It prepares us so against sudden changes, that we shall not easily be surprised at the sudden coming of the day of the Lord: for he, that is curious of his time, will not easily be unready and unfurnished.

SECTION II.

The second general Instrument of holy Living, Purity of Intention.

That we should intend and design God's glory in every action we do, whether it be natural or chosen, is expressed by St. Paul,[n] "Whether ye eat or drink, do all to the glory of God." Which rule when we observe, every action of nature becomes religious, and every meal is an act of worship, and shall have its reward in its proportion, as well as an act of prayer. Blessed be that goodness and grace of God, which, out of infinite desire to glorify and save mankind, would make the very works of nature capable of becoming acts of virtue, that all our life-time we may do him service.

This grace is so excellent, that it sanctifies the most common action of our life; and yet, so necessary, that, without it, the very best actions of our devotion are imperfect and vicious. For he that prays out of custom, or gives alms for praise, or fasts to be accounted religious, is but a Pharisee in his devotion, and a beggar in his alms, and a hypocrite in his fast. But a holy end sanctifies all these and all other actions which can be made holy, and gives distinction to them, and procures acceptance.

For, as to know the end distinguishes a man from a beast, so to choose a good end distinguishes him from an evil man. Hezekiah repeated his good deeds upon his sick-bed, and obtained favour of God; but the Pharisee was accounted insolent for doing[o] the same thing; because this man did it to upbraid his brother, the other to obtain a mercy of God. Zacharias questioned with the angel about his message, and was made speechless for his incredulity; but the blessed Virgin Mary questioned too, and was blameless; for she did it to inquire after the manner of the thing, but he did not believe the thing itself: he doubted of God's power, or the truth of the messenger; but she, only of her own incapacity. This was it which distinguished the mourning of David from the exclamation of Saul; the confession of Pharaoh from that of Manasses; the tears of Peter from the repentance of Judas: "for the praise is not in the deed done, but in the manner of its doing.[p] If a man visits his sick friend, and watches at his pillow for charity's sake, and because of his old affection, we approve it; but if he does it in hope of legacy, he is a vulture, and only watches for the carcass. The same things are honest and dishonest: the manner of doing them, and the end of the design, makes the separation."

Holy intention is to the actions of a man that which the soul is to the body, or form to its matter, or the root to the tree, or the sun to the world, or the fountain to a river, or the base to a pillar: for, without these, the body is a dead trunk, the matter is sluggish, the tree is a block, the world is darkness, the river is quickly dry, the pillar rushes into flatness and a ruin; and the action is sinful, or unprofitable and vain. The poor farmer, that gave a dish of cold water to Artaxerxes, was rewarded with a golden goblet; and he that gives the same to a disciple in the name of a disciple, shall have a crown: but if he gives water in despite, when the disciple needs wine or a cordial, his reward shall be, to want that water to cool his tongue.

But this duty must be reduced to rules:

[n] 1 Cor. x. 31.

[o] Atticus eximie si cœnat, lautus habetur;
Si Rutilus, demens ———— Juven. Sat II.

[p] Seneca.

Rules for our Intentions.

1. In every action reflect upon the end; and in your undertaking it, consider why you do it, and what you propound to yourself for a reward, and to your action as its end.

2. Begin every action in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: the meaning of which is, 1. That we be careful, that we do not the action without the permission or warrant of God. 2. That we design it to the glory of God, if not in the direct action, yet at least in its consequence; if not in the particular, yet at least in the whole order of things and accidents. 3. That it may be so blessed, that what you intend for innocent and holy purposes, may not, by any chance, or abuse, or misunderstanding of men, be turned into evil, or made the occasion of sin.

3. Let every action of concernment be begun with prayer, that God would not only bless the action, but sanctify your purpose; and make an oblation of the action to God: holy and well-intended actions being the best oblations and presents we can make to God; and, when God is entitled to them, he will the rather keep the fire upon the altar bright and shining.

4. In the prosecution of the action, renew and re-enkindle your purpose by short ejaculations to these purposes: "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name, let all praise be given:" and consider, "Now I am working the work of God; I am his servant, I am in a happy employment, I am doing my Master's business, I am not at my own dispose, I am using his talents, and all the gain must be his:" for then be sure, as the glory is his, so the reward shall be thine. If thou bringest his goods home with increase, he will make thee ruler over cities.

5. Have a care, that, while the altar thus sends up a holy fume, thou dost not suffer the birds to come and carry away the sacrifice: that is, let not that which began well, and was intended for God's glory, decline and end in thy own praise, or temporal satisfaction, or a sin. A story told to represent the vileness of unchastity, is well begun: but if thy female auditor be pleased with thy language, and begins rather to like thy person for thy story, than to dislike the crime, be watchful, lest this goodly head of gold descend in silver and brass, and end in iron and clay, like Nebuchadnezzar's image; for from the[q] end it shall have its name and reward.

6. If any accidental event, which was not first intended by thee, can come to pass, let it not be taken into thy purposes, not at all be made use of: as if, by telling a true story, you can do an ill turn to your enemy, by no means do it; but, when the temptation is found out, turn all thy enmity upon that.

7. In every more solemn action of religion, join together many good ends, that the consideration of them may entertain all your affections; and that, when any one ceases, the purity of your intention may be supported by another supply. He that fasts only to tame a rebellious body, when he is provided of a remedy either in grace or nature, may be tempted to leave off his fasting. But he, that in his fast intends the mortification of every unruly appetite, and accustoming himself to bear the yoke of the Lord, a contempt of the pleasures of meat and drink, humiliation of all wilder thoughts, obedience and humility, austerity and charity, and the convenience and assistance to devotion, and to do an act of repentance; whatever happens, will have reason enough to make him to continue his purpose, and to sanctify it. And certain it is, the more good ends are designed in an action, the more degrees of excellency the man obtains.

8. If any temptation to spoil your purpose happens in a religious duty, do not presently omit the action, but rather strive to rectify your intention, and to mortify the temptation. St. Bernard taught us this rule: for when the devil, observing him to preach excellently and to do much benefit to his hearers, tempted him to vain-glory, hoping that the good man, to avoid that, would cease preaching, he gave this answer only; "I neither began for thee, neither for thee will I make an end."

9. In all actions, which are of long continuance, deliberation, and abode, let your holy and pious intention be actual; that is, that it be, by a special prayer or action, by a peculiar act of resignation or oblation given to God: but in smaller actions, and little things and indifferent, fail not to secure a pious habitual intention; that is, that it be included within your general care, that no action have an ill end; and that it be comprehended in your general prayers, whereby you offer yourself and all you do, to God's glory.

10. Call not every temporal end a defiling of thy intention, but only, 1. when it contradicts any of the ends of God; or, 2. when it is principally intended in an action of religion. For sometimes a temporal end is part of our duty; and such are all the actions of our calling, whether our employment be religious or civil. We are commanded to provide for our family: but if the minister of divine offices shall take upon him that holy calling for covetous or ambitious ends, or shall not design the glory of God principally and especially, he hath polluted his hands and his heart; and the fire of the altar is quenched, or it sends forth nothing but the smoke of mushrooms, or unpleasant gums. And it is a great unworthiness to prefer the interest of a creature before the ends of God, the Almighty Creator.

But because many cases may happen, in which a man's heart may deceive him, and he may not well know what is in his own spirit; therefore, by these following signs, we shall best make a judgment, whether our intentions be pure, and our purposes holy.

Signs of Purity of Intention.

1. It is probable our hearts[r] are right with God, and our intentions innocent and pious, if we set upon actions of religion or civil life with an affec-

[q] Qui furatur ut mœchetur, mœchus est magis quam fur.—ARIST. Eth.

[r] See sect. I. of this chapter, Rule 18.

tion proportionate to the quality of the work; that we act our temporal affairs with a desire no greater than our necessity; and that, in actions of religion, we be zealous, active, and operative, so far as prudence will permit; but in all cases, that we value a religious design before a temporal, when otherwise they are in equal order to their several ends: that is, that whatsoever is necessary in order to our soul's health, be higher esteemed than what is for bodily; and the necessities, the indispensable necessities of the spirit, be served before the needs of nature, when they are required in their several circumstances; or plainer yet, when we choose any temporal inconvenience, rather than commit a sin, and when we choose to do a duty, rather than to get gain. But he that does his recreation or his merchandise cheerfully, promptly, readily, and busily, and the works of religion slowly, flatly, and without appetite; and the spirit moves like Pharaoh's chariots, when the wheels were off; it is a sign, that his heart is not right with God, but it cleaves too much to the world.

2. It is likely our hearts are pure, and our intentions spotless, when we are not solicitous of the opinion and censures of men; but only that we do our duty, and be accepted of God. For our eyes will certainly be fixed there, from whence we expect our reward: and if we desire that God should approve us, it is a sign we do his work, and expect him our paymaster.

3. He that does as well, in private, between God and his own soul, as in public, in pulpits, in theatres, and market-places, hath given himself a good testimony, that his purposes are full of honesty, nobleness, and integrity. For what Helkanah said to the mother of Samuel, "Am not I better to thee than ten sons?" is most certainly verified concerning God; that he, who is to be our judge, is better than ten thousand witnesses. But he, that would have his virtue published, studies not virtue, but glory. "He is not just,[s] that will not be just without praise: but he is a righteous man, that does justice, when to do so is made infamous; and he is a wise man, who is delighted with an ill name that is well gotten." And indeed that man hath a strange[t] covetousness, or folly, that is not contented with this reward, that he hath pleased God. And see what he gets by it. He that does good works[u] for praise or secular ends, sells an inestimable jewel for a trifle; and that, which would purchase heaven for him, he parts with for the breath of the people; which, at best, is but air, and that not often wholesome.

4. It is well, also, when we are not solicitous or troubled concerning the effect and event of all our actions; but that being first by prayer recommended to him, is left at his dispose: for then, in case the event be not answerable to our desires, or to the efficacy of the instrument, we have nothing left to rest in, but the honesty of our purposes; which it is the more likely we have secured, by how much more we are indifferent concerning the success. St. James converted but eight persons, when he preached in Spain: and our blessed Saviour converted fewer than his own disciples did: and if thy labours prove unprosperous, if thou beest much troubled at that, it is certain thou didst not think thyself secure of a reward for your intention; which you might have done, if it had been pure and just.

5. He loves virtue for God's sake and its own, that loves and honours it wherever it is to be seen; but he that is envious or angry at a virtue, that is not his own, at the perfection or excellency of his neighbour, is not covetous of the virtue, but of its reward and reputation; and then his intentions are polluted. It was a great ingenuity in Moses, that wished all the people might be prophets; but if he had designed his own honour, he would have prophesied alone. But he that desires only, that the work of God and religion shall go on, is pleased with it, whoever is the instrument.

6. He that despises the world and all its appendant vanities, is the best judge, and the most secured of his intentions; because he is the farthest removed from a temptation. Every degree of mortification is a testimony of the purity of our purposes; and in what degree we despise sensual pleasure, or secular honours, or worldly reputation, in the same degree we shall conclude our heart right to religion and spiritual designs.

7. When we are not solicitous concerning the instruments and means of our actions; but use those means, which God hath laid before us, with resignation, indifferency, and thankfulness; it is a good sign, that we are rather intent upon the end of God's glory, than our own conveniency, or temporal satisfaction. He that is indifferent, whether he serve God in riches or in poverty, is rather a seeker of God than of himself; and he that will throw away a good book, because it is not curiously gilded, is more curious to please his eye, than to inform his understanding.

8. When a temporal end, consisting with a spiritual, and pretended to be subordinate to it, happens to fail and be defeated, if we can rejoice in that, so God's glory may be secured, and the interests of religion, it is a great sign our hearts are right, and our ends prudently designed and ordered.

When our intentions are thus balanced, regulated, and discerned, we may consider, 1. That this exercise is of so universal efficacy in the whole course of a holy life, that it is like the soul to every holy action, and must be provided for in every undertaking; and is, of itself alone, sufficient to make all natural and indifferent actions to be adopted into the family of religion.

2. That there are some actions, which are usually reckoned as parts of our religion, which yet, of themselves, are so relative and imperfect, that, without the purity of intention, they degenerate; and unless they be directed and proceed on to those purposes, which God designed them to, they return into the family of common, secular, or sinful actions. Thus alms are for charity, fasting for temperance,

[s] Seneca,— Ep. 113.
[t] St. Chrys. l. ii de Compun. cordis
[u] St. Greg. Moral. 8. cap. xxv.

prayer is for religion, humiliation is for humility, austerity or sufferance is in order to the virtue of patience: and when these actions fail of their several ends, or are not directed to their own purposes, alms are mispent, fasting is an impertinent trouble, prayer is but lip-labour, humiliation is but hypocrisy, sufferance is but vexation; for such were the alms of the Pharisee, the fast of Jezebel, the prayer of Judah reproved by the prophet Isaiah, the humiliation of Ahab, the martyrdom of heretics; in which nothing is given to God, but the body, or the forms of religion; but the soul and the power of godliness is wholly wanting.

3. We are to consider, that no intention can sanctify an unholy or unlawful action. Saul, the king, disobeyed God's commandment, and spared the cattle of Amalek to reserve the best for sacrifice: and Saul, the Pharisee, persecuted the church of God, with a design to do God service: and they that killed the apostles, had also good purposes, but they had unhallowed actions. When there is both truth in election, and charity in the intention;[v] when we go to God in ways of his own choosing or approving, then our eye is single, and our hands are clean, and our hearts are pure. But when a man does evil, that good may come of it, or good to an evil purpose, that man does like him that rolls himself in thorns that he may sleep easily; he roasts himself in the fire, that he may quench his thirst with his own sweat; he turns his face to the east, that he may go to bed with the sun. I end this with the saying of a wise heathen;[w] "He is to be called evil, that is good only for his own sake. Regard not how full hands you bring to God, but how pure. Many cease from sin out of fear alone, not out of innocence or love of virtue;" and they, as yet, are not to be called innocent, but timorous.

SECTION III.

The third general Instrument of holy Living; or the Practice of the Presence of God.

THAT God is present in all places, that he sees every action, hears all discourses, and understands every thought, is no strange thing to a christian ear, who hath been taught this doctrine, not only by right reason, and the consent of all the wise men in the world, but also by God himself in holy Scripture. "Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth?"[x] "Neither is there any creature, that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and open to the eyes of him with whom we have to do."[y] "For in him we live, and move, and have our being."[z] God is wholly in every place; included in no place; not bound with cords, except those of love; not divided into parts, not changeable into several shapes; filling heaven and earth with his present power, and with his never absent nature. So St. Augustine[a] expresses this article. So that we may imagine God to be as the air and the sea; and we all enclosed in his circle, wrapped up in the lap of his infinite nature; or as infants in the wombs of their pregnant mothers: and we can no more be removed from the presence of God than from our own being.

[v] St. Bern. lib. de Præcept. [w] Publius Mimus.
[x] Jer. xxiii. 23, 24. [y] Heb. iv. 13. [z] Acts vii. 28.
[a] Lib. vii. de Civit. c. xxx.

Several manners of the Divine Presence.

The presence of God is understood by us, in several manners, and to several purposes.

1. God is present by his essence; which, because it is infinite, cannot be contained within the limits of any place; and because he is of an essential purity and spiritual nature, he cannot be undervalued by being supposed present in the places of unnatural uncleanness: because as the sun, reflecting upon the mud of strands and shores, is unpolluted in its beams, so is God not dishonoured, when we suppose him in every of his creatures, and in every part of every one of them; and is still as unmixt with any unhandsome adherence, as is the soul in the bowels of the body.

2. God is every where present by his power.[b] He rolls the orbs of heaven with his hand; he fixes the earth with his foot; he guides all the creatures with his eye, and refreshes them with his influence; he makes the power of hell to shake with his terrors, and binds the devils with his word, and throws them out with his command; and sends the angels on embassies with his decrees: he hardens the joints of infants and confirms the bones, when they are fashioned beneath secretly in the earth. He it is, that assists at the numerous productions of fishes; and there is not one hollowness in the bottom of the sea, but he shows himself to be Lord of it, by sustaining there the creatures, that come to dwell in it: and in the wilderness, the bittern and the stork, the dragon and the satyr, the unicorn and the elk, live upon his provisions, and revere his power, and feel the force of his almightiness.

3. God is more specially present, in some places, by the several and more special manifestations of himself to extraordinary purposes. First, by glory. Thus his seat is in heaven; because, there he sits encircled with all the outward demonstrations of his glory, which he is pleased to show to all the inhabitants of those his inward and secret courts. And thus they, that "die in the Lord," may be properly said to be "gone to God;" with whom although they were before, yet now they enter into his courts, in the secret of his tabernacle, into the retinue and splendour of his glory. That is called walking with God; but this is dwelling, or being with him. "I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ;" so said St. Paul. But this manner of Divine presence is reserved for the elect people of God, and for their portion in their country.

[b] Θεὸς περιέχε. τῇ βουλήσει τὸ πᾶν, μείζων τοῦ παντὸς ὥσπερ τῇ οὐσίᾳ, οὕτως καὶ ἀξίᾳ.—RESP. ad Orthod.

4. God is, by grace and benediction, specially present in holy places,[c] and in the solemn assemblies of his servants. If holy people meet in grots and dens of the earth, when persecution or a public necessity disturbs the public order, circumstance, and convenience, God fails not to come thither to them; but God is also, by the same or a greater reason, present there, where they meet ordinarily, by order, and public authority: there God is present ordinarily, that is, at every such meeting. God will go out of his way to meet his saints, when themselves are forced out of their way of order by a sad necessity; but else, God's usual way is to be present in those places where his servants are appointed ordinarily[d] to meet. But his presence there signifies nothing, but a readiness to hear their prayers, to bless their persons, to accept their offices, and to like even the circumstance of orderly and public meeting. For thither the prayers of consecration, the public authority separating it, and God's love of order, and the reasonable customs of religion, have, in ordinary, and in a certain degree, fixed this manner of his presence; and he loves to have it so.

5. God is especially present, in the hearts of his people, by his Holy Spirit: and indeed the hearts of holy men are temples in the truth of things, and, in type and shadow, they are heaven itself. For God reigns in the hearts of his servants: there is his kingdom. The power of grace hath subdued all his enemies: there is his power. They serve him night and day, and give him thanks and praise: that is his glory. This is the religion and worship of God in the temple. The temple itself is the heart of man; Christ is the high priest, who from thence sends up the incense of prayers, and joins them to his own intercession, and presents all together to his Father; and the Holy Ghost, by his dwelling there, hath also consecrated it into a temple;[e] and God dwells in our hearts by faith, and Christ by his Spirit, and the Spirit by his purities: so that we are also cabinets of the mysterious Trinity; and what is this short of heaven itself, but as infancy is short of manhood, and letters of words? The same state of life it is, but not the same age. It is heaven in a looking-glass, dark, but yet true, representing the beauties of the soul, and the graces of God, and the images of his eternal glory, by the reality of a special presence.

6. God is specially present in the consciences of all persons, good and bad, by way of testimony and judgment; that is, he is there a remembrancer to call our actions to mind, a witness to bring them to judgment, and a judge to acquit or to condemn. And although this manner of presence is, in this life, after the manner of this life, that is, imperfect, and we forget many actions of our lives; yet the greatest changes of our state of grace or sin, our most considerable actions, are always present, like capital letters to an aged and dim eye: and, at the day of judgment, God shall draw aside the cloud, and manifest this manner of his presence more notoriously, and make it appear that he was an observer of our very thoughts; and that he only laid those things by, which, because we covered with dust and negligence, were not then discerned. But when we are risen from our dust and imperfection, they all appear plain and legible.

Now the consideration of this great truth is of a very universal use, in the whole course of the life of a christian. All the consequents and effects of it are universal. He that remembers, that God stands a witness and a judge, beholding every secrecy, besides his impiety, must have put on impudence, if he be not much restrained in his temptation to sin. "For the greatest part of sin is taken away,[f] if a man have a witness of his conversation: and he is a great despiser of God, who sends a boy away, when he is going to commit fornication, and yet will dare to do it, though he knows God is present, and cannot be sent off: as if the eye of a little boy were more awful than the all-seeing eye of God. He is to be feared in public, he is to be feared in private: if you go forth, he spies you; if you go in, he sees you; when you light the candle, he observes you; when you put it out, then also God marks you. Be sure that, while you are in his sight, you behave yourself as becomes so holy a presence." But if you will sin, retire yourself wisely, and go where God cannot see; for no where else can you be safe. And certainly, if men would always actually consider, and really esteem this truth, that God is the great eye of the world, always watching over our actions, and an ever-open ear to hear all our words, and an unwearied arm ever lifted up to crush a sinner into ruin, it would be the readiest way in the world, to make sin to cease from amongst the children of men, and for men to approach to the blessed estate of the saints in heaven, who cannot sin, for they always walk in the presence and behold the face of God. This instrument is to be reduced to practice, according to the following rules.

Rules of exercising this consideration.

1. Let this actual thought often return, that God is omnipresent, filling every place; and say with David,[g] "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, thou art there," &c. This thought, by being frequent, will make an habitual dread and reverence towards God, and fear in all thy actions. For it is a great necessity and engagement to do unblamably, when we act before the Judge,[h] who is infallible in his sentence, all-knowing in his information, severe in his anger, powerful in his providence, and intolerable in his wrath and indignation.

2. In the beginning of actions of religion, make an act of adoration, that is, solemnly worship God, and place thyself in God's presence, and behold him with the eye of faith; and let thy desires actually

[c] Matt. xviii. 20. Heb. x. 25.
[d] 1 Kings v. 9. Psalm cxxxviii. 1, 2.
[e] 1 Cor. iii. 16. 2 Cor. vi. 16.
[f] S. Aug. de verbis Dominicis, c. iii.
[g] Psal. xiii. 7, 8.
[h] Boeth. l. v. de Consol.

fix on him, as the object of thy worship, and the reason of thy hope, and the fountain of thy blessing. For when thou hast placed thyself before him, and kneelest in his presence, it is most likely, all the following parts of thy devotion will be answerable to the wisdom of such an apprehension, and the glory of such a presence.

3. Let every thing you see, represent to your spirit the presence, the excellency, and the power of God; and let your conversation with the creatures lead you unto the Creator; for so shall your actions be done, more frequently, with an actual eye to God's presence, by your often seeing him in the glass of the creation. In the face of the sun, you may see God's beauty; in the fire, you may feel his heat warming; in the water, his gentleness to refresh you; he it is, that comforts your spirit, when you have taken cordials; it is the dew of heaven, that makes your field give you bread; and the breasts of God are the bottles, that minister drink to your necessities. This philosophy, which is obvious to every man's experience, is a good advantage to our piety; and, by this act of understanding, our wills are checked from violence and misdemeanour.

4. In your retirement, make frequent colloquies, or short discoursings, between God and thy own soul. "Seven times a day do I praise thee: and, in the night season also, I thought upon thee, while I was waking." So did David; and every act of complaint or thanksgiving, every act of rejoicing or of mourning, every petition and every return of the heart in these intercourses, is a going to God, an appearing in his presence, and a representing him present to thy spirit and to thy necessity. And this was, long since, by a spiritual person called, "a building to God, a chapel in our heart." It reconciles Martha's employment with Mary's devotion, charity, and religion, the necessities of our calling and the employments of devotion. For thus, in the midst of the works of your trade, you may retire into your chapel, your heart; and converse with God by frequent addresses and returns.

5. Represent and offer to God "acts of love and fear;" which are the proper effects of this apprehension, and the proper exercise of this consideration. For, as God is every where present by his power, he calls for reverence and godly fear; as he is present to thee in all thy needs, and relieves them, he deserves thy love: and since, in every accident of our lives, we find one or other of these apparent, and, in most things, we see both, it is a proper and proportionate return, that to every such demonstration of God, we express ourselves sensible of it, by admiring the Divine goodness, or trembling at his presence; ever obeying him, because we love him, and ever obeying him, because we fear to offend him. This is that which Enoch did, who thus "walked with God."

6. Let us remember, that God is in us, and that we are in him: we are his workmanship, let us not deface it; we are in his presence, let us not pollute it by unholy and impure actions. God hath "also wrought all our works in us;"[i] and because he rejoices in his own works, if we defile them, and make them unpleasant to him, we walk perversely with God, and he will walk crookedly towards us.

7. "God is in the bowels of thy brother;" refresh them, when he needs it, and then you give your alms in the presence of God, and to God; and he feels the relief which thou providest for thy brother.

8. God is in every place: suppose it therefore to be a church; and that decency of deportment and piety of carriage, which you are taught, by religion, or by custom, or by civility and public manners, to use in churches, the same uses in all places: with this difference only, that, in churches, let your deportment be religious in external forms and circumstances also; but there and every where, let it be religious in abstaining from spiritual indecencies, and in readiness to do good actions; that it may not be said of us, as God once complained of his people, "What hath my beloved done wickedness in my house?"[k]

9. God is in every creature; be cruel towards none, neither abuse any by intemperance. Remember, that the creatures, and every member of thy own body, is one of the lesser cabinets and receptacles of God. They are such, which God hath blessed with his presence, hallowed by his touch, and separated from unholy use, by making them to belong to his dwelling.

10. He walks as in the presence of God, that converses with him in frequent prayer and frequent communion; that runs to him in all his necessities, that asks counsel of him in all his doubtings; that opens all his wants to him; that weeps before him for his sins; that asks remedy and support for his weakness; that fears him as a judge; reverences him as a lord; obeys him as a father; and loves him as a patron.

The benefits of this exercise.

The benefits of this consideration and exercise being universal upon all the parts of piety, I shall less need to specify any particulars: but yet, most properly, this exercise of considering the Divine presence is, 1. an excellent help to prayer, producing in us reverence and awfulness to the divine majesty of God, and actual devotion in our offices. 2. It produces a confidence in God, and fearlessness of our enemies, patience in trouble, and hope of remedy; since God is so nigh in all our sad accidents, he is a disposer of the hearts of men and the events of things; he proportions out our trials, and supplies us with remedy, and, where his rod strikes us, his staff supports us. To which we may add this; that God, who is always with us, is especially, by promise, with us in tribulation, to turn the misery into a mercy, and that our greatest trouble may become our advantage, by entitling us to a new manner of the Divine presence. 3. It is apt to produce joy and rejoicing in God, we being more apt to delight in the partners and witnesses of our conversation; every degree of mutual abiding and conversing being a relation and an endearment: we

[i] Isa. xxvi. 12.

[k] Jer. xi. 15. secun. vulg. edit.

are of the same household with God; he is with us in our natural actions, to preserve us; in our recreations, to restrain us; in our public actions to applaud or reprove us; in our private, to observe us; in our sleeps, to watch by us; in our watchings, to refresh us: and if we walk with God in all his ways, as he walks with us in all ours, we shall find perpetual reasons to enable us to keep that rule of God, "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, Rejoice." And this puts me in mind of a saying of an old religious person,[l] "There is one way of overcoming our ghostly enemies; spiritual mirth, and a perpetual bearing of God in our minds." This effectively resists the devil, and suffers us to receive no hurt from him. 4. This exercise is apt also to enkindle holy desires of the enjoyment of God, because it produces joy, when we do enjoy him; the same desires that a weak man hath for a defender, the sick man for a physician, the poor for a patron, the child for his father, the espoused lover for her betrothed. 5. From the same fountain are apt to issue humility of spirit, apprehensions of our great distance and our great needs, our daily wants and hourly supplies, admiration of God's unspeakable mercies: it is the cause of great modesty and decency in our actions; it helps to recollection of mind, and restrains the scatterings and looseness of wandering thoughts; it establishes the heart in good purposes, and leadeth on to perseverance; it gains purity and perfection, (according to the saying of God to Abraham, "walk before me, and be perfect,") holy fear, and holy love, and indeed every thing that pertains to holy living: when we see ourselves placed in the eye of God, who sets us on work and will reward us plenteously, to serve him with an eye-service is very pleasing; for he also sees the heart: and the want of this consideration was declared to be the cause, why Israel sinned so grievously, "for they say, The Lord hath forsaken the earth, and the Lord seeth not:"[m] "therefore the land is full of blood, and the city full of perverseness."[n] What a child would do, in the eye of his father; and a pupil, before his tutor; and a wife, in the presence of her husband; and a servant, in the sight of his master; let us always do the same: for we are made a spectacle to God, to angels, and to men; we are always in the sight and presence of the all-seeing and almighty God, who also is to us a father and a guardian, a husband and a lord.

Prayers and Devotions, according to the religion and purposes of the foregoing Considerations.

I.

For grace to spend our time well.

O eternal God, who, from all eternity, dost behold and love thy own glories and perfections infinite, and hast created me to do the work of God after the manner of men, and to serve thee in this generation, and according to my capacities; give me thy grace, that I may be a curious and prudent spender of my time, so as I may best prevent, or resist, all temptation, and be profitable to the christian commonwealth, and, by discharging all my duty, may glorify thy name. Take from me all slothfulness, and give me a diligent and an active spirit, and wisdom to choose my employment; that I may do works proportionable to my person, and to the dignity of a christian, and may fill up all the spaces of my time with actions of religion and charity; that, when the devil assaults me, he may not find me idle; and my dearest Lord, at his sudden coming, may find me busy in lawful, necessary, and pious actions; improving my talent intrusted to me by thee, my Lord; that I may enter into the joy of my Lord, to partake of his eternal felicities, even for thy mercy's sake, and for my dearest Saviour's sake. Amen.

Here follows the devotion of ordinary days; for the right employment of those portions of time, which every day must allow for religion.

The first Prayers in the morning, as soon as we are dressed.

Humbly and reverently compose yourself, with heart lift up to God, and your head bowed, and meekly kneeling upon your knees, say the Lord's prayer: after which, use the following collects, or as many of them as you shall choose.

"Our Father which art in heaven," &c.

I.

An Act of Adoration, being the song that the angels sing in heaven.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come;[o] heaven and earth, angels and men, the air and the sea, give glory, and honour, and thanks to him, that sitteth on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever.[p] All the blessed spirits and souls of the righteous cast their crowns before the throne, and worship him, that liveth for ever and ever.[q] Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created. Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord God Almighty: just and true are thy ways, thou king of saints.[r] Thy wisdom is infinite, thy mercies are glorious; and I am not worthy, O Lord, to appear in thy presence, before whom the angels hide their faces. O holy and eternal Jesus, Lamb of God, who wert slain from the beginning of the world, thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign with thee for ever. Blessing, honour, glory, and power be unto him, that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever. Amen.

[l] In vita S. Anthon.
[m] Psal. x. 11.
[n] Ezek. ix. 9.
[o] Rev. xi. 17.
[p] And v. 10, 13.
[q] And iv. 10.
[r] And xv. 3.

II.

An Act of Thanksgiving, being the song of David, for the morning.

Sing praises unto the Lord, O ye saints of his, and give thanks to him for a remembrance of his holiness. For his wrath endureth but the twinkling of an eye; and in his pleasure is life: heaviness may endure for a night; but joy cometh in the morning. Thou, Lord, hast preserved me this night from the violence of the spirits of darkness, from all sad casualties and evil accidents, from the wrath, which I have every day deserved: thou hast brought my soul out of hell; thou hast kept my life from them that go down into the pit; thou hast showed me marvellous great kindness, and hast blessed me for ever: the greatness of thy glory reacheth unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds. Therefore shall every good man sing of thy praise without ceasing. O my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever. Hallelujah.

III.

An Act of Oblation, or presenting ourselves to God for the day.

Most holy and eternal God, lord and sovereign of all the creatures, I humbly present to thy Divine Majesty, myself, my soul and body, my thoughts and my words, my actions and intentions, my passions and my sufferings, to be disposed by thee to thy glory; to be blessed by thy providence; to be guided by thy counsel; to be sanctified by thy Spirit; and, afterwards, that my body and soul may be received into glory: for nothing can perish, which is under thy custody; and the enemy of souls cannot devour what is thy portion, nor take it out of thy hands. This day, O Lord, and all the days of my life, I dedicate to thy honour; and the actions of my calling, to the uses of grace; and the religion of all my days, to be united to the merits and intercession of my holy Saviour, Jesus; that, in him and for him, I may be pardoned and accepted. Amen.

IV.

An Act of Repentance or Contrition.

For, as for me, I am not worthy to be called thy servant; much less am I worthy to be thy son; for I am the vilest of sinners and the worst of men; a lover of the things of the world, and a despiser of the things of God; proud and envious, lustful and intemperate, greedy of sin, and impatient of reproof; desirous to seem holy, and negligent of being so; transported with interest; fooled with presumption and false principles; disturbed with anger, with a peevish and unmortified spirit, and disordered by a whole body of sin and death. Lord, pardon all my sins for my sweetest Saviour's sake; thou, who didst die for me, holy Jesus, save me and deliver me; reserve not my sins to be punished in the day of wrath and eternal vengeance; but wash away my sins, and blot them out of thy remembrance, and purify my soul with the waters of repentance, and the blood of the cross; that, for what is past, thy wrath may not come out against me; and, for the time to come, I may never provoke thee to anger or to jealousy. O just and dear God, be pitiful and gracious to thy servant. Amen.

V.

The Prayer, or Petition.

Bless me, gracious God, in my calling to such purposes as thou shalt choose for me, or employ me in: relieve me in all my sadnesses; make my bed in my sickness; give me patience in my sorrows, confidence in thee, and grace to call upon thee in all temptations. O be thou my guide in all my actions, my protector in all dangers; give me a healthful body and a clear understanding; a sanctified and just, a charitable and humble, a religious and a contented spirit: let not my life be miserable and wretched; nor my name stained with sin and shame; nor my condition lifted up to a tempting and dangerous fortune; but let my condition be blessed, my conversation useful to my neighbours, and pleasing to thee; that, when my body shall lie down in its bed of darkness, my soul may pass into the regions of light, and live with thee for ever, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

VI.

An Act of Intercession or Prayer for others, to be added to this or any other office, as our devotion, or duty, or their needs, shall determine us.

O God of infinite mercy, who hast compassion on all men, and relievest the necessities of all that call to thee for help, hear the prayers of thy servant, who is unworthy to ask any petition for himself, yet, in humility and duty, is bound to pray for others.

For the Church.

O let thy mercy descend upon the whole church; preserve her in truth and peace, in unity and safety, in all storms, and against all temptations and enemies; that she, offering to thy glory the never-ceasing sacrifice of prayer and thanksgiving, may advance the honour of her Lord, and be filled with his Spirit, and partake of his glory. Amen.

For the King.

In mercy, remember the king; preserve his person in health and honour; his crown, in wealth and dignity; his kingdoms, in peace and plenty; the churches under his protection, in piety and knowledge, and a strict and holy religion: keep him perpetually in thy fear and favour, and crown him with glory and immortality. Amen.

For the Clergy.

Remember them that minister about holy things; let them be clothed with righteousness, and sing with joyfulness. Amen.

For Wife or Husband.

Bless thy servant [my wife, or husband] with health of body and of spirit. O let the hand of

thy blessing be upon *his* [or *her*] head, night and day, and support *him* in all necessities, strengthen *him* in all temptations, comfort *him* in all *his* sorrows, and let *him* be thy servant in all changes; and make us both to dwell with thee for ever in thy favour, in the light of thy countenance, and in thy glory. Amen.

For our Children.

Bless my children with healthful bodies, with good understandings, with the graces and gifts of thy Spirit, with sweet dispositions and holy habits; and sanctify them throughout in their bodies, and souls, and spirits, and keep them unblamable to the coming of the Lord Jesus. Amen.

For Friends and Benefactors.

Be pleased, O Lord, to remember my friends, all that have prayed for me, and all that have done me good. [*Here name such, whom you would specially recommend.*] Do thou good to them, and return all their kindness double into their own bosom, rewarding them with blessings, and sanctifying them with thy graces, and bringing them to glory.

For our Family.

Let all my family and kindred, my neighbours and acquaintance, [*here name what other relations you please,*] receive the benefits of my prayers, and the blessings of God; the comforts and supports of thy providence, and the sanctification of thy Spirit.

For all in misery.

Relieve and comfort all the persecuted and afflicted: speak peace to troubled consciences: strengthen the weak: confirm the strong: instruct the ignorant: deliver the oppressed from him that spoileth him, and relieve the needy that hath no helper: and bring us all, by the waters of comfort, and in the ways of righteousness, to the kingdom of rest and glory, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

To God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; to the eternal Son, that was incarnate and born of a virgin; to the Spirit of the Father and the Son, be all honour and glory, worship, and thanksgiving, now and for ever. Amen.

Another Form of Prayer, for the morning.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Our Father, &c.

I.

Most glorious and eternal God, Father of mercy, and God of all comfort, I worship and adore thee with the lowest humility of my soul and body, and give thee all thanks and praise for thy infinite and essential glories and perfections, and for the continual demonstration of thy mercies upon me, upon all mine, and upon thy holy catholic church.

II.

I acknowledge, dear God, that I have deserved the greatest of thy wrath and indignation; and that, if thou hadst dealt with me according to my deserving, I had now, at this instant, been desperately bewailing my miseries, in the sorrows and horrors of a sad eternity. But, thy mercy triumphing over thy justice and my sins, thou hast still continued to me life and time of repentance; thou hast opened to me the gates of grace and mercy, and perpetually callest upon me to enter in, and to walk in the paths of a holy life, that I might glorify thee, and be glorified of thee eternally.

III.

Behold, O God, for this thy great and unspeakable goodness, for the preservation of me this night, and for all other thy graces and blessings, I offer up my soul and body, all that I am, and all that I have, as a sacrifice to thee and thy service; humbly begging of thee to pardon all my sins, to defend me from all evil, to lead me into all good; and let my portion be amongst thy redeemed ones, in the gathering together of the saints, in the kingdom of grace and glory.

IV.

Guide me, O Lord, in all the changes and varieties of the world; that in all things that shall happen, I may have an evenness and tranquillity of spirit; that my soul may be wholly resigned to thy divinest will and pleasure, never murmuring at thy gentle chastisements and fatherly correction; never waxing proud and insolent, though I feel a torrent of comforts and prosperous successes.

V.

Fix my thoughts, my hopes, and my desires, upon heaven and heavenly things: teach me to despise the world, to repent me deeply for my sins; give me holy purposes of amendment, and ghostly strength and assistances to perform faithfully whatsoever I shall intend piously. Enrich my understanding with an eternal treasure of Divine truths, that I may know thy will; and thou, who workest in us to will and to do of thy good pleasure, teach me to obey all thy commandments, to believe all thy revelations, and make me partaker of all thy gracious promises.

VI.

Teach me to watch over all my ways, that I may never be surprised by sudden temptations or a careless spirit, nor ever return to folly and vanity. Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips, that I offend not in my tongue, neither against piety nor charity. Teach me to think of nothing but thee, and what is in order to thy glory and service; to speak nothing but of thee, and thy glories; and to do nothing, but what becomes thy servant, whom thy infinite mercy, by the graces of thy Holy Spirit, hath sealed up to the day of redemption.

VII.

Let all my passions and affections be so mortified and brought under the dominion of grace, that I may never, by deliberation and purpose, nor yet by levity, rashness, or inconsideration, offend thy Divine majesty. Make me such as thou wouldst have me to be: strengthen my faith, confirm my hope, and give me a daily increase of charity, that, this day and ever, I may serve thee according to all my opportunities and capacities, growing from grace to grace; till at last, by thy mercies, I shall receive the consummation and perfection of grace, even the glories of thy kingdom, in the full fruition of the face and excellencies of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; to whom be glory and praise, honour and adoration, given by all angels, and all men, and all creatures, now, and to all eternity. Amen.

¶ To this may be added the prayer of intercession for others, whom we are bound to remember, which is at the end of the foregoing prayer; or else you may take such special prayers, which follow at the end of the fourth chapter [for parents, for children, &c.]

After which, conclude with this ejaculation.

Now, in all tribulation and anguish of spirit, in all dangers of soul and body, in prosperity and adversity, in the hour of death and in the day of judgment, holy and most blessed Saviour Jesus, have mercy upon me, save me, and deliver me and all faithful people. Amen.

¶ Between this and noon, usually, are said the public prayers appointed by authority; to which all the clergy are obliged, and other devout persons, that have leisure, to accompany them.

¶ Afternoon, or at any time of the day, when a devout person retires into his closet for private prayer, or spiritual exercises, he may say the following devotions.

An exercise to be used at any time of the day.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, &c. Our Father, &c.

The Hymn, collected out of the Psalms, recounting the excellencies and greatness of God.

O be joyful in God, all ye lands; sing praises unto the honour of his name, make his name to be glorious. O come hither, and behold the works of God, how wonderful he is in his doings towards the children of men. He ruleth with his power for ever.[s]

He is the Father of the fatherless, and defendeth the cause of the widow, even God in his holy habitation. He is the God, that maketh men to be of one mind in a house, and bringeth the prisoners out of captivity; but letteth the runagates continue in scarceness.[t]

It is the Lord, that commandeth the waters; it is the glorious God, that maketh the thunder. It is the Lord, that ruleth the sea: the voice of the Lord is mighty in operation; the voice of the Lord is a glorious voice.[u]

Let all the earth fear the Lord; stand in awe of him, all ye that dwell in the world.[v] Thou shalt show us wonderful things in thy righteousness, O God of our salvation; thou, that art the hope of all the ends of the earth, and of them that remain in the broad sea.[w]

Glory be to the Father, &c.

Or this.

O Lord, thou art my God, I will exalt thee: I will praise thy name, for thou hast done wonderful things: thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth.[x]

Thou, in thy strength, settest fast the mountains, and art girded about with power. Thou stillest the raging of the sea, and the noise of his waves, and the madness of his people.[y]

They also, that remain in the uttermost parts of the earth, shall be afraid at thy tokens; thou, that makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to praise thee.

O Lord God of hosts, who is like unto thee? thy truth, most mighty Lord, is on every side.[z] Among the gods there is none like unto thee; O Lord, there is none that can do as thou doest. For thou art great, and doest wondrous things; thou art God alone.[a]

God is very greatly to be feared in the council of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are round about him.[b]

Righteousness and equity is in the habitation of thy seat; mercy and truth shall go before thy face. Glory and worship are before him: power and honour are in his sanctuary.[c]

Thou, Lord, art the thing that I long for; thou art my hope, even from my youth. Through thee have I been holden up ever since I was born; thou art he, that took me out of my mother's womb; my praise shall be always of thee.[d]

Glory be to the Father, &c.

¶ After this may be read some portion of Holy Scripture, out of the New Testament, or out of the Sapiential books of the Old, *viz.* Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, &c. because these are of great use to piety, and to civil conversation. Upon which when you have awhile meditated, humbly composing yourself upon your knees, say as followeth.

Ejaculations.

My help standeth in the name of the Lord, who hath made heaven and earth.[e]

[s] Psal. lxvi. 1, 4, 6.
[t] Psal. lxviii. 5, 6.
[u] Psal. xxix. 3, 4.
[v] Psal. xxxiii. 8.
[w] Psal. lxv. 5.
[x] Isa. xxv. 1.
[y] Psal. lxv. 6—8.
[z] Psal. lxxxix. 9.
[a] Psal lxxxvi. 8, 9.
[b] Psal. lxxxix. 8, 15.
[c] Psal. xcvi. 3.
[d] Psal. lxxi. 5, 6.
[e] Psal. cxxiv. 8.

Show the light of thy countenance upon thy servant; and I shall be safe.[f]

Do well, O Lord, to them that be true of heart, and evermore mightily defend them.[g]

Direct me in thy truth, and teach me; for thou art my Saviour, and my great Master.[h]

Keep me from sin and death eternal, and from my enemies visible and invisible.

Give me grace to live a holy life, and thy favour, that I may die a godly and happy death.

Lord, hear the prayer of thy servant, and give me thy Holy Spirit.

The Prayer.

I.

O eternal God, merciful and gracious, vouchsafe thy favour and thy blessing to thy servant: let the love of thy mercies, and the dread and fear of thy majesty, make me careful and inquisitive to search thy will, and diligent to perform it, and to persevere in the practices of a holy life, even till the last of my days.

II.

Keep me, O Lord, for I am thine by creation; guide me, for I am thine by purchase: thou hast redeemed me by the blood of thy Son; and loved me with the love of a father, for I am thy child by adoption and grace: let thy mercy pardon my sins, thy providence secure me from the punishments and evils I have deserved, and thy care watch over me, that I may never any more offend thee: make me, in malice, to be a child; but in understanding, piety, and the fear of God, let me be a perfect man in Christ, innocent and prudent, readily furnished and instructed to every good work.

III.

Keep me, O Lord, from the destroying angel, and from the wrath of God: let thy anger never rise against me, but thy rod gently correct my follies, and guide me in thy ways, and thy staff support me in all sufferings and changes. Preserve me from fracture of bones, from noisome, infectious, and sharp sicknesses; from great violences of fortune and sudden surprises: keep all my senses entire till the day of my death, and let my death be neither sudden, untimely, nor unprovided: let it be after the common manner of men, having in it nothing extraordinary, but an extraordinary piety, and the manifestation of thy great and miraculous mercy.

IV.

Let no riches make me ever forget myself, no poverty ever make me to forget thee: let no hope or fear, no pleasure or pain, no accident without, no weakness within, hinder or discompose my duty, or turn me from the ways of thy commandments. O let thy Spirit dwell with me for ever, and make my soul just and charitable, full of honesty, full of religion, resolute and constant in holy purposes, but inflexible to evil. Make me humble and obedient, peaceable and pious: let me never envy any man's goods, nor deserve to be despised myself: and if I be, teach me to bear it with meekness and charity.

V.

Give me a tender conscience; a conversation discreet and affable, modest and patient, liberal and obliging; a body chaste and healthful, competency of living according to my condition, contentedness in all estates, a resigned will and mortified affections: that I may be, as thou wouldst have me, and my portion may be in the lot of the righteous, in the brightness of thy countenance, and the glories of eternity. Amen.

Holy is our God. Holy is the Almighty. Holy is the Immortal. Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth, have mercy upon me.

A form of Prayer for the Evening, to be said by such, who have not time or opportunity to say the public prayers appointed for this office.

I.

Evening Prayer.

O eternal God, great Father of men and angels, who hast established the heavens and the earth in a wonderful order, making day and night to succeed each other; I make my humble address to thy Divine Majesty, begging of thee mercy and protection this night and ever. O Lord, pardon all my sins, my light and rash words, the vanity and impiety of my thoughts, my unjust and uncharitable actions, and whatsoever I have transgressed against thee this day, or at any time before. Behold, O God, my soul is troubled in the remembrance of my sins, in the frailty and sinfulness of my flesh, exposed to every temptation, and of itself not able to resist any. Lord God of mercy, I earnestly beg of thee to give me a great portion of thy grace, such as may be sufficient and effectual for the mortification of all my sins and vanities and disorders: that as I have formerly served my lust and unworthy desires, so now I may give myself up wholly to thy service and the studies of a holy life.

II.

Blessed Lord, teach me frequently and sadly to remember my sins; and be thou pleased to remember them no more: let me never forget thy mercies, and do thou still remember to do me good. Teach me to walk always as in thy presence; ennoble my soul with great degrees of love to thee, and consign my spirit with great fear, religion, and veneration of thy holy name and laws; that it may become the great employment of my whole life to serve thee, to advance thy glory, to root out all the accursed habits of sin; that in holiness of life, in humility, in charity, in chastity, and all the ornaments of grace, I may, by patience, wait for the coming of our Lord Jesus. Amen.

[f] Psal. lxxx. 6. [g] Psal. cxxv. 4. [h] Psal. xxv. 5.

III.

Teach me, O Lord, to number my days, that I may apply my heart unto wisdom; ever to remember my last end, that I may not dare to sin against thee. Let thy holy angels be ever present with me to keep me in all my ways, from the malice and violence of the spirits of darkness, from evil company, and the occasions and opportunities of evil, from perishing in popular judgments, from all the ways of sinful shame, from the hands of all mine enemies, from a sinful life, and from despair in the day of my death. Then, O brightest Jesu, shine gloriously upon me; let thy mercies and the light of thy countenance sustain me in all my agonies, weaknesses, and temptations. Give me opportunity of a prudent and spiritual guide; and of receiving the holy sacrament, and let thy loving Spirit so guide me in the ways of peace and safety, that with the testimony of a good conscience and the sense of thy mercies and refreshment, I may depart this life in the unity of the church, in the love of God, and a certain hope of salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord and most blessed Saviour. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

Another Form of Evening Prayer which may also be used at bed-time.

Our Father, &c.

I will lift up my eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.[i]

My help cometh of the Lord, which made heaven and earth.

He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee, will not slumber.

Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord is thy keeper, the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand.

The sun shall not smite thee by day, neither the moon by night.

The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil; he shall preserve thy soul.

The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in, from this time forth for evermore.

Glory be to the Father, &c.

I.

Visit, I beseech thee, O Lord, this habitation with thy mercy, and me with thy grace and salvation. Let thy holy angels pitch their tents round about and dwell here, that no illusion of the night may abuse me, the spirits of darkness may not come near to hurt me, no evil or sad accident oppress me; and let the eternal Spirit of the Father dwell in my soul and body, filling every corner of my heart with light and grace. Let no deed of darkness overtake me; and let thy blessing, most blessed God, be upon me for ever, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

II.

Into thy hands, most blessed Jesu, I commend my soul and body, for thou hast redeemed both with thy precious blood. So bless and sanctify my sleep unto me, that it may be temperate, holy, and safe, a refreshment to my wearied body, to enable it so to serve my soul, that both may serve thee with a never-failing duty. O let me never sleep in sin or death eternal, but give me a watchful and a prudent spirit, that I may omit no opportunity of serving thee; that whether I sleep or wake, live or die, I may be thy servant and thy child: that when the work of my life is done, I may rest in the bosom of my Lord, till by the voice of the archangel, the trump of God, I shall be awakened, and called to sit down and feast in the eternal supper of the Lamb. Grant this, O Lamb of God, for the honour of thy mercies, and the glory of thy name, O most merciful Saviour and Redeemer Jesus. Amen.

III.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus, who hath sent his angels, and kept me this day from the destruction that walketh at noon, and the arrow that flieth by day; and hath given me his Spirit to restrain me from those evils, to which my own weaknesses, and my evil habits, and my unquiet enemies, would easily betray me. Blessed and for ever hallowed be thy name for that never-ceasing shower of blessing, by which I live, and am content and blessed, and provided for in all necessities, and set forward in my duty and way to heaven. Blessing, honour, glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever. Amen.

Holy is our God. Holy is the Almighty. Holy is the Immortal. Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth, have mercy upon me.

Ejaculations and short Meditations to be used in the night, when we wake.

Stand in awe and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. I will lay me down in peace and sleep; for thou, Lord, only makest me to dwell in safety.[k]

O Father of spirits, and the God of all flesh, have mercy and pity upon all sick and dying christians, and receive the souls which thou hast redeemed returning unto thee.

Blessed are they that dwell in the heavenly Jerusalem, where there is no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God does lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.[l] And there shall be no night there, and they need no candle; for the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign for ever and ever.[m]

Meditate on Jacob's wrestling with the angel all night: be thou also importunate with God for a blessing, and give not over till he hath blessed thee.

Meditate on the angel passing over the children of Israel, and destroying the Egyptians for disobe-

[i] Psal. cxxi. 1, &c. [k] Psal. iv. 4, 9. [l] Rev. xxi. 23. [m] Rev. xxii. 5.

dience and oppression. Pray for the grace of obedience and charity, and for the Divine protection.

Meditate on the angel, who destroyed in a night the whole army of the Assyrians for fornication. Call to mind the sins of thy youth, the sins of thy bed; and say with David, "My reins chasten me in the night season, and my soul refuseth comfort." Pray for pardon and the grace of chastity.

Meditate on the agonies of Christ in the garden, his sadness and affliction all that night; and thank and adore him for his love, that made him suffer so much for thee; and hate thy sins, which made it necessary for the Son of God to suffer so much.

Meditate on the four last things. 1. The certainty of death. 2. The terrors of the day of judgment. 3. The joys of heaven. 4. The pains of hell; and the eternity of both.

Think upon all thy friends, who are gone before thee; and pray that God would grant to thee to meet them in a joyful resurrection.

"The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night;[n] in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up. Seeing then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God?"

Lord, in mercy remember thy servant in the day of judgment.

Thou shalt answer for me, O Lord my God. In thee, O Lord, have I trusted: let me never be confounded. Amen.

I desire the christian reader to observe, that all these offices or forms of prayer (if they should be used every day) would not spend above an hour and a half: but because some of them are double (and so but one of them to be used in one day) it is much less: and by affording to God one hour in twenty-four, thou mayest have the comforts and rewards of devotion. But he that thinks this is too much, either is very busy in the world, or very careless of heaven. I have parted the prayers into smaller portions, that he may use which and how many he please in any one of the forms.

Ad Sect. 2.

A Prayer for holy intention in the beginning and pursuit of any considerable action, as Study, Preaching, &c.

O eternal God, who hast made all things for man, and man for thy glory, sanctify my body and soul, my thoughts and my intentions, my words and actions, that whatsoever I shall think, or speak, or do, may be by me designed to the glorification of thy name; and by thy blessing it may be effective and successful in the work of God, according as it can be capable. Lord, turn my necessities into virtue; the works of nature into the works of grace, by making them orderly, regular, temperate, subordinate, and profitable, to ends beyond their own proper efficacy: and let no pride or self-seeking, no covetousness or revenge, no impure mixture or unhandsome purposes, no little ends and low imaginations, pollute my spirit, and unhallow any of my words and actions: but let my body be a servant of my spirit, and both body and spirit servants of Jesus; that, doing all things for thy glory here, I may be partaker of thy glory hereafter, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Ad Sect. 3.

A Prayer meditating and referring to the Divine presence.

¶ This Prayer is specially to be used in temptation to private sin.

O Almighty God, infinite and eternal, thou fillest all things with thy presence; thou art every where by thy essence and by thy power, in heaven by glory, in holy places by thy grace and favour, in the hearts of thy servants by thy Spirit, in the consciences of all men by thy testimony and observation of us. Teach me to walk always as in thy presence, to fear thy majesty, to reverence thy wisdom and omniscience; that I may never dare to commit any indecency in the eye of my Lord and my Judge; but that I may, with so much care and reverence, demean myself, that my judge may not be my accuser, but my advocate; that I, expressing the belief of thy presence here by careful walking, may feel the effects of it in the participation of eternal glory, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

CHAPTER II.

OF CHRISTIAN SOBRIETY.

SECTION I.

Of Sobriety in the general sense.

CHRISTIAN religion, in all its moral parts, is nothing else but the law of nature, and great reason, complying with the great necessities of all the world, and promoting the great profit of all relations, and carrying us through all accidents of variety of chances to that end, which God hath from eternal ages purposed for all that live according to it, and which he hath revealed in Jesus Christ: and, ac-

[n] 2 Pet. iii. 10.

Prov. 23 & 24 —
Who hath woe? &c

—

Ac. 24 & 25.
And as he reasoned of
r. t. & j'gmt to come
Felix trembled —

—

Gal. V & 22, 23 &c
But the fruit of the
spirit is love joy,
peace l. suffering
gentleness, goodness, faith
Meekness. temperance
agt. such there is no law
: & they that are X's have
crucified the flesh
with its affections
& lusts —

2 P. 1 & 6. vide
Add to K. t. & to t.

1 Cor. 9 & 25
He that striveth &c

ch

cording to the apostle's arithmetic, hath but these three parts of it; 1. Sobriety, 2. Justice, 3. Religion. "For the grace of God bringing salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live, 1. Soberly, 2. Righteously, and, 3. Godly, in this present world, looking for that blessed hope and glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." The first contains all our deportment in our personal and private capacities, the fair treating of our bodies and our spirits. The second enlarges our duty in all relations to our neighbour. The third contains the offices of direct religion, and intercourse with God.

Christian sobriety is all that duty, that concerns ourselves in the matter of meat and drink, and pleasures and thoughts; and it hath within it the duties of, 1. Temperance, 2. Chastity, 3. Humility, 4. Modesty, 5. Content.

It is a using severity, denial, and frustration of our appetite, when it grows unreasonable in any of these instances: the necessity of which we shall to best purpose understand, by considering the evil consequences of sensuality, effeminacy, or fondness after carnal pleasures.

Evil consequences of Voluptuousness or Sensuality.

1. A longing after sensual pleasures is a dissolution of the spirit of a man, and makes it loose, soft, and wandering; unapt for noble, wise, or spiritual employments; because the principles, upon which pleasure is chosen and pursued, are sottish, weak, and unlearned, such as prefer the body before the soul,[o] the appetite before reason, sense before the spirit, the pleasures of a short abode before the pleasures of eternity.

2. The nature of sensual pleasure is vain, empty, and unsatisfying, biggest always in expectation, and a mere vanity in the enjoying, and leaves a sting and thorn behind it, when it goes off. Our laughing, if it be loud and high, commonly ends in a deep sigh; and all the instances of pleasure have a sting in the tail, though they carry beauty on the face, and sweetness on the lip.

3. Sensual pleasure is a great abuse to the spirit of a man, being a kind of fascination or witchcraft, blinding the understanding and enslaving the will. And he that knows he is free-born or redeemed with the blood of the Son of God, will not easily suffer the freedom of his soul to be entangled and rifled.[p]

4. It is most contrary to the state of a christian, whose life is a perpetual exercise, a wrestling and warfare, to which sensual pleasure disables him, by yielding to that enemy, with whom he must strive, if ever he will be crowned.[q] And this argument the apostle intimated: "He that striveth for masteries is temperate in all things: now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we, an incorruptible."[r]

5. It is by a certain consequence the greatest impediment in the world to martyrdom: that being a fondness, this being a cruelty to the flesh; to which a christian man, arriving by degrees, must first have crucified the lesser affections: for he, that is overcome by little arguments of pain, will hardly consent to lose his life with torments.

Degrees of Sobriety.

Against this voluptuousness, sobriety is opposed in three degrees.

1. A despite or disaffection to pleasures, or a resolving against all entertainment of the instances and temptations of sensuality: and it consists in the internal faculties of will and understanding, decreeing and declaring against them, disapproving and disliking them, upon good reason and strong resolution.

2. A fight and actual war against all the temptations and offers of sensual pleasure, in all evil instances and degrees; and it consists in prayer, in fasting, in cheap diet, and hard lodging, and laborious exercises, and avoiding occasions, and using all arts and industry of fortifying the spirit, and making it severe, manly, and christian.

3. Spiritual pleasure is the highest degree of sobriety: and in the same degree, in which we relish and are in love with spiritual delights, the hidden manna,[s] with the sweetness of devotion, with the joys of thanksgiving, with rejoicing in the Lord, with the comforts of hope, with the deliciousness of charity and alms-deeds, with the sweetness of a good conscience, with the peace of meekness, and the felicities of a contented spirit: in the same degree we disrelish and loathe the husks of swinish lusts, and the parings of the apples of Sodom; and the taste of sinful pleasures is unsavoury as the drunkard's vomit.

Rules for suppressing Voluptuousness.

The precepts and advices, which are of best and of general use in the curing of sensuality, are these:

1. Accustom thyself to cut off all superfluity in the provisions of thy life, for our desires will enlarge beyond the present possession, so long as all the things of this world are unsatisfying: if therefore you suffer them to extend beyond the measures of necessity or moderated conveniency, they will still swell: but you reduce them to a little compass, when you make nature to be your limit. We must more take care that our desires should cease,[t] than that they should be satisfied: and therefore reducing them to narrow scantlings and small proportions is the best instrument to redeem their trouble, and prevent the dropsy, because that is next to a universal denying them: it is certainly a paring off from them all unreasonableness and irregularity. "For whatsoever covets unseemly things, and is apt to swell into an inconvenient bulk, is to be chastened

[o] Tu si animum vicisti potiùs quàm animus te, est quod gaudeas. Qui animum vincunt, quam quos animus, semper probiores cluent.—TRINUM. 2. 2. 29.

[p] Μόνον σκέψαι ποσου πωλεῖς τὴν σεαυτοῦ προαίρεσιν, ἄνθρωπε· εἰ μηδὲν ἄλλο, μὴ ὀλίγου αὐτὴν πωλήσῃς.—ARRIAN. c. 2. l. i.

[q] Θέλεις ὀλύμπια νικῆσαι; Δεῖ σ' εὐτακτεῖν, ἀναγκοτροφεῖν, ἀπέχεσθαι πεμμάτων γυμνάζεσθαι πρὸς ἀνάγκην, &c. —EPICT. c. 29. 2. ed. Schw.

[r] 1 Cor. ix. 25.

[s] Apoc. ii. 17.

[t] Desideria tua parvo redime; hoc enim tantum curare debes, ut desinant.—SENEC.

and tempered: and such are sensuality, and a boy,"[u] said the philosopher.

2. Suppress your sensual desires in their first approach;[v] for then they are least, and thy faculties and election are stronger: but if they, in their weakness, prevail upon thy strengths, there will be no resisting them, when they are increased and thy abilities lessened. "You shall scarce obtain of them to end, if you suffer them to begin."

3. Divert them with some laudable employment, and take off their edge by inadvertency, or a not attending to them. For since the faculties of a man cannot, at the same time, with any sharpness, attend to two objects, if you employ your spirit upon a book or a bodily labour, or any innocent and indifferent employment, you have no room left for the present trouble of a sensual temptation. For to this sense it was, that Alexander told the queen of Caria, that his tutor Leonidas had provided two cooks for him;[w] "Hard marches all night, and a small dinner the next day:" these tamed his youthful aptnesses to dissolution, so long as he ate of their provisions.

4. Look upon pleasures, not upon that side that is next the sun, or where they look beauteously; that is, as they come towards you to be enjoyed, for then they paint, and smile, and dress themselves up in tinsel and glass, gems and counterfeit imagery: but when thou hast rifled and discomposed them with enjoying their false beauties, and that they begin to go off, then behold them in their nakedness and weariness.[x] See what a sigh and sorrow, what naked unhandsome proportions, and a filthy carcass, they discover; and the next time they counterfeit, remember what you have already discovered, and be no more abused. And I have known some wise persons have advised to cure the passions and longings of their children by letting them taste of every thing they passionately fancied: for they should be sure to find less in it than they looked for, and the impatience of their being denied would be loosened and made slack: and when our wishings are no bigger than the thing deserves, and our usages of them according to our needs, (which may be obtained by trying what they are, and what good they can do us,) we shall find in all pleasures so little entertainment, that the vanity of the possession will soon reprove the violence of the appetite. And if this permission be in innocent instances, it may be of good use: but Solomon tried it in all things, taking his fill of all pleasures, and soon grew weary of them all. The same thing we may do by reason, which we do by experience, if either we will look upon pleasures, as we are sure they look when they go off, after their enjoyment; or if we will credit the experience of those men, who have tasted them and loathed them.

5. Often consider and contemplate the joys of heaven, that, when they have filled thy desires which are the sails of the soul, thou mayest steer only thither, and never more look back to Sodom. And when thy soul dwells above, and looks down upon the pleasures of the world, they seem like things at distance, little and contemptible: and men running after the satisfaction of their sottish appetites seem foolish as fishes, thousands of them running after a rotten worm, that covers a deadly hook; or at the best but like children, with great noise pursuing a bubble rising from a walnut-shell, which ends sooner than the noise.

6. To this, the example of Christ and his apostles, of Moses, and all the wise men of all ages of the world, will much help; who understanding how to distinguish good from evil, did choose a sad and melancholy way to felicity, rather than the broad, pleasant, and easy path to folly and misery.

But this is but the general. Its first particular is temperance.

SECTION II.

Of Temperance in Eating and Drinking.

Sobriety is the bridle of the passions of desire,[y] and temperance is the bit and curb of that bridle, a restraint put into a man's mouth, a moderate use of meat and drink, so as may best consist with our health, and may not hinder but help the works of the soul by its necessary supporting us, and ministering cheerfulness and refreshment.

Temperance consists in the actions of the soul principally; for it is a grace that chooses natural means in order to proper, and natural, and holy ends: it is exercised about eating and drinking, because they are necessary; but therefore it permits the use of them, only as they minister to lawful ends; it does not eat and drink for pleasure, but for need, and for refreshment, which is a part or a degree of need. I deny not that eating and drinking *may be*, and in healthful bodies, *always is*, with pleasure; because there is in nature no greater pleasure, than that all the appetites, which God hath made, should be satisfied: and a man may choose a morsel that is pleasant, the less pleasant being rejected as being less useful, less apt to nourish, or more agreeing with an infirm stomach, or when the day is festival by order, or by private joy. In all these cases it is permitted to receive a more free delight, and to design it too, as the less principal: that is, that the chief reason why we choose the more delicious, be the serving that end, for which such refreshments and choices are permitted. But when delight is the only end, and rests itself, and dwells there long, then eating and drinking is not a serving of God, but an inordinate action; because it is not in the way to that end whither God directed it. But the choosing of a delicate before a more ordinary dish is to be done, as other human actions are, in which there are no degrees and pre-

[u] Lib. iii. Eth. c. 12. p. 129. ed Wilk.

[v] Facilius est initia affectuum prohibere, quam impetum regere.—Senec. ep. 86.

[w] Νυκτιπορίαν καὶ ὀλιγαριστίαν.

[x] Voluptates abeuntes fessas et pœnitentia plenas, animis nostris natura subjecit, quo minus cupide repetantur.—Seneca. Læta venire Venus, tristis abire solet.

[y] Ἐγκράτεια, ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐν κράτει ἔχειν τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν.

cise natural limits described, but a latitude is indulged; it must be done moderately, prudently, and according to the accounts of wise, religious, and sober men: and then God, who gave us such variety of creatures, and our choice to use which we will, may receive glory from our temperate use, and thanksgiving; and we may use them indifferently without scruple, and a making them to become snares to us, either by too licentious and studied use of them, or too restrained and scrupulous fear of using them at all, but in such certain circumstances, in which no man can be sure he is not mistaken.

But temperance in meat and drink is to be estimated by the following measures.

Measures of Temperance in eating.

1. Eat not before the time, unless necessity, or charity, or any intervening accident, which may make it reasonable and prudent, should happen. Remember it had almost cost Jonathan his life, because he tasted a little honey before the sun went down, contrary to the king's commandment; and although a great need, which he had, excused him from the sin of gluttony, yet it is inexcusable, when thou eatest before the usual time, and thrustest thy hand into the dish unseasonably, out of greediness of the pleasure, and impatience of the delay.

2. Eat not hastily and impatiently, but with such decent and timely action, that your eating be a human act, subject to deliberation and choice, and that you may consider in the eating: whereas he that eats hastily, cannot consider particularly of the circumstances, degrees, and little accidents and chances, that happen in his meal; but may contract many little indecencies, and be suddenly surprised.

3. Eat not delicately, or nicely; that is, be not troublesome to thyself or others in the choice of thy meats, or the delicacy of thy sauces. It was imputed as a sin to the sons of Israel, that they loathed manna and longed for flesh; "the quails stunk in their nostrils, and the wrath of God fell upon them." And for the manner of dressing, the sons of Eli were noted of indiscreet curiosity: they would not have the flesh boiled, but raw, that they might roast it with fire. Not that it was a sin to eat it, or desire meat roasted; but that when it was appointed to be boiled, they refused it: which declared an intemperate and a nice palate. It is lawful in all senses to comply with a weak and a nice stomach; but not with a nice and curious palate. When our health requires it, that ought to be provided for: but not so our sensuality and intemperate longings. Whatsoever is set before you, eat; if it be provided for you, you may eat it, be it never so delicate; and be it plain and common, so it be wholesome, and fit for you, it must not be refused upon curiosity: for every degree of that is a degree of intemperance. Happy and innocent were the ages of our forefathers, who ate herbs and parched corn, and drank the pure stream, and broke their fast with nuts and roots;[z] and when they were permitted flesh, ate it only dressed with hunger and fire; and the first sauce they had was bitter herbs, and sometimes bread dipped in vinegar. But, in this circumstance, moderation is to be reckoned in proportion to the present customs, to the company, to education, and the judgment of honest and wise persons, and the necessities of nature.

4. Eat not too much: load neither thy stomach nor thy understanding. "If thou sit at a bountiful table, be not greedy upon it, and say not there is much meat on it. Remember that a wicked eye is an evil thing: and what is created more wicked than an eye? Therefore, it weepeth upon every occasion. Stretch not thy hand whithersoever it looketh, and thrust it not with him into the dish. A very little is sufficient for a man well nurtured, and he fetcheth not his wind short upon his bed."

Signs and Effects of Temperance.

We shall best know, that we have the grace of temperance by the following signs, which are as so many arguments to engage us also upon its study and practice.

1. A temperate man is modest; greediness is unmannerly and rude. And this is intimated in the advice of the son of Sirach, "When thou sittest amongst many, reach not thy hand out first of all. Leave off first for manners' sake, and be not insatiable, lest thou offend." 2. Temperance is accompanied with gravity of deportment; greediness is garish, and rejoices loosely at the sight of dainties.[a] 3. Sound, but moderate, sleep, is its sign and its effect. Sound sleep cometh of moderate eating; he riseth early, and his wits are with him. 4. A spiritual joy and a devout prayer. 5. A suppressed and seldom anger. 6. A command of our thoughts and passions. 7. A seldom-returning and a never-prevailing temptation. 8. To which add, that a temperate person is not curious of fancies and deliciousness. He thinks not much, and speaks not often, of meat and drink; hath a healthful body and long life, unless it be hindered by some other accident: whereas to gluttony, the pain of watching and choler, the pangs of the belly, are continual company. And therefore Stratonicus said handsomely concerning the luxury of the Rhodians, "They built houses, as if they were immortal; but they feasted, as if they meant to live but a little while." And Antipater, by his reproach of the old glutton Demades, well expressed the baseness of this sin, saying, that Demades, now old,[b] and always a glutton, was like a spent sacrifice, nothing left of him but his belly and his tongue, all the man besides is gone.

Of Drunkenness.

But I desire that it be observed, that because intemperance in eating is not so soon perceived by

[z] Felix initium, prior ætas contenta dulcibus arvis;
Facilèque serâ solebat jejunia solvere glande.
Boeth. l. 1. de Consol.
Arbuteos fœtus, montanaque fraga legebant.—Ov. M. 1. 104.

[a] Cicero vocat Temperantiam ornatum vitæ, in quo decorum illud et honestum situm est.

[b] Plutarch. de cupid. divit.

others as immoderate drinking, and the outward visible effects of it are not either so notorious or so ridiculous, therefore gluttony is not of so great disreputation amongst men as drunkenness; yet, according to its degree, it puts on the greatness of the sin before God, and is most strictly to be attended to, lest we be surprised by our security and want of diligence, and the intemperance is alike criminal in both, according as the affections are either to the meat or drink. Gluttony is more uncharitable to the body, and drunkenness to the soul, or the understanding part of man; and therefore in Scripture is more frequently forbidden and declaimed against than the other: and sobriety hath by use obtained to signify temperance in drinking.

Drunkenness is an immoderate affection and use of drink. That I call immoderate, that is besides or beyond that order of good things, for which God hath given us the use of drink. The ends are, digestion of our meat, cheerfulness and refreshment of our spirits, or any end of health; besides which if we go, or at any time beyond it, it is inordinate and criminal, it is the vice of drunkenness. It is forbidden by our blessed Saviour in these words,[c] "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness:" surfeiting, that is, the evil effects, the sottishness and remaining stupidity of habitual, or of the last night's drunkenness. For Christ forbids both the actual and the habitual intemperance; not only the effect of it, but also the affection to it: for in both there is sin. He that drinks but little, if that little makes him drunk, and if he know beforehand his own infirmity, is guilty of surfeiting, not of drunkenness.[d] But he that drinks much, and is strong to bear it, and is not deprived of his reason violently, is guilty of the sin of drunkenness. It is a sin, not to prevent such uncharitable effects upon the body and understanding: and therefore a man that loves not the drink, is guilty of surfeiting, if he does not watch to prevent the evil effect: and it is a sin, and the greater of the two, inordinately to love or to use the drink, though the surfeiting or violence do not follow. Good therefore is the counsel of the son of Sirach, "Show not thy valiantness in wine; for wine hath destroyed many."[e]

Evil consequents to Drunkenness.

The evils and sad consequents of drunkenness (the consideration of which are as so many arguments to avoid the sin) are to this sense reckoned by the writers of holy Scripture, and other wise personages of the world. 1. It causeth woes and mischief,[f] wounds and sorrow, sin and shame;[g] it maketh bitterness of spirit, brawling and quarrelling; it increaseth rage and lesseneth strength; it maketh red eyes, and a loose and babbling tongue. 2. It particularly ministers to lust, and yet disables the body; so that in effect it makes man wanton as a satyr, and impotent as age. And Solomon in enumerating the evils of this vice, adds this to the account,[h] "thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things:" as if the drunkard were only desire, and then impatience, muttering and enjoying like an eunuch embracing a woman. 3. It besots and hinders the actions of the understanding, making a man brutish in his passions, and a fool in his reason; and differs nothing from madness, but that it is voluntary, and so is an equal evil in nature, and a worse in manners.[i] 4. It takes off all the guards, and lets loose the reins of all those evils, to which a man is by his nature or by his evil customs inclined, and from which he is restrained by reason and severe principles. Drunkenness calls off the watchmen from their towers; and then all the evils, that can proceed from a loose heart, and an untied tongue, and a dissolute spirit, and an unguarded, unlimited will, all that we may put upon the accounts of drunkenness. 5. It extinguisheth and quenches the Spirit of God, for no man can be filled with the Spirit of God and with wine at the same time. And therefore St. Paul makes them exclusive of each other.[k] "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit."[l] And since Joseph's cup was put into Benjamin's sack, no man had a divining goblet. 6. It opens all the sanctuaries of nature, and discovers the nakedness of the soul, all its weaknesses and follies; it multiplies sins and discovers them; it makes a man incapable of being a private friend, or a public counsellor. 7. It taketh a man's soul into slavery and imprisonment more than any vice whatsoever,[m] because it disarms a man of all his reason and his wisdom, whereby he might be cured, and therefore commonly it grows upon him with age; a drunkard being still more a fool and less a man. I need not add any sad examples, since all story and all ages have too many of them. Amnon was slain by his brother Absalom, when he was warm and high with wine. Simon the high priest and two of his sons were slain by their brother at a drunken feast. Holofernes was drunk when Judith slew him: and all the great things that Daniel spake of Alexander,[n] were drowned with a surfeit of one night's intemperance: and the drunkenness of Noah and Lot are upon record to eternal ages, that in those early in-

[c] Luke xxi. 34

[d] Κραιπάλη ἀπὸ προτεραίας aut ἀπὸ χθιζῆς οἰνοποσίας. Schol. in Aristoph. Idem fere apud Plutarch. Vinolentia animi quandam remissionem et levitatem, ebrietas futilitatem significat.—Plutarch. de Garrul.

[e] Ecclus. xxxi. 25.

[f] Prov. xxiii. 29. Ecclus. xxxi. 26.

[g] Multa faciunt ebrii, quibus sobrii erubescunt.—Senec. ep. 83. 17.

[h] Prov. xxiii. 33.

[i] Insaniæ comes est ira, contubernalis ebrietas. —Plutar. ——— Corpus onustum
Hesternis vitiis animum quoque prægravat. Horat.
Ebrietas est voluntaria insania.—Senec.

[k] Ephes. v. 18.

[l] Οἶνός σε τρώει μελιήδης, ὅς τε καὶ ἄλλους
Βλάπτει, ὅς ἂν μιν χανδὸν ἕλῃ μηδ' αἴσιμα πίνῃ.
Homer. Od. φ.' 293.

[m] Prov. xxxi. 4.
——— Οὐδεῖς δὲ μεθύων, ἄν σκοπῆς, "Ος οὐχὶ δοῦλός ἐστι τοῦ πεπωκέναι. Philem. p. 344. ed. Clerc.

[n] Alexandrum intemperantia bibendi, et ille Herculanus ac fatalis scyphus perdidit.—Sen. ep. lxxxiii. 21.

stances, and righteous persons, and less criminal drunkenness, than is that of christians in this period of the world, God might show, that very great evils are prepared to punish this vice; no less than shame, and slavery, and incest; the first upon Noah, the second upon one of his sons, and the third in the person of Lot.

Signs of Drunkenness.

But if it be inquired concerning the periods and distinct significations of this crime; and when a man is said to be drunk; to this I answer, that drunkenness is in the same manner to be judged as sickness. As every illness or violence done to health, in every part of its continuance, is a part or degree of sickness: so is every going off from our natural and common temper, and our usual severity of behaviour, a degree of drunkenness. He is not only drunk, that can drink no more; for few are so: but he hath sinned in a degree of drunkenness, who hath done any thing towards it beyond his proper measure. But its parts and periods are usually thus reckoned. 1. Apish gestures. 2. Much talking. 3. Immoderate laughing. 4. Dulness of sense. 5. Scurrility, that is, wanton, or jeering, or abusive language. 6. An useless understanding. 7. Stupid sleep. 8. Epilepsies, or fallings and reelings, and beastly vomitings. The least of these, even when the tongue begins to be untied, is a degree of drunkenness.

But that we may avoid the sin of intemperance in meats and drinks, besides the former rules of measures, these counsels also may be useful.

Rules for obtaining Temperance.

1. Be not often present at feasts, nor at all in dissolute company, when it may be avoided; for variety of pleasing objects steals away the heart of man: and company is either violent or enticing; and we are weak or complying, or perhaps desirous enough to be abused. But if you be unavoidably or indiscreetly engaged, let not mistaken civility or good nature engage thee either to the temptation of staying, (if thou understandest thy weakness,) or the sin of drinking inordinately.

2. Be severe in your judgment concerning your proportions, and let no occasion make you enlarge far beyond your ordinary. For a man is surprised by parts; and while he thinks one glass more will not make him drunk, that one glass hath disabled him from well discerning his present condition and neighbour danger. "While men think themselves wise, they become fools:" they think they shall taste the aconite and not die, or crown their heads with juice of poppy and not be drowsy; and if they drink off the whole vintage, still they think, they can swallow another goblet.[o] But remember this, whenever you begin to consider, whether you may safely take one draught more, it is then high time to give over. Let that be accounted a sign late enough to break off: for every reason to doubt, is a sufficient reason to part the company.

3. Come not to table, but when thy need invites thee: and if thou beest in health, leave something of thy appetite unfilled, something of thy natural heat unemployed, that it may secure thy digestion, and serve other needs of nature or the spirit.

4. Propound to thyself (if thou beest in a capacity) a constant rule of living, of eating and drinking: which though it may not be fit to observe scrupulously, lest it become a snare to thy conscience, or endanger thy health upon every accidental violence; yet let not thy rule be broken often nor much, but upon great necessity and in small degrees.

5. Never urge any man to eat or drink beyond his own limits and his own desires. He that does otherwise, is drunk with his brother's surfeit,[p] and reels and falls with his intemperance; that is, the sin of drunkenness is upon both their scores; they both lie wallowing in the guilt.

6. Use St. Paul's instruments of sobriety; "Let us who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for an helmet the hope of salvation." Faith, hope, and charity, are the best weapons in the world to fight against intemperance. The faith of the Mahometans forbids them to drink wine, and they abstain religiously, as the sons of Rechab: and the faith of Christ forbids drunkenness to us; and therefore is infinitely more powerful to suppress this vice, when we remember, that we are christians, and to abstain from drunkenness and gluttony is part of the faith and discipline of Jesus, and that with these vices neither our love to God nor our hopes of heaven can possibly consist; and therefore, when these enter the heart, the others go out at the mouth: for this is the devil, that is cast out by fasting and prayer, which are the proper actions of these graces.

7. As a pursuance of this rule, it is a good advice, that as we begin and end all our times of eating with prayer and thanksgiving; so, at the meal, we remove and carry up our mind and spirit to the celestial table, often thinking of it, and often desiring it; that by enkindling thy desire to heavenly banquets, thou mayest be indifferent and less passionate for the earthly.

8. Mingle discourses, pious, or in some sense profitable, and in all senses charitable and innocent, with thy meal, as occasion is ministered.

9. Let your drink so serve your meat, as your meat doth your health; that it be apt to convey and digest it, and refresh the spirits: but let it never go beyond such a refreshment, as may a little lighten the present load of a sad or troubled spirit; never to inconvenience, lightness, sottishness, vanity, or intemperance; and know that the loosing the bands of the tongue, and the very first dissolution of its duty, is one degree of the intemperance.

10. In all cases be careful, that you be not brought under the power of such things, which otherwise are lawful enough in the use. "All

[o] Chi ha bevuto tutto il mare, può bere anche un trano.—Senec. ep. 83.

[p] Nil interest, faveas sceleri, an illud facias.—Senec.

things are lawful for me; but I will not be brought under the power of any;" said St. Paul. And to be perpetually longing, and impatiently desirous of any thing, so that a man cannot abstain from it, is to lose a man's liberty, and to become a servant of meat and drink, or smoke. And I wish this last instance were more considered by persons, who little suspect themselves guilty of intemperance, though their desires are strong and impatient, and the use of it perpetual and unreasonable to all purposes, but that they have made it habitual and necessary, as intemperance itself is made to some men.

11. Use those advices, which are prescribed as instruments to suppress voluptuousness, in the foregoing section.

SECTION III.

Of Chastity.

Reader, stay, and read not the advices of the following section, unless thou hast a chaste spirit; or desirest to be chaste; or at least art apt to consider, whether you ought or no. For there are some spirits so atheistical, and some so wholly possessed with a spirit of uncleanness, that they turn the most prudent and chaste discourses into dirty and filthy apprehensions; like choleric stomachs, changing their very cordials and medicines into bitterness; and in a literal sense, turning the grace of God into wantonness. They study cases of conscience in the matter of carnal sins, not to avoid, but to learn ways how to offend God and pollute their own spirits; and search their houses with a sun-beam, that they may be instructed in all the corners of nastiness. I have used all the care I could, in the following periods, that I might neither be wanting to assist those that need it, nor yet minister any occasion of fancy or vainer thoughts to those that need them not. If any man will snatch the pure taper from my hand, and hold it to the devil, he will only burn his own fingers, but shall not rob me of the reward of my care and good intention, since I have taken heed how to express the following duties, and given him caution how to read them.

Chastity is that duty, which was mystically intended by God in the law of circumcision. It is the circumcision of the heart, the cutting off all superfluity of naughtiness, and a suppression of all irregular desires in the matter of sensual or carnal pleasure. I call all desires irregular and sinful, that are not sanctified, 1. By the holy institution, or by being within the protection of marriage; 2. By being within the order of nature; 3. By being within the moderation of christian modesty. Against the first, are fornication, adultery, and all voluntary pollutions of either sex. Against the second are all unnatural lusts and incestuous mixtures. Against the third is all immoderate use of permitted beds; concerning which judgment is to be made, as concerning meats and drinks: there being no certain degree of frequency or intention prescribed to all persons; but it is to be ruled as the other actions of a man, by proportion to the end, by the dignity of the person in the honour and severity of being a christian, and by other circumstances, of which I am to give account.

Chastity is that grace, which forbids and restrains all these, keeping the body and soul pure in that state, in which it is placed by God, whether of the single or of the married life. Concerning which our duty is thus described by St. Paul, "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the gentiles which know not God."[q]

Chastity is either abstinence or continence. Abstinence is that of virgins or widows: continence of married persons. Chaste marriages are honourable and pleasing to God: widowhood is pitiable in its solitariness and loss, but amiable and comely, when it is adorned with gravity and purity, and not sullied with remembrances of the passed license, nor with present desires of returning to a second bed. But virginity is a life of angels, the enamel of the soul, the huge advantage of religion, the great opportunity for the retirements of devotion;[r] and, being empty of cares, it is full of prayers: being unmingled with the world, it is apt to converse with God; and by not feeling the warmth of a too-forward and indulgent nature, flames out with holy fires, till it be burning like the cherubim and the most ecstasied order of holy and unpolluted spirits.

Natural virginity, of itself, is not a state more acceptable to God; but that which is chosen and voluntary in order to the conveniences of religion and separation from worldly encumbrances, is therefore better than the married life; not that it is more holy, but that it is a freedom from cares, an opportunity to spend more time in spiritual employments; it is not allayed with businesses and attendances upon lower affairs: and if it be a chosen condition to these ends, it containeth in it a victory over lusts, and greater desires of religion, and self-denial; and therefore is more excellent than the married life, in that degree in which it hath greater religion, and a greater mortification, a less satisfaction of natural desires, and a greater fulness of the spiritual; and just so is to expect that little coronet or special reward, which God hath prepared (extraordinary and besides the great crown of all faithful souls) for those, "who have not defiled themselves with women, but follow the virgin Lamb for ever."[s]

But some married persons, even in their marriage, do better please God, than some virgins in their state of virginity: they, by giving great example of conjugal affection, by preserving their faith

[q] 1 Thess. iv. 3-5.

[r] Virginitas est, in carne corruptibili, incorruptionis perpetua meditatio.—St. Aug. l. de Virg. c. 13.

[s] Apoc. xiv. 4.

unbroken, by educating children in the fear of God, by patience and contentedness and holy thoughts, and the exercise of virtues proper to that state, do not only please God, but do in a higher degree than those virgins, whose piety is not answerable to their great opportunities and advantages.

However, married persons, and widows, and virgins, are all servants of God and coheirs in the inheritance of Jesus, if they live within the restraints and laws of their particular estate, chastely, temperately, justly, and religiously.

The evil consequents of Uncleanness.

The blessings and proper effects of chastity we shall best understand, by reckoning the evils of uncleanness and carnality.

1. Uncleanness of all vices is the most shameful. "The eye of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight, saying, No eye shall see me; and disguiseth his face. In the dark they dig through houses, which they had marked for themselves in the day-time; they know not the light: for the morning is to them as the shadow of death. He is swift as the waters; their portion is cursed in the earth; he beholdeth not the way of the vineyards."[t] Shame is the eldest daughter of uncleanness.[u]

2. The appetites of uncleanness are full of cares and trouble, and its fruition is sorrow and repentance. The way of the adulterer is hedged with thorns;[v] full of fears and jealousies, burning desires and impatient waitings, tediousness of delay, and sufferance of affronts, and amazements of discovery.[w]

3. Most of its kinds are of that condition, that they involve the ruin of two souls; and he that is a fornicator or adulterous, steals the soul, as well as dishonours the body, of his neighbour; and so it becomes like the sin of falling Lucifer, who brought a part of the stars with his tail from heaven.

4. Of all carnal sins it is that alone which the devil takes delight to imitate and counterfeit; communicating with witches and impure persons in the corporal act, but in this only.

5. Uncleanness with all its kinds is a vice, which hath a professed enmity against the body. "Every sin which a man doth, is without the body; but he that committeth fornication, sinneth against his own body."[x]

6. Uncleanness is hugely contrary to the spirit of government,[y] by embasing the spirit of a man, making it effeminate, sneaking, soft, and foolish, without courage, without confidence. David felt this after his folly with Bathsheba, he fell to unkingly arts and stratagems to hide the crime; and he did nothing but increase it, and remained timorous and poor-spirited, till he prayed to God once more to establish him with a free and princely spirit.[z] And no superior dare strictly observe discipline upon his charge, if he hath let himself loose to the shame of incontinence.

7. The gospel hath added two arguments against uncleanness, which were never before used, nor indeed could be: since God hath given the Holy Spirit to them that are baptized, and rightly confirmed, and entered into covenant with him, our bodies are made temples of the Holy Ghost, in which he dwells; and therefore uncleanness is sacrilege and defiles a temple. It is St. Paul's argument, "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?"[a] and "He that defiles a temple, him will God destroy.[b] Therefore glorify God in your bodies," that is, flee fornication. To which, for the likeness of the argument, add, "that our bodies are members of Christ; and therefore God forbid that we should take the members of Christ, and make them members of a harlot." So that uncleanness dishonours Christ, and dishonours the Holy Spirit: it is a sin against God, and in this sense a sin against the Holy Ghost.

8. The next special argument, which the gospel ministers especially against adultery, and for the preservation of the purity of marriage, is that marriage is by Christ hallowed in a mystery, to signify the sacramental and mystical union of Christ and his church.[c] He therefore that breaks this knot, which the church in their mutual faith have tied, and Christ hath knit up into a mystery, dishonours a great rite of christianity, of high, spiritual, and excellent signification.

9. St. Gregory reckons uncleanness to be the parent of these monsters,[d] blindness of mind, inconsideration, precipitancy or giddiness in actions, self-love, hatred of God, love of the present pleasures, a despite or despair of the joys of religion here, and of heaven hereafter. Whereas a pure mind in a chaste body is the mother of wisdom and deliberation, sober counsels and ingenious actions, open deportment and sweet carriage, sincere principles and unprejudicate understanding, love of God and self-denial, peace and confidence, holy prayers and spiritual comfort, and a pleasure of spirit infinitely greater than the sottish and beastly pleasures of unchastity. "For to overcome pleasure is the greatest pleasure; and no victory is greater than that, which is gotten over our lusts and filthy inclinations."[e]

10. Add to all these, the public dishonesty and disreputation, that all the nations of the world have cast upon adulterous and unhallowed embraces. Abimelech, to the men of Gerar, made it death to meddle with the wife of Isaac: and Judah condemned Thamar to be burnt for her adulterous conception: and God, besides the law made to put the adulterous person to death, did constitute a settled and constant miracle to discover the adultery of a suspected woman,[f] that her bowels should burst with drinking the waters of jealousy. The Egyptian law was to cut off the nose of the adulteress, and the offending part of the adulterer. The Locrians put out the adulterer's both eyes. The Ger-

[t] Job xxiv. 15, &c. [u] ἄτιμα πάθη. [v] Hos. ii. 6.
[w] Appetitus fornicationis anxietas est, satietas verò pœnitentia.—S. HIERON.
[x] 1 Cor. vi. 18. [y] φθαρτικαὶ τῶν ἀρχῶν.
[z] Spiritu principali me confirma. Psal. li.
[a] 1 Cor. vi. 19. [b] 1 Cor. iii. 17.
[c] Ephes. v. 32. [d] Moral.
[e] St. Cyprian. de bono pudicitiæ. [f] Numb. v. 14.

mans (as Tacitus reports) placed the adulteress amidst her kindred naked, and shaved her head, and caused her husband to beat her with clubs through the city. The Gortynæans crowned the man with wool, to shame him for his effeminacy; and the Cumani caused the woman to ride upon an ass, naked and hooted at, and for ever after called her by an appellative of scorn, "a rider upon the ass:"[g] all nations, barbarous and civil, agreeing in their general design, of rooting so dishonest and shameful a vice from under heaven.

The middle ages of the church were not pleased that the adulteress should be put to death:[h] but in the primitive ages, the civil laws, by which christians were then governed, gave leave to the wronged husband to kill his adulterous wife, if he took her in the fact:[i] but because it was a privilege indulged to men, rather than a direct detestation of the crime, a consideration of the injury rather than of the uncleanness, therefore it was soon altered, but yet hath caused an inquiry, Whether is worse, the adultery of the man or the woman?

The resolution of which case, in order to our present affair, is thus: in respect of the person, the fault is greater in a man than in a woman, who is of a more pliant and easy spirit, and weaker understanding, and hath nothing to supply the unequal strengths of men, but the defensative of a passive nature and armour of modesty, which is the natural ornament of that sex. "And it is unjust that the man should demand chastity and severity from his wife, which himself will not observe towards her,[k]" said the good emperor Antoninus: it is as if the man should persuade his wife to fight against those enemies, to which he had yielded himself a prisoner. 2. In respect of the effects and evil consequents, the adultery of the woman is worse, as bringing bastardy into a family, and disinherisons or great injuries to the lawful children, and infinite violations of peace, and murders, and divorces, and all the effects of rage and madness. 3. But in respect of the crime, and as relating to God, they are equal, intolerable, and damnable: and since it is no more permitted to men to have many wives, than to women to have many husbands, and that in this respect their privilege is equal, their sin is so too. And this is the case of the question in christianity. And the church anciently refused to admit such persons to the holy communion, until they had done seven years' penances in fasting, in sackcloth, in severe inflictions and instruments of charity and sorrow, according to the discipline of those ages.

Acts of Chastity in general.

The actions and proper offices of the grace of chastity in general, are these.

1. To resist all unchaste thoughts: at no hand, entertaining pleasure in the unfruitful fancies and remembrances of uncleanness, although no definite desire or resolution be entertained.

2. At no hand, to entertain any desire,[l] or any fantastic, imaginative loves; though by shame, or disability, or other circumstance, they be restrained from act.

3. To have a chaste eye and hand:[m] for it is all one with what part of the body we commit adultery: and if a man lets his eye loose, and enjoys the lust of that, he is an adulterer. "Look not upon a woman to lust after her." And supposing all the other members restrained, yet if the eye be permitted to lust, the man can no otherwise be called chaste, than he can be called severe and mortified, that sits all day long seeing plays and revellings, and out of greediness to fill his eye neglects his belly. There are some vessels, which if you offer to lift by the belly or bottom, you cannot stir them, but are soon removed, if you take them by the ears. It matters not with which of your members you are taken and carried off from your duty and severity.

4. To have a heart and mind chaste and pure; that is, detesting all uncleanness; disliking all its motions, past actions, circumstances, likenesses, discourses: and this ought to be the chastity of virgins and widows, of old persons and eunuchs especially, and generally of all men, according to their several necessities.

5. To discourse chastely and purely;[n] with great care declining all indecencies of language, chastening the tongue, and restraining it with grace, as vapours of wine are restrained with a bunch of myrrh.

6. To disapprove by an after-act all involuntary and natural pollutions: for if a man delights in having suffered any natural pollution, and with pleasure remembers it, he chooses that, which was in itself involuntary; and that which, being natural, was innocent, becoming voluntary, is made sinful.

7. They that have performed these duties and parts of chastity, will certainly abstain from all exterior actions of uncleanness, those noon-day and midnight devils, those lawless and ungodly worshippings of shame and uncleanness, whose birth is in trouble, whose growth is in folly, and whose end is in shame.

But besides these general acts of chastity, which are common to all states of men and women, there are some few things proper to the severals.

Acts of Virginal Chastity.

1. Virgins must remember, that the virginity of the body is only excellent in order to the purity of the soul; who therefore must consider, that since they are in some measure in a condition like that of angels, it is their duty to spend much of their time in angelical employment: for in the same degree that virgins live more spiritually than other persons, in the same degree is their virginity a more excel-

[g] ὀνοβατις.

[h] Concil. Tribur. c. 49. Concil. Aurel. 1. sub. Clodovæo.

[i] Cod. de adulteriis, ad legem Juliam, l. 1. et Cod. Theod. de adulteriis, c. placuit.

[k] Apud Aug. de adulter. conjug.—Plut. conjug. præcept.

[l] —— Casso saltem delectamine amare quod potiri non licet.—Poeta. Patellas *luxuriæ oculos*, dixit Isidorus. Ἀλγηδόνας ἀνθρώπων, alius quidam.

[m] Time videre unde possis cadere, et noli fieri perversâ simplicitate securus.—St. Aug.

[n] Sp. Minucius Pontifex Posthumium monuit, ne verbis vitæ castimoniam non æquantibus uteretur.—Plut. de cap. ex inim. utilit.

lent state. But else it is no better than that of involuntary or constrained eunuchs; a misery and a trouble, or else a mere privation, as much without excellency as without mixture.

2. Virgins must contend for a singular modesty; whose first part must be an ignorance in the distinction of sexes, or their proper instruments; or if they accidentally be instructed in that, it must be supplied with an inadvertency or neglect of all thoughts and remembrances of such difference; and the following parts of it must be pious and chaste thoughts, holy language, and modest carriage.

3. Virgins must be retired and unpublic: for all freedom and looseness of society is a violence done to virginity, not in its natural, but in its moral capacity; that is, it loses part of its severity, strictness, and opportunity of advantages, by publishing that person, whose work is religion, whose company is angels, whose thoughts must dwell in heaven, and separate from all mixtures of the world.

4. Virgins have a peculiar obligation to charity: for this is the virginity of the soul; as purity, integrity, and separation is of the body: which doctrine we are taught by St. Peter: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently."[o] For a virgin, that consecrates her body to God, and pollutes her spirit with rage, or impatience, or inordinate anger, gives him what he most hates, a most foul and defiled soul.

5. These rules are necessary for virgins, that offer that state to God, and mean not to enter into the state of marriage: for they that only wait the opportunity of a convenient change, are to steer themselves by the general rules of chastity.

Rules for Widows or vidual Chastity.

For widows, the fontinel of whose desires hath been opened by the former permissions of the marriage-bed, they must remember,

1. That God hath now restrained the former license, bound up their eyes and shut up their heart into a narrower compass, and hath given them sorrow to be a bridle to their desires. A widow must be a mourner; and she that is not, cannot so well secure the chastity of her proper state.

2. It is against public honesty to marry another man, so long as she is with child by her former husband: and of the same fame it is, in a lesser proportion, to marry within the year of mourning; but anciently it was infamous for her to marry, till by common account the body was dissolved into its first principle of earth.

3. A widow must restrain her memory and her fancy, not recalling or recounting her former permissions and freer licenses with any present delight; for then she opens that sluice, which her husband's death and her own sorrow have shut up.

4. A widow, that desires her widowhood should be a state pleasing to God, must spend her time as devoted virgins should, in fastings, and prayers, and charity.

5. A widow must forbid herself to use those temporal solaces, which in her former estate were innocent, but now are dangerous.

Rules for married persons, or matrimonial Chastity.

Concerning married persons, besides the keeping of their mutual faith and contract with each other, these particulars are useful to be observed.[p]

1. Although their mutual endearments are safe within the protection of marriage, yet they that have wives or husbands must be as though they had them not; that is, they must have an affection greater to each other than they have to any person in the world, but not greater than they have to God; but that they be ready to part with all interest in each other's person rather than sin against God.

2. In their permissions and license, they must be sure to observe the order of nature, and the ends of God. "He is an ill husband, that uses his wife as a man treats a harlot,"[q] having no other end but pleasure. Concerning which our best rule is, that although in this, as in eating and drinking, there is an appetite to be satisfied, which cannot be done without pleasing that desire; yet since that desire and satisfaction was intended by nature for other ends, they should never be separate from those ends, but always be joined with all or one of these ends, "with a desire of children, or to avoid fornication, or to lighten and ease the cares and sadnesses of household affairs, or to endear each other;" but never with a purpose, either in act or desire, to separate the sensuality from these ends which hallow it. Onan did separate his act from its proper end, and so ordered his embraces that his wife should not conceive, and God punished him.

3. Married persons must keep such modesty and decency of treating each other,[r] that they never force themselves into high and violent lusts, with arts and misbecoming devices; always remembering, that those mixtures are most innocent, which are most simple and most natural, most orderly and most safe.

4. It is a duty of matrimonial chastity, to be restrained and temperate in the use of their lawful pleasures: concerning which, although no universal rule can antecedently be given to all persons, any more than to all bodies one proportion of meat and drink; yet married persons are to estimate the degree of their license according to the following proportions. 1. That it be moderate, so as to consist with health. 2. That it be so ordered as not to be too expensive of time, that precious opportunity of working out our salvation. 3. That when duty is demanded, it be always paid (so far as is in our powers and election) according to the foregoing

[o] 1 Pet. i. 22.

[p] Nisi fundamenta stirpis jacta sint probè, Miseros necesse est esse deinceps posteros.—Eurip.

[q] Non debemus eodem amico uti et adulatore; nec eâdem uti uxore et scorto.—Plut. conjug. præcept.

[r] Non rectè est ab Herodoto dictum, simul cum tunicâ mulierem verecundiam exuere. Quæ nam casta est, positâ veste, verecundiam ejus loco induit, maximèque verecundiâ conjuges tesserâ maximi invicem amoris utuntur.—Plut. conjug. præcept.

measures. 4. That it be with a temperate affection, without violent transporting desires, or too sensual applications. Concerning which a man is to make judgment by proportion to other actions, and the severities of his religion, and the sentences of sober and wise persons; always remembering, that marriage is a provision for supply of the natural necessities of the body, not for the artificial and procured appetites of the mind. And it is a sad truth, that many married persons, thinking that the flood-gates of liberty are set wide open without measures or restraint, (so they sail in that channel,) have felt the final rewards of intemperance and lust, by their unlawful using of lawful permissions. Only let each of them be temperate, and both of them be modest. Socrates was wont to say, that those women to whom nature had not been indulgent in good features and colours, should make it up themselves with excellent manners; and those who were beautiful and comely, should be careful, that so fair a body be not polluted with unhandsome usages. To which Plutarch[s] adds, that a wife, if she be unhandsome, should consider how extremely ugly she would be, if she wanted modesty; but if she be handsome, let her think how gracious that beauty would be, if she superadds chastity.

5. Married persons by consent are to abstain from their mutual entertainments at solemn times of devotion; not as a duty of itself necessary, but as being the most proper act of purity, which in their condition they can present to God, and being a good advantage for attending their preparation to the solemn duty and their demeanour in it. It is St. Paul's counsel, that "by consent for a time they should abstain, that they may give themselves to fasting and prayer."[t] And though when christians did receive the holy communion every day,[u] it is certain they did not abstain, but had children; yet when the communion was more seldom, they did with religion abstain from the marriage-bed during the time of their solemn preparatory devotions, as anciently they did from eating and drinking, till the solemnity of the day was past.

6. It were well if married persons would, in their penitential prayers, and in their general confessions, suspect themselves, and accordingly ask a general pardon for all their indecencies, and more passionate applications of themselves in the offices of marriage: that what is lawful and honourable in its kind, may not be sullied with imperfect circumstances; or if it be, it may be made clean again by the interruption and recallings of such a repentance, of which such uncertain parts of action are capable.

But, because of all the dangers of a christian, none more pressing and troublesome than the temptations to lust, no enemy more dangerous than that of the flesh, no accounts greater, than what we have to reckon for at the audit of concupiscence, therefore it concerns all, that would be safe from this death, to arm themselves by the following rules, to prevent, or to cure all the wounds of our flesh made by the poisoned arrows of lust.

Remedies against Uncleanness.

1. When a temptation of lust assaults thee, do not resist it by heaping up arguments against it, and disputing with it, considering its offers and its dangers, but fly from it,[v] that is, think not at all of it; lay aside all consideration concerning it, and turn away from it by any severe and laudable thought of business. Saint Jerome very wittily reproves the gentile superstition, who pictured the virgin-deities armed with a shield and lance, as if chastity could not be defended without war and direct contention. No; this enemy is to be treated otherwise. If you hear it speak, though but to dispute with it, it ruins you; and the very arguments you go about to answer, leave a relish upon the tongue. A man may be burned, if he goes near the fire, though but to quench his house; and by handling pitch, though but to draw it from your clothes, you defile your fingers.

2. Avoid idleness, and fill up all the spaces of thy time with severe and useful employment; for lust usually creeps in at those emptinesses, where the soul is unemployed, and the body is at ease. For no easy, healthful, and idle person was ever chaste, if he could be tempted. But of all employments bodily labour is most useful, and of greatest benefit for the driving away the devil.

3. Give no entertainment to the beginnings, the first motions and secret whispers of the spirit of impurity. For if you totally suppress it, it dies:[w] if you permit the furnace to breathe its smoke and flame out at any vent, it will rage to the consumption of the whole. This cockatrice is soonest crushed in the shell; but if it grows, it turns to a serpent, and a dragon, and a devil.

4. Corporal mortification, and hard usages of our body, hath, by all ages of the church, been accounted a good instrument, and of some profit against the spirit of fornication. A spare diet, and a thin coarse table, seldom refreshment, frequent fasts, not violent, and interrupted with returns to ordinary feeding, but constantly little, unpleasant, of wholesome but sparing nourishment; for by such cutting off the provisions of victual, we shall weaken the strengths of our enemy. To which if we add lyings upon the ground, painful postures in prayer, reciting our devotions with our arms extended at full length, like Moses praying against Amalek, or our blessed Saviour hanging upon his painful bed of sorrows,

[s] De conjug. præcept. [t] 1 Cor. vii. 5.

[u] Hoc etiam ex more Christianorum. Tertul. suadens fœminis Christianis ne Paganis nubant ait, Quis denique solennibus Paschæ abnoctantem securus sustinebit?—Tertul. ad uxor. 2. 1. Et ex more etiam Gentilium.—Plut. sympos. 3. q. 6. Nobis autem, si leges civitatis rectè colimus, cavendum est, ne ad templa et sacrificia accedamus, paulò antè re venereâ usi. Itaque expedit, nocte et somno interjecto, justoque intervallo adhibito, mundos rursum quasi de integro, et ad novum diem nova cogitantes (ut ait Democritus) surgere.

[v] Contra libidinis impetum apprehende fugam, si vis obtinere victoriam.—St. Aug. Nella guerra d'amor chi fuge vince.

[w] ——— Quisquis in primo obstitit
Repulítque amorem, tutus ac victor fuit:
Qui blandiendo dulce nutrivit malum,
Serò recusat ferre, quod subiit, jugum.
Senec. Hippol. 134.

the cross, and (if the lust be upon us, and sharply tempting) by inflicting any smart to overthrow the strongest passion by the most violent pain, we shall find great ease for the present, and the resolution and apt sufferance against the future danger. And this was St. Paul's remedy, "I bring my body under;" he used some rudenesses towards it. But it was a great nobleness of chastity, which St. Jerome reports of a son of the king of Nicomedia,[x] who being tempted upon flowers and a perfumed bed, with a soft violence, but yet tied down to the temptation, and solicited with circumstances of Asian luxury by an impure courtesan, lest the easiness of his posture should abuse him, spit out his tongue into her face; to represent, that no virtue hath cost the saints so much as this of chastity.[y]

5. Fly from all occasions, temptations, loosenesses of company, balls and revellings, indecent mixtures of wanton dancings, idle talk, private society with strange women, starings upon a beauteous face, the company of women that are singers, amorous gestures, garish and wanton dresses, feasts and liberty, banquets and perfumes,[z] wine and strong drinks, which are made to persecute chastity; some of these being the very prologues to lust, and the most innocent of them being but like condited or pickled mushrooms, which if carefully corrected, and seldom tasted, may be harmless, but can never do good: ever remembering, that it is easier to die for chastity than to live with it; and the hangman could not extort a consent from some persons, from whom a lover would have entreated it. For the glory of chastity will easily overcome the rudeness of fear and violence; but easiness and softness and smooth temptations creep in, and, like the sun, make a maiden lay by her veil and robe, which persecution, like the northern wind, makes her hold fast and clap close about her.

6. He that will secure his chastity, must first cure his pride and his rage. For oftentimes lust is the punishment of a proud man,[a] to tame the vanity of his pride by the shame and affronts of unchastity; and the same intemperate heat that makes anger, does enkindle lust.

7. If thou beest assaulted with an unclean spirit, trust not thyself alone; but run forth into company, whose reverence and modesty may suppress, or whose society may divert thy thoughts: and a perpetual witness of thy conversation is of especial use against this vice, which evaporates in the open air, like camphire, being impatient of light and witnesses.

8. Use frequent and earnest prayers to the King of purities, the first of virgins, the eternal God, who is of an essential purity, that he would be pleased to reprove and cast out the unclean spirit. For beside the blessings of prayer by way of reward, it hath a natural virtue to restrain this vice: because a prayer against it is an unwillingness to act it; and so long as we heartily pray against it, our desires are secured, and then this devil hath no power. This was St. Paul's other remedy: "For this cause I besought the Lord thrice." And there is much reason and much advantage in the use of this instrument; because the main thing, that in this affair is to be secured, is a man's mind.[b] He that goes about to cure lust by bodily exercises alone (as St. Paul's phrase is) or mortifications, shall find them sometimes instrumental to it, and incitations of sudden desires, but always insufficient and of little profit: but he that hath a chaste mind, shall find his body apt enough to take laws; and let it do its worst, it cannot make a sin, and in its greatest violence can but produce a little natural uneasiness, not so much trouble as a severe fasting-day, or a hard night's lodging upon boards. If a man be hungry, he must eat; and if he be thirsty, he must drink in some convenient time, or else he dies: but if the body be rebellious, so the mind be chaste, let it do its worst, if you resolve perfectly not to satisfy it, you can receive no great evil by it. Therefore the proper cure is by application to the spirit, and securities of the mind, which can no way so well be secured as by frequent and fervent prayers, and sober resolution, and severe discourses. Therefore,

9. Hither bring in succour from consideration of the Divine presence, and of his holy angels, meditation of death, and the passions of Christ upon the cross, imitations of his purities, and of the Virgin Mary his unspotted and holy mother, and of such eminent saints, who, in their generations, were burning and shining lights, unmingled with such uncleanness, which defile the soul, and who now follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes.

10. These remedies are of universal efficacy in all cases extraordinary and violent; but in ordinary and common, the remedy, which God hath provided, that is, honourable marriage,[c] hath a natural efficacy, besides a virtue by Divine blessing, to cure the inconveniences, which otherwise might afflict persons temperate and sober.

SECTION IV.

Of Humility.

HUMILITY is the great ornament and jewel of christian religion; that whereby it is distinguished

[x] In vitâ S. Pauli.

[y] Benedictus in spinis se volutavit; S. Martinianus faciem et manus. S. Johannes, cognomento Bonus, calamos acutos inter ungues et carnem digitorum intrusit. S. Theoctistus in silvis more ferarum vixit, ne inter Arabes pollueretur.

[z] Στέφος πλέκων ποθ' εὕρον
'Εν τοῖς ῥόδοις Ἔρωτα,
Καὶ τῶν πτερῶν κατασχών,
'Εβάπτισ' εἰς τὸν οἶνον,
Λαβὼν δ' ἔπιον αὐτὸν·
Καὶ νῦν ἔσω μελῶν μου
Πτεροῖσι γαργαλίζει. JULIAN.

Venus rosam amat propter fabellam, quam recitat. LABANIUS.
Venter mero æstuans citò despumatur in libidines. ST. HIERON.
Il fuoco che non mi scalda, non voglio che mi scotti.

[a] ——— numquid ego à te
Magno prognatam deposco consule ———
Velatâque stolâ mea cùm conferbuit ira?
HORAT. serm. l. i. Sat. 2.

[b] Mens impudicam facere, non corpus solet.

[c] Danda est opera ut matrimonio devinciantur, quod est tutissimum juventutis vinculum.—PLUT. de educ. lib.

from all the wisdom of the world; it not having been taught by the wise men of the gentiles, but first put into a discipline, and made part of a religion, by our Lord Jesus Christ, who propounded himself imitable by his disciples so signally in nothing, as in the twin-sisters of meekness and humility. Learn of me, for I am meek and humble; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

For all the world, all that we are, and all that we have, our bodies and our souls, our actions and our sufferings, our conditions at home, our accidents abroad, our many sins and our seldom virtues, are as so many arguments to make our souls dwell low in the deep valleys of humility.

Arguments against Pride by way of consideration.

1. Our body is weak and impure, sending out more uncleanness from its several sinks than could be endured, if they were not necessary and natural: and we are forced to pass that through our mouths, which as soon as we see upon the ground, we loathe like rottenness and vomiting.

2. Our strength is inferior to that of many beasts, and our infirmities so many, that we are forced to dress and tend horses and asses, that they may help our needs, and relieve our wants.

3. Our beauty is in colour inferior to many flowers, and in proportion of parts it is no better than nothing; for even a dog hath parts as well proportioned and fitted to his purposes, and the designs of his nature, as we have; and when it is most florid and gay, three fits of an ague can change it into yellowness and leanness, and the hollowness and wrinkles of deformity.

4. Our learning is then best, when it teaches most humility: but to be proud of learning is the greatest ignorance in the world. For our learning is so long in getting, and so very imperfect, that the greatest clerk knows not the thousandth part of what he is ignorant; and knows so uncertainly what he seems to know, and knows no otherwise than a fool or a child, even what is told him or what he guesses at, that except those things which concern his duty, and which God hath revealed to him, which also every woman knows so far as is necessary, the most learned man hath nothing to be proud of, unless this be a sufficient argument to exalt him, that he uncertainly guesses at some more unnecessary thing than many others, who yet know all that concerns them, and mind other things more necessary for the needs of life and commonwealths.

5. He that is proud of riches, is a fool. For if he be exalted above his neighbours, because he hath more gold, how much inferior is he to a gold mine? How much is he to give place to a chain of pearl, or a knot of diamonds? For certainly that hath the greatest excellency, from whence he derives all his gallantry and pre-eminence over his neighbours.

6. If a man be exalted by reason of any excellence in his soul, he may please to remember, that all souls are equal; and their differing operations are because their instrument is in better tune, their body is more healthful, or better tempered: which is no more praise to him, than it is that he was born in Italy.

7. He that is proud of his birth, is proud of the blessings of others, not of himself: for if his parents were more eminent in any circumstance than their neighbours, he is to thank God, and to rejoice in them; but still he may be a fool, or unfortunate, or deformed; and when himself was born, it was indifferent to him, whether his father were a king or a peasant, for he knew not any thing, nor chose any thing: and most commonly it is true, that he that boasts of his ancestors, who were the founders and raisers of a noble family, doth confess that he hath in himself a less virtue and a less honour, and therefore that he is degenerated.

8. Whatsoever other difference there is between thee and thy neighbour, if it be bad, it is thine own, but thou hast no reason to boast of thy misery and shame: if it be good, thou hast received it from God; and then thou art more obliged to pay duty and tribute, use and principal to him: and it were a strange folly for a man to be proud of being more in debt than another.

9. Remember what thou wert, before thou wert begotten. Nothing. What wert thou in the first regions of thy dwelling, before thy birth? Uncleanness. What wert thou for many years after? Weakness. What in all thy life? A great sinner. What in all thy excellencies? A mere debtor to God, to thy parents, to the earth, to all the creatures. But we may, if we please, use the method of the Platonists,[d] who reduce all the causes and arguments for humility, which we can take from ourselves, to these seven heads. 1. The spirit of a man is light and troublesome. 2. His body is brutish and sickly. 3. He is constant in his folly and error, and inconsistent in his manners and good purposes. 4. His labours are vain, intricate, and endless. 5. His fortune is changeable, but seldom pleasing, never perfect. 6. His wisdom comes not till he be ready to die, that is, till he be past using it. 7. His death is certain, always ready at the door, but never far off. Upon these or the like meditations if we dwell or frequently retire to them, we shall see nothing more reasonable than to be humble, and nothing more foolish than to be proud.

Acts or offices of Humility.

The grace of humility is exercised by these following rules.

1. Think not thyself better for any thing that happens to thee from without. For although thou mayest, by gifts bestowed upon thee, be better than another, as one horse is better than another, that is, of more use to others; yet as thou art a man, thou hast nothing to commend thee to thyself but that only, by which thou art a man, that is, by what thou choosest and refusest.

2. Humility consists not in railing against thyself, or wearing mean clothes, or going softly and

[d] Apuleius de Demon. Socratis.

submissively; but in hearty and real evil or mean opinion of thyself. Believe thyself an unworthy person heartily, as thou believest thyself to be hungry, or poor, or sick, when thou art so.

3. Whatsoever evil thou sayest of thyself, be content that others should think to be true: and if thou callest thyself fool, be not angry if another say so of thee. For if thou thinkest so truly, all men in the world desire other men to be of their opinion; and he is a hypocrite, that accuses himself before others, with an intent not to be believed. But he that calls himself intemperate, foolish, lustful, and is angry when his neighbours call him so, is both a false and a proud person.

4. Love to be concealed, and little esteemed:[e] be content to want praise, never being troubled when thou art slighted or undervalued; for thou canst not undervalue thyself, and if thou thinkest so meanly, as there is reason, no contempt will seem unreasonable, and therefore it will be very tolerable.

5. Never be ashamed of thy birth,[f] or thy parents, or thy trade,[g] or thy present employment, for the meanness or poverty of any of them, and when there is an occasion to speak of them, such an occasion as would invite you to speak of any thing that pleases you, omit it not, but speak as readily and indifferently of thy meanness as of thy greatness. Primislaus, the first king of Bohemia, kept his country-shoes always by him, to remember from whence he was raised: and Agathocles, by the furniture of his table, confessed, that, from a potter he was raised to be the king of Sicily.

6. Never speak any thing directly tending to thy praise or glory; that is, with a purpose to be commended, and for no other end. If other ends be mingled with thy honour, as if the glory of God, or charity, or necessity, or any thing of prudence be thy end, you are not tied to omit your discourse or your design, that you may avoid praise, but pursue your end, though praise come along in the company. Only let not praise be the design.

7. When thou hast said or done any thing, for which thou receivest praise or estimation, take it indifferently, and return it to God; reflecting upon him as the giver of the gift, or the blesser of the action, or the aid of the design: and give God thanks for making thee an instrument of his glory, for the benefit of others.

8. Secure a good name to thyself by living virtuously and humbly; but let this good name be nursed abroad, and never be brought home to look upon it: let others use it for their own advantage; let them speak of it if they please; but do not thou at all use it, but as an instrument to do God glory, and thy neighbour more advantage. Let thy face, like Moses's, shine to others, but make no looking-glasses for thyself.

9. Take no content in praise, when it is offered thee; but let thy rejoicing in God's gift be allayed with fear, lest this good bring thee to evil. Use the praise, as you use your pleasure in eating and drinking; if it comes, make it do drudgery, let it serve other ends, and minister to necessities, and to caution, lest, by pride, you lose your just praise, which you have deserved; or else, by being praised unjustly, you receive shame into yourself with God and wise men.

10. Use no stratagems and devices to get praise. Some use to inquire into the faults of their own actions or discourses, on purpose to hear, that it was well done or spoken, and without fault:[h] others bring the matter into talk, or thrust themselves into company, and intimate and give occasion to be thought or spoke of. These men make a bait to persuade themselves to swallow the hook, till by drinking the waters of vanity they swell and burst.

11. Make no suppletories to thyself, when thou art disgraced or slighted, by pleasing thyself with supposing thou didst deserve praise, though they understood thee not, or enviously detracted from thee: neither do thou get to thyself a private theatre and flatterers,[i] in whose vain noises and fantastic praises thou mayest keep up thine own good opinion of thyself.

12. Entertain no fancies of vanity and private whispers of this devil of pride: such as was that of Nebuchadnezzar; "Is not this great Babylon, which I have built for the honour of my name, and the might of my majesty, and the power of my kingdom?" Some fantastic spirits will walk alone, and dream waking of greatnesses, of palaces, of excellent orations, full theatres, loud applauses, sudden advancement, great fortunes, and so will spend an hour with imaginative pleasure; all their employment being nothing but fumes of pride, and secret indefinite desires and significations of what their heart wishes. In this, although there is nothing of its own nature directly vicious, yet it is either an ill mother or an ill daughter, an ill sign or an ill effect; and therefore at no hand consisting with the safety and interests of humility.

13. Suffer others to be praised in thy presence, and entertain their good and glory with delight; but at no hand disparage them, or lessen the report, or make an objection; and think not the advancement of thy brother is a lessening of thy worth. But this act is also to extend further.

14. Be content that he should be employed, and thou laid by as unprofitable; his sentence approved, thine rejected; he be preferred, and thou fixed in a low employment.

15. Never compare thyself with others, unless it be to advance them and to depress thyself. To which purpose, we must be sure in some sense or other to think ourselves the worst in every company where we come; one is more learned than I am, another is more prudent, a third more honourable, a fourth more chaste, or he is more charitable, or

[e] Ama nesciri et pro nihilo reputari.—Gerson.
[f] Il villan nobilitado non cognosce parentado.
[g] Chi del arte sua se vergogna, sempre vive con vergogna.
[h] Τί οὖν ἡμῖν ὀβελίσκον καταπιὼν περιπατεῖς; ἤθελον ἵνα με καὶ οἱ ἀπαντῶντες θαυμάζωσι, καὶ ἑπακολουθοῦντες ἐπικραυγάζωσιν, ὦ μεγάλου φιλοσόφου.—Arrian. Epist. c. 21. l. 1.
[i] Alter alteri satis amplum theatrum sumus; satis unus, satis nullus.—Sen.

less proud. For the humble man observes their good, and reflects only upon his own vileness; or considers the many evils of himself certainly known to himself, and the ill of others but by uncertain report; or he considers, that the evils, done by another, are out of much infirmity or ignorance, but his own sins are against a clearer light; and if the other had so great helps, he would have done more good and less evil; or he remembers, that his old sins before his conversion were greater in the nature of the thing, or in certain circumstances, than the sins of other men. So St. Paul reckoned himself the chiefest of sinners, because formerly he had acted the chiefest sin of persecuting the church of God. But this rule is to be used with this caution; that though it be good always to think meanest of ourselves, yet it is not ever safe to speak it; because those circumstances and considerations, which determine thy thoughts, are not known to others as to thyself; and it may concern others, that they hear thee give God thanks for the graces he hath given thee. But if thou preservest thy thoughts and opinions of thyself truly humble, you may with more safety give God thanks in public for that good which cannot or ought not to be concealed.

16. Be not always ready to excuse every oversight, or indiscretion, or ill action; but if thou beest guilty of it, confess it plainly; for virtue scorns a lie for its cover; but to hide a sin with it, is like a crust of leprosy drawn upon an ulcer. If thou beest not guilty (unless it be scandalous,) be not over-earnest to remove it; but rather use it as an argument to chastise all greatness of fancy and opinion in thyself; and accustom thyself to bear reproof patiently and contentedly, and the harsh words of thy enemies, as knowing that the anger of an enemy is a better monitor, and represents our faults, or admonishes us of our duty with more heartiness, than the kindness does, or precious balms of a friend.

17. Give God thanks for every weakness, deformity, and imperfection, and accept it as a favour and grace of God, and an instrument to resist pride, and nurse humility; ever remembering, that when God, by giving thee a crooked back, hath also made thy spirit stoop or less vain, thou art more ready to enter the narrow gate of heaven, than by being straight, and standing upright, and thinking highly. Thus the apostles rejoiced in their infirmities, not moral, but natural and accidental, in their being beaten and whipt like slaves, in their nakedness and poverty.

18. Upbraid no man's weakness to him to discomfort him, neither report it to disparage him, neither delight to remember it to lessen him, or to set thyself above him. Be sure never to praise thyself, or to dispraise any man else, unless God's glory or some holy end do hallow it. And it was noted to the praise of Cyrus, that, amongst his equals in age,[k] he would never play at any sport, or use any exercise, in which he knew himself more excellent than they; but in such, in which he was unskilful, he would make his challenges, lest he should shame them by his victory, and that himself might learn something of their skill, and do them civilities.

19. Besides the foregoing parts and actions, humility teaches us to submit ourselves and all our faculties to God, "to believe all things, to do all things, to suffer all things," which his will enjoins us: to be content in every state or change, knowing we have deserved worse than the worst we feel; and (as Anytus said to Alcibiades) he hath taken but half, when he might have taken all; to adore his goodness, to fear his greatness, to worship his eternal and infinite excellencies, and to submit ourselves to all our superiors, in all things, according to godliness, and to be meek and gentle in our conversation towards others."[l]

Now although, according to the nature of every grace, this begins as a gift, and is increased like a habit, that is, best by its own acts; yet besides the former acts and offices of humility, there are certain other exercises and considerations, which are good helps and instruments for the procuring and increasing this grace, and the curing of pride.

Means and exercises for obtaining and increasing the grace of Humility.

1. Make confession of thy sins often to God; and consider what all that evil amounts to, which you then charge upon yourself. Look not upon them as scattered in the course of a long life; now, an intemperate anger, then, too full a meal; now, idle talking, and another time, impatience; but unite them into one continued representation, and remember, that he whose life seems fair, by reason that his faults are scattered at large distances in the several parts of his life, yet, if all his errors and follies were articled against him, the man would seem vicious and miserable: and possibly this exercise, really applied upon thy spirit, may be useful.

2. Remember, that we usually disparage others upon slight grounds and little instances; and towards them one fly is enough to spoil a whole box of ointment; and if a man be highly commended, we think him sufficiently lessened, if we clap one sin or folly or infirmity into his account. Let us, therefore, be just to ourselves, since we are so severe to others, and consider, that whatsoever good any one can think or say of us, we can tell him of hundreds of base, and unworthy, and foolish actions, any one of which were enough (we hope) to destroy another's reputation; therefore, let so many be sufficient to destroy our over-high thoughts of ourselves.

3. When thy neighbour is cried up by public fame and popular noises, that we may disparage and lessen him, we cry out that the people is a herd of unlearned and ignorant persons, ill judges, loud

[k] Ama l'amico tuo con il difetto suo. In colloquiis, pueri invisi aliis non fient, si non omnino in disputationibus victoriam semper obtinere laborent. Non tantùm egregium est scire vincere, sed etiam posse vinci pulchrum est, ubi victoria est damnosa.—Plut. de educ. liber.

[l] Nihil ita dignum est odio, ut eorum mores, qui compellantibus se difficiles prebent.—Plut.

trumpets, but which never give certain sound: let us use the same art to humble ourselves, and never take delight and pleasure in public reports, and acclamations of assemblies, and please ourselves with their judgment,[m] of whom, in other the like cases, we affirm that they are mad.

4. We change our opinion of others, by their kindness or unkindness towards us. If he be my patron, and bounteous, he is wise, he is noble, his faults are but warts, his virtues are mountainous; but if he proves unkind, or rejects our importunate suit, then he is ill-natured, covetous, and his free meal is called gluttony; that which before we called civility, is now very drunkenness; and all he speaks is flat and dull, and ignorant as a swine. This, indeed, is unjust towards others; but a good instrument, if we turn the edge of it upon ourselves. We use ourselves ill, abusing ourselves with false principles, cheating ourselves with lies and pretences, stealing the choice and election from our wills, placing voluntary ignorance in our understandings, denying the desires of the spirit, setting up a faction against every noble and just desire; the least of which, because we should resent up to reviling the injurious person, it is but reason we should at least not flatter ourselves with fond and too kind opinions.

5. Every day call to mind some one of thy foulest sins, or the most shameful of thy disgraces, or the indiscreetest of thy actions, or any thing that did then most trouble thee, and apply it to the present swelling of thy spirit and opinion, and it may help to allay it.

6. Pray often for his grace, with all humility of gesture and passion of desire; and in thy devotion interpose many acts of humility, by way of confession and address to God, and reflection upon thyself.

7. Avoid great offices and employments, and the noises of worldly honour.[n] For in those states, many times so many ceremonies and circumstances will seem necessary, as will destroy the sobriety of thy thoughts. If the number of thy servants be fewer, and their observances less, and their reverences less solemn, possibly they will seem less than thy dignity; and if they be so much and so many, it is likely they will be too big for thy spirit. And here be thou very careful, lest thou be abused by a pretence, that thou wouldst use thy great dignity, as an opportunity of doing great good. For supposing it might be good for others, yet it is not good for thee: they may have encouragement in noble things from thee; and, by the same instrument, thou mayest thyself be tempted to pride and vanity. And certain it is, God is as much glorified by thy example of humility in a low or temperate condition, as by thy bounty in a great and dangerous.

8. Make no reflex acts upon thy own humility, nor upon any other grace, with which God hath enriched thy soul. For since God oftentimes hides from his saints and servants the sight of those excellent things, by which they shine to others, (though the dark side of the lantern be toward themselves,) that he may secure the grace of humility; it is good that thou do so thyself: and if thou beholdest a grace of God in thee, remember to give him thanks for it, that thou mayest not boast in that which is none of thy own: and consider how thou hast sullied it, by handling it with dirty fingers, with thy own imperfections, and with mixture of unhandsome circumstances. Spiritual pride is very dangerous, not only by reason it spoils so many graces, by which we drew nigh unto the kingdom of God, but also because it so frequently creeps upon the spirit of holy persons. For it is no wonder for a beggar to call himself poor, or a drunkard to confess that he is no sober person; but for a holy person to be humble, for one whom all men esteem a saint, to fear lest himself become a devil, and to observe his own danger, and to discern his own infirmities, and make discovery of his bad adherencies, is as hard as for a prince to submit himself to be guided by tutors, and make himself subject to discipline, like the meanest of his servants.

9. Often meditate upon the effects of pride, on one side, and humility, on the other. First, That pride is like a canker, and destroys the beauty of the fairest flowers, the most excellent gifts and graces; but humility crowns them all. Secondly, That pride is a great hinderance to the perceiving the things of God;[o] and humility is an excellent preparative and instrument of spiritual wisdom. Thirdly, That pride hinders the acceptation of our prayers; but "humility pierceth the clouds, and will not depart till the Most High shall regard." Fourthly, That humility is but a speaking truth, and all pride is a lie. Fifthly, That humility is the most certain way to real honour, and pride is ever affronted or despised. Sixthly, That pride turned Lucifer into a devil, and humility exalted the Son of God above every name, and placed him eternally at the right hand of his Father. Seventhly, That "God resisteth the proud,"[p] professing open defiance and hostility against such persons; but "giveth grace to the humble:" grace and pardon, remedy and relief against misery and oppression, content in all conditions, tranquillity of spirit, patience in afflictions, love abroad, peace at home, and utter freedom from contention, and the sin of censuring others, and the trouble of being censured themselves. For the humble man will not "judge his brother for the mote in his eye," being more troubled at "the beam in his own eye;" and is patient and glad to be reproved, because himself hath cast the first stone at himself, and therefore wonders not that others are of his mind.

10. Remember that the blessed Saviour of the world hath done more to prescribe, and transmit, and secure this grace, than any other;[q] his whole life being a great continued example of humility, a vast descent from the glorious bosom of his Father to the womb of a poor maiden, to the form of a servant, to the miseries of a sinner, to a life of

[m] Οὐχ οὗτοί εἰσι, περὶ ὧν εἰωθὸς λέγειν ὅτι μαίνονται; τί οὖν ὑπὸ τῶν μαινομένων θέλεις θαυμάζεσθαι;—ARRIAN.

[n] Fabis abstine, dixit Pythagoras. Olim nam Magistratus per suffragia fabis lata creabantur.—PLUT.

[o] Matt. xi. 25. [p] James iv. 6. [q] John xiii. 15.

labour, to a state of poverty, to a death of malefactors, to the grave of death, and the intolerable calamities which we deserved: and it were a good design, and yet but reasonable, that we should be as humble in the midst of our greatest imperfections and basest sins, as Christ was in the midst of his fulness of the Spirit, great wisdom, perfect life, and most admirable virtues.

11. Drive away all flatterers from thy company, and at no hand endure them; for he that endures himself so to be abused by another, is not only a fool for entertaining the mockery, but loves to have his own opinion of himself to be heightened and cherished.

12. Never change thy employment for the sudden coming of another to thee; but if modesty permits, or discretion, appear to him that visits thee the same that thou wert to God and thyself in thy privacy. But if thou wert walking or sleeping, or in any other innocent employment or retirement, snatch not up a book to seem studious, nor fall on thy knees to seem devout, nor alter any thing to make him believe thee better employed than thou wert.

13. To the same purpose it is of great use, that he who would preserve his humility, should choose some spiritual person, to whom he shall oblige himself to discover his very thoughts and fancies, every act of his, and all his intercourse with others, in which there may be danger; that by such an openness of spirit he may expose every blast of vainglory, every idle thought, to be chastened and lessened by the rod of spiritual discipline: and he that shall find himself tied to confess every proud thought, every vanity of his spirit, will also perceive they must not dwell with him, nor find any kindness from him; and besides this, the nature of pride is so shameful and unhandsome, that the very discovery of it is a huge mortification and means of suppressing it. A man would be ashamed to be told, that he inquires after the faults of his last oration or action on purpose to be commended: and therefore, when the man shall tell his spiritual guide the same shameful story of himself, it is very likely he will be humbled, and heartily ashamed of it.

14. Let every man suppose, what opinion he should have of one, that should spend his time in playing with drum-sticks and cockle-shells, and that should wrangle all day long with a little boy for pins, or should study hard and labour to cozen a child of his gauds; and, who would run into a river, deep and dangerous, with a great burden upon his back, even then when he were told of the danger, and earnestly importuned not to do it? and let him but change the instances and the person, and he shall find that he hath the same reason to think as bad of himself, who pursues trifles with earnestness, spending his time in vanity, and his "labour for that which profits not;" who knowing the laws of God, the rewards of virtue, the cursed consequents of sin, that it is an evil spirit that tempts him to it; a devil, one that hates him, that longs extremely to ruin him; that it is his own destruction that he is then working; that the pleasures of his sin are base and brutish, unsatisfying in the enjoyment, soon over, shameful in their story, bitter in the memory, painful in the effect here, and intolerable hereafter, and for ever; yet in despite of all this, he runs foolishly into his sin and his ruin, merely because he is a fool, and winks hard, and rushes violently like a horse into the battle, or like a madman to his death. He that can think great and good things of such a person, the next step may court the rack for an instrument of pleasure, and admire a swine for wisdom, and go for counsel to the prodigal and trifling grasshopper.

After the use of these and such-like instruments and considerations, if you would try, how your soul is grown, you shall know that humility, like the root of a goodly tree, is thrust very far into the ground, by these goodly fruits, which appear above ground.

Signs of Humility.

1. The humble man trusts not to his own discretion, but in matter of concernment relies rather upon the judgment of his friends, counsellors, or spiritual guides. 2. He does not pertinaciously pursue the choice of his own will, but in all things lets God choose for him, and his superiors in those things which concern them. 3. He does not murmur against commands.[r] 4. He is not inquisitive into the reasonableness of indifferent and innocent commands, but believes their command to be reason enough in such cases to exact his obedience. 5. He lives according to a rule, and with compliance to public customs, without any affectation or singularity. 6. He is meek and indifferent in all accidents and chances. 7. He patiently bears injuries.[s] 8. He is always unsatisfied in his own conduct, resolutions, and counsels. 9. He is a great lover of good men, and a praiser of wise men, and a censurer of no man. 10. He is modest in his speech, and reserved in his laughter. 11. He fears, when he hears himself commended, lest God make another judgment concerning his actions than men do. 12. He gives no pert or saucy answers, when he is reproved, whether justly or unjustly. 13. He loves to sit down in private, and, if he may, he refuses the temptation of offices and new honours. 14. He is ingenuous, free, and open, in his actions and discourses. 15. He mends his fault, and gives thanks, when he is admonished. 16. He is ready to do good offices to the murderers of his fame, to his slanderers, backbiters, and detractors, as Christ washed the feet of Judas. 17. And is contented to be suspected of indiscretion, so before God he may be really innocent, and not offensive to his neighbour, nor wanting to his just and prudent interest.

SECTION V.

Of Modesty.

Modesty is the appendage of sobriety, and is to chastity, to temperance, and to humility, as the

[r] Assai commanda, chi ubbidisce al saggio.

[s] Verum humilem patientia ostendit.—St. Hier.

fringes are to a garment. It is a grace of God, that moderates the over-activeness and curiosity of the mind, and orders the passions of the body, and external actions, and is directly opposed to curiosity, to boldness, to indecency. The practice of modesty consists in these following rules.

Acts and Duties of Modesty, as it is opposed to Curiosity.[t]

1. Inquire not into the secrets of God,[u] but be content to learn thy duty according to the quality of thy person or employment: that is, plainly, if thou beest not concerned in the conduct of others; but if thou beest a teacher, learn it so, as may best enable thee to discharge thy office. God's commandments were proclaimed to all the world; but God's counsels are to himself and to his secret ones, when they are admitted within the veil.

2. Inquire not into the things which are too hard for thee, but learn modestly to know thy infirmities and abilities;[v] and raise not thy mind up to inquire into mysteries of state, or the secrets of government, or difficulties theological, if thy employment really be, or thy understanding be judged to be, of a lower rank.

3. Let us not inquire into the affairs of others, that concern us not, but be busied within ourselves and our own spheres; ever remembering that to pry into the actions or interests of other men, not under our charge, may minister to pride, to tyranny, to uncharitableness, to trouble, but can never consist with modesty; unless where duty, or the mere intentions of charity and relation, do warrant it.

4. Never listen at the doors or windows:[w] for besides that it contains in it danger and a snare, it is also an invading my neighbour's privacy, and a laying that open, which he therefore enclosed, that it might not be open. Never ask, what he carries covered so curiously; for it is enough, that it is covered curiously. Hither also is reducible, that we never open letters without public authority, or reasonable presumed leave, or great necessity, or charity.

Every man hath in his own life sins enough, in his own mind trouble enough, in his own fortune evils enough, and in performance of his offices, failings more than enough, to entertain his own inquiry; so that curiosity after the affairs of others cannot be without envy and an evil mind. What is it to me, if my neighbour's grandfather were a Syrian, or his grandmother illegitimate; or that another is indebted five thousand pounds, or whether his wife be expensive? But commonly curious persons, or (as the apostle's phrase is) "busybodies," are not solicitous or inquisitive into the beauty and order of a well-governed family, or after the virtues of an excellent person; but if there be any thing, for which men keep locks and bars and porters, things that blush to see the light, and either are shameful in manners, or private in nature, these things are their care and their business. But if great things will satisfy our inquiry, the course of the sun and moon, the spots in their faces, the firmament of heaven, and the supposed orbs, the ebbing and flowing of the sea, are work enough for us: or if this be not, let him tell me, whether the number of the stars be even or odd, and when they began to be so; since some ages have discovered new stars which the former knew not, but might have seen if they had been where now they are fixed. If these be too troublesome, search lower, and tell me, why this turf this year brings forth a daisy, and the next year a plantain; why the apple bears his seed in his heart, and wheat bears it in his head: let him tell, why a graft, taking nourishment from a crabstock, shall have a fruit more noble than its nurse and parent: let him say, why the best of oil is at the top, the best of wine in the middle, and the best of honey at the bottom, otherwise than it is in some liquors, that are thinner, and in some, that are thicker. But these things are not such as please busybodies; they must feed upon tragedies, and stories of misfortunes, and crimes; and yet tell them ancient stories of the ravishment of chaste maidens, or the debauchment of nations, or the extreme poverty of learned persons, or the persecutions of the old saints, or the changes of government, and sad accidents happening in royal families amongst the Arsacidæ, the Cæsars, the Ptolemies, these were enough to scratch the itch of knowing sad stories; but unless you tell them something sad and new, something that is done within the bounds of their own knowledge or relation, it seems tedious and unsatisfying; which shows plainly, it is an evil spirit: envy and idleness married together, and begot curiosity. Therefore Plutarch rarely well compares curious and inquisitive ears to the execrable gates of cities, out of which only malefactors and hangmen and tragedies pass, nothing that is chaste or holy. If a physician should go from house to house unsent for, and inquire what woman hath a cancer in her bowels, or what man hath a fistula in his colic-gut, though he could pretend to cure it, he would be almost as unwelcome as the disease itself: and therefore it is inhuman, to inquire after crimes and disasters without pretence of amending them, but only to discover them. We are not angry with searchers and publicans, when they look only on public merchandise, but when they break open trunks, and pierce vessels, and unrip packs, and open sealed letters.

Curiosity is the direct incontinency of the spirit; and adultery itself, in its principle, is many times nothing but a curious inquisition after, and envying of another man's enclosed pleasures; and there have been many, who refused fairer objects, that they might ravish an enclosed woman from her retirement and single-possessor. But these inquisitions are seldom without danger, never without baseness; they are neither just nor honest, nor de-

[t] Εὐσχημοσύνη.

[u] Ecclus. iii. 21–23.

[v] Qui scrutator est Majestatis, opprimetur à gloriâ. Prov. xxv. Αὕτη ἀρχὴ τοῦ φιλοσοφεῖν, αἴσθησις τοῦ ἰδίου ἡγεμονικοῦ, πῶς ἔχει· μετὰ γὰρ τὸ γνῶναι ὅτι ἀσθενῶς, οὐκέτι θελήσει χρῆσθαι αὐτῷ πρὸς τὰ μέγιστα. ARRIAN. lib. i. cap. 26. Et plus sapere interdum vulgus, quòd, quantum opus est, sapiat.—LACTANT.

[w] Ecclus. vii. 21.—Ne occhi in lettera, ne mano in tasca, ne orecchi in secreti altrui.

lightful, and very often useless to the curious inquirer. For men stand upon their guards against them, as they secure their meat against harpies and cats, laying all their counsels and secrets out of their way; or as men clap their garments close about them, when the searching and saucy winds would discover their nakedness; as knowing, that what men willingly hear, they do willingly speak of. Knock therefore at the door, before you enter upon your neighbour's privacy; and remember, that there is no difference between entering into his house, and looking into it.

Acts of Modesty as it is opposed to Boldness.[x]

1. Let us always bear about us such impressions of reverence and fear of God as to tremble at his voice, to express our apprehensions of his greatness in all great accidents, in popular judgments, loud thunders, tempests, earthquakes; not only for fear of being smitten ourselves, or that we are concerned in the accident, but also that we may humble ourselves before his Almightiness, and express that infinite distance between his infiniteness and our weaknesses, at such times especially, when he gives such visible arguments of it. He that is merry and airy at shore, when he sees a sad and a loud tempest on the sea; or dances briskly, when God thunders from heaven; regards not when God speaks to all the world, but is possessed with a firm immodesty.

2. Be reverent, modest, and reserved in the presence of thy betters, giving to all, according to their quality, their titles of honour, keeping distance, speaking little, answering pertinently, not interposing without leave or reason, not answering to a question propounded to another; and ever present to thy superiors the fairest side of thy discourse, of thy temper, of thy ceremony, as being ashamed to serve excellent persons with unhandsome intercourse.

3. Never lie before a king, or a great person, nor stand in a lie, when thou art accused; nor offer to justify what is indeed a fault; but modestly be ashamed of it, ask pardon, and make amends.[y]

4. Never boast of thy sin, but at least lay a veil upon thy nakedness and shame,* and put thine hand before thine eyes, thou thou mayest have this beginning of repentance, to believe thy sin to be thy shame. For he that blushes not at his crime, but adds shamelessness to his shame, hath no instrument left to restore him to the hopes of virtue.

5. Be not confident and affirmative in an uncertain matter, but report things modestly and temperately, according to the degree of that persuasion, which is, or ought to be, begotten in thee by the efficacy of the authority, or the reason inducing thee.

6. Pretend not to more knowledge than thou hast, but be content to seem ignorant where thou art so, lest thou beest either brought to shame, or retirest into shamelessness.[z]

Acts of Modesty as it is opposed to Indecency.[a]

1. In your prayers, in churches, and places of religion, use reverent postures, great attention, grave ceremony, the lowest gestures of humility, remembering that we speak to God, in our reverence to whom we cannot possibly exceed; but that the expression of this reverence be according to law or custom, and the example of the most prudent and pious persons; that is, let it be the best in its kind, to the best of essences.

2. In all public meetings, private addresses, in discourses, in journeys, use those forms of salutation, reverence, and decency, which the custom prescribes, and is usual amongst the most sober persons; giving honour to whom honour belongeth, taking place of none of thy betters, and in all cases of question concerning civil precedency, giving it to any one that will take it, if it be only thy own right that is in question.

3. Observe the proportion of affections in all meetings and to all persons; be not merry at a funeral, nor sad upon a festival; but rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

4. Abstain from wanton and dissolute laughter, petulant and uncomely jests, loud talking, jeering, and all such actions, which in civil account are called indecencies and incivilities.

5. Towards your parents use all modesty of duty and humble carriage; towards them and all your kindred, be severe in the modesties of chastity; ever fearing, lest the freedoms of natural kindness should enlarge into any neighbourhood of unhandsomeness. For all incestuous mixtures, and all circumstances and degrees towards it, are the highest violations of modesty in the world; for therefore incest is grown to be so high a crime, especially in the last periods of the world, because it breaks that reverence which the consent of all nations and the severity of human laws hath enjoined towards our parents and nearest kindred, in imitation of that law which God gave to the Jews in prosecution of modesty in this instance.

6. Be a curious observer of all those things which are of good report, and are parts of public honesty.[b] For public fame, and the sentence of prudent and public persons, is the measure of good and evil in things indifferent; and charity requires us to comply with those fancies and affections, which are agreeable to nature, or the analogy of virtue, or public laws, or old customs. It is against modesty for a woman to marry a second husband, as long as she bears a burden by the first; or to admit a second love, while her funeral tears are not wiped from her

[x] Αἰσχύνη.

[y] Quem Deus tegit verecundiæ pallio, hujus maculas hominibus non ostendit.—Maimon. Can. Eth.

Πρῶτον ἀγαθῶν ἀναμάρτητον, δεύτερον δ' αἰσχύναι.
Meliss.

Obstare primum est velle, nec labi viâ;
Pudor est secundus, nosse peccandi modum.
Senec. Hip. 140.

* A Chione saltem, vel ab Helide disce pudorem;
Abscondunt spurcas hæc monumenta lupas.
Mart. l. i. Ep. 35.

[z] Ecclus. iii. 25.

[a] Κοσμιότης, εὐταξία or εὐπρέπεια.

[b] Philip. iv. 8.

cheeks. It is against public honesty to do some lawful actions of privacy in public theatres, and therefore in such cases retirement is a duty of modesty.[c]

7. Be grave, decent, and modest, in thy clothing and ornament: never let it be above thy condition, not always equal to it, never light or amorous, never discovering a nakedness through a thin veil, which thou pretendest to hide, never to lay a snare for a soul; but remember what becomes a christian, professing holiness, chastity, and the discipline of the holy Jesus: and the first effect of this let your servants feel by your gentleness and aptness to be pleased with their usual diligence, and ordinary conduct.[d] For the man or woman that is dressed with anger and impatience, wears pride under their robes, and immodesty above.

8. Hither also is to be reduced singular and affected walking, proud, nice, and ridiculous gestures of body, painting and lascivious dressings; all which together God reproves by the prophet, "The Lord saith, because the daughters of Sion are haughty, and walk with stretched-forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and make a tinkling with their feet; therefore the Lord will smite her with a scab of the crown of the head, and will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments."[e] And this duty of modesty, in this instance, is expressly enjoined to all christian women by St. Paul: "That women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearl, or costly array, but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works."[f]

9. As those meats are to be avoided, which tempt our stomachs beyond our hunger; so also should prudent persons decline all such spectacles, relations, theatres, loud noises, and outcries, which concern us not, and are besides our natural or moral interest. Our senses should not, like petulant and wanton girls, wander into markets and theatres without just employment; but when they are sent abroad by reason, return quickly with their errand, and remain modestly at home under their guide, till they be sent again.[g]

10. Let all persons be curious in observing modesty towards themselves, in the handsome treating their own body, and such as are in their power, whether living or dead. Against this rule they offend who expose to others their own, or pry into others' nakedness beyond the limits of necessity, or where a leave is not made holy by a permission from God. It is also said, that God was pleased to work a miracle about the body of Epiphanius, to reprove the immodest curiosity of an unconcerned person, who pried too near, when charitable people were composing it to the grave. In all these cases and particulars, although they seem little, yet our duty and concernment is not little. Concerning which I use the words of the son of Sirach, "He that despiseth little things, shall perish by little and little."

SECTION VI.

Of Contentedness in all Estates and Accidents.

Virtues and discourses are, like friends, necessary in all fortunes; but those are the best, which are friends in our sadnesses, and support us in our sorrows and sad accidents; and in this sense, no man that is virtuous can be friendless; nor hath any man reason to complain of the Divine Providence, or accuse the public disorder of things, or his own felicity, since God hath appointed one remedy for all the evils in the world, and that is, a contented spirit: for this alone makes a man pass through fire, and not be scorched; through seas, and not be drowned; through hunger and nakedness, and want nothing. For since all the evil in the world consists in the disagreeing between the object and the appetite, as when a man hath what he desires not, or desires what he hath not, or desires amiss; he that composes his spirit to the present accident, hath variety of instances for his virtue, but none to trouble him; because his desires enlarge not beyond his present fortune; and a wise man is placed in the variety of chances, like the nave or centre of a wheel, in the midst of all the circumvolutions and changes of posture, without violence or change, save that it turns gently in compliance with its changed parts, and is indifferent which part is up and which is down; for there is some virtue or other to be exercised, whatever happens, either patience or thanksgiving, love or fear, moderation or humility, charity or contentedness, and they are every one of them equally in order to his great end and immortal felicity: and beauty is not made by white or red, by black eyes and a round face, by a straight body and a smooth skin, but by a proportion to the fancy. No rules can make amiability; our minds and apprehensions make that; and so is our felicity: and we may be reconciled to poverty and a low fortune, if we suffer contentedness and the grace of God to make the proportions. For no man is poor that does not think himself so: but if, in a full fortune, with impatience he desires more, he proclaims his wants and his beggarly condition.[h] But because this grace of contentedness was the sum of all the old moral philosophy, and a great duty in christianity, and of most universal use in the whole course of our lives, and the only instrument to ease the burdens of the world and the enmities of sad chances, it will not be amiss to press it by the proper arguments, by which God hath bound it upon our spirits, it being fastened by reason and religion, by duty and interest, by necessity and

[c] At meretrix abigit testem veloque serâque;
Raraque Summœni fornice rima patet.
Mart. i. 53.

[d] Tuta sit ornatrix: odi quæ sauciat ora
Unguibus, et raptâ brachia figit acu.
Devovet, et tangit Dominæ caput illa, simulque
Plorat ad invisas sanguinolenta comas.
Ovid. A. A. 3. 238.

[e] Isa. iii. 16–18. [f] 1 Tim. ii. 9.

[g] Œdipum curiositas in extremas conjecit calamitates.
Plut.

[h] Non facta tibi est, si dissimules, injuria.

conveniency, by example, and by the proposition of excellent rewards, no less than peace and felicity.

1. Contentedness in all estates is a duty of religion; it is the great reasonableness of complying with the Divine Providence, which governs all the world, and hath so ordered us in the administration of his great family. He were a strange fool, that should be angry because dogs and sheep need no shoes, and yet himself is full of care to get some. God hath supplied those needs to them by natural provisions, and to thee by an artificial: for he hath given thee reason to learn a trade, or some means to make or buy them, so that it only differs in the manner of our provision; and which had you rather want, shoes or reason? And my patron, that hath given me a farm, is freer to me, than if he gives a loaf ready baked. But, however, all these gifts come from him, and therefore it is fit he should dispense them as he pleases; and if we murmur here, we may, at the next melancholy, be troubled, that God did not make us to be angels or stars. For if that which we are or have do not content us, we may be troubled for every thing in the world, which is besides our being or our possessions.

God is the master of the scenes; we must not choose which part we shall act; it concerns us only to be careful that we do it well, always saying, "If this please God, let it be as it is:"[i] and we who pray, that God's will may be done in earth as it is in heaven, must remember, that the angels do whatsoever is commanded them, and go wherever they are sent, and refuse no circumstances; and if their employment be crossed by a higher degree, they sit down in peace, and rejoice in the event; and when the angel of Judea could not prevail in behalf of the people committed to his charge,[k] because the angel of Persia opposed it, he only told the story at the command of God, and was as content, and worshipped with as great an ecstasy in his proportion, as the prevailing spirit. Do thou so likewise: keep the station where God hath placed you, and you shall never long for things without, but sit at home, feasting upon the Divine Providence and thy own reason, by which we are taught, that it is necessary and reasonable to submit to God.

For is not all the world God's family? Are not we his creatures? Are we not as clay in the hand of the potter? Do we not live upon his meat, and move by his strength, and do our work by his light? Are we any thing, but what we are from him? And shall there be a mutiny among the flocks and herds, because their lord or their shepherd chooses their pastures, and suffers them not to wander into deserts and unknown ways? If we choose, we do it so foolishly, that we cannot like it long, and most commonly not at all: but God, who can do what he pleases, is wise to choose safely for us, affectionate to comply with our needs, and powerful to execute all his wise decrees. Here therefore is the wisdom of the contented man, to let God choose for him: for when we have given up our wills to him, and stand in that station of the battle, where our great General hath placed us, our spirits must needs rest, while our conditions have, for their security, the power, the wisdom, and the charity of God.

2. Contentedness, in all accidents, brings great peace of spirit, and is the great and only instrument of temporal felicity. It removes the sting from the accident, and makes a man not to depend upon chance, and the uncertain dispositions of men for his well-being, but only on God and his own spirit. We ourselves make our fortunes good or bad,[l] and when God lets loose a tyrant upon us, or a sickness, or scorn, or a lessened fortune, if we fear to die, or know not to be patient, or are proud, or covetous, then the calamity sits heavy on us. But if we know how to manage a noble principle, and fear not death so much as a dishonest action, and think impatience a worse evil than a fever, and pride to be the biggest disgrace, and poverty to be infinitely desirable before the torments of covetousness; then we who now think vice to be so easy, and make it so familiar, and think the cure so impossible, shall quickly be of another mind, and reckon these accidents amongst things eligible.

But no man can be happy, that hath great hopes and great fears of things without, and events depending upon other men, or upon the chances of fortune. The rewards of virtue are certain, and our provisions for our natural support are certain; or if we want meat till we die, then we die of that disease, and there are many worse than to die with an atrophy or consumption, or unapt and coarser nourishment. But he that suffers a transporting passion concerning things within the power of others, is free from sorrow and amazement no longer than his enemy shall give him leave; and it is ten to one but he shall be smitten then and there, where it shall most trouble him: for so the adder teaches us where to strike, by her curious and fearful defending of her head. The old Stoics, when you told them of a sad story, would still answer, τὶ πρὸς μέ; "*What is that to me?*—Yes, for the tyrant hath sentenced you also to prison.—Well, what is that? He will put a chain upon my leg; but he cannot bind my soul.—No: but he will kill you.—Then I will die. If presently, let me go, that I may presently be freer than himself; but if not till anon or to-morrow, I will dine first, or sleep, or do what reason or nature calls for, as at other times." This, in gentile philosophy, is the same with the discourse of St. Paul,[m] "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed, both to be full and to be hungry; both to abound and suffer need."[n]

We are in the world, like men playing at tables; the chance is not in our power, but to play it is; and when it is fallen we must manage it as we

[i] Εἰ τοῦτο τῷ Θεῷ φίλον, τοῦτο γενέσθω. [k] Dan. x. 13.
[l] Ὁ θεὸς τέθεικε, καὶ φῆσιν, εἴ τι ἀγαθὸν θέλεις, παρὰ σεαυτοῦ λαβέ.—Arrian. Ep.

[m] Phil. iv. 11, 12. 1 Tim. vi. 6. Hebr. xiii. 5.
[n] Chi bene mal non può soffrir, à grand honor non può venir.

can; and let nothing trouble us, but when we do a base action, or speak like a fool, or think wickedly: these things God hath put into our powers; but concerning those things which are wholly in the choice of another, they cannot fall under our deliberation, and therefore neither are they fit for our passions. My fear may make me miserable, but it cannot prevent what another hath in his power and purpose: and prosperities can only be enjoyed by them, who fear not at all to lose them; since the amazement and passion concerning the future takes off all the pleasure of the present possession. Therefore if thou hast lost thy land, do not also lose thy constancy; and if thou must die a little sooner, yet do not die impatiently. For no chance is evil to him that is content, and to a man nothing is miserable, unless it be unreasonable.[o] No man can make another man to be his slave unless he hath first enslaved himself to life and death, to pleasure or pain, to hope or fear: command these passions, and you are freer than the Parthian kings.

Instruments or Exercises to procure Contentedness.

Upon the strength of these premises we may reduce this virtue to practice by its proper instruments first, and then by some more special considerations or arguments of content.

1. When any thing happens to our displeasure, let us endeavour to take off its trouble by turning it into spiritual or artificial advantage, and handle it on that side in which it may be useful to the designs of reason. For there is nothing but hath a double handle, or at least we have two hands to apprehend it. When an enemy reproaches us, let us look on him as an impartial relator of our faults, for he will tell thee truer than thy fondest friend will; and thou mayest call them precious balms, though they break thy head, and forgive his anger, while thou makest use of the plainness of his declamation. "The ox, when he is weary, treads surest:" and if there be nothing else in the disgrace, but that it makes us to walk warily, and tread sure for fear of our enemies, that is better than to be flattered into pride and carelessness. This is the charity of christian philosophy, which expounds the sense of the Divine Providence fairly, and reconciles us to it by a charitable construction: and we may as well refuse all physic, if we consider it only as unpleasant in the taste; and we may find fault with the rich valleys of Thasus, because they are circled by sharp mountains: but so also we may be in charity with every unpleasant accident, because, though it taste bitter, it is intended for health and medicine.

If therefore thou fallest from thy employment in public, take sanctuary in an honest retirement, being indifferent to thy gain abroad, or thy safety at home. If thou art out of favour with thy prince, secure the favour of the King of kings, and then there is no harm come to thee. And when Zeno Citiensis lost all his goods in a storm, he retired to the studies of philosophy, to his short cloak and a severe life, and gave thanks to fortune for his prosperous mischance. When the north wind blows hard, and it rains sadly, none but fools sit down in it and cry; wise people defend themselves against it with a warm garment, or a good fire and a dry roof. When a storm of a sad mischance beats upon our spirits, turn it into some advantage by observing where it can serve another end, either of religion or prudence, of more safety or less envy: it will turn into something that is good, if we list to make it so; at least it may make us weary of the world's vanity, and take off our confidence from uncertain riches, and make our spirits to dwell in those regions, where content dwells essentially. If it does any good to our souls, it hath made more than sufficient recompence for all the temporal affliction. He that threw a stone at a dog, and hit his cruel stepmother, said, that although he intended it otherwise, yet the stone was not quite lost: and if we fail in the first design, if we bring it home to another equally to content us, or more to profit us, then we have put our conditions past the power of chance; and this was called, in the old Greek comedy, "a being revenged on fortune by becoming philosophers," and turning the chance into reason or religion: for so a wise man shall overrule his stars, and have a greater influence upon his own content than all the constellations and planets of the firmament.

2. Never compare thy condition with those above thee: but, to secure thy content, look upon those thousands with whom thou wouldst not, for any interest, change thy fortune and condition. A soldier must not think himself unprosperous, if he be not successful as the son of Philip, or cannot grasp a fortune as big as the Roman empire. Be content, that thou art not lessened as was Pyrrhus; or if thou beest, that thou art not routed like Crassus: and when that comes to thee, it is a great prosperity that thou art not caged and made a spectacle, like Bajazet, or thy eyes were not pulled out, like Zedekiah's, or that thou wert not flayed alive, like Valentinian. If thou admirest the greatness of Xerxes, look also on those that digged the mountain Atho, or whose ears and noses were cut off, because the Hellespont carried away the bridge. It is a fine thing (thou thinkest) to be carried on men's shoulders: but give God thanks, that thou art not forced to carry a rich fool upon thy shoulders, as those poor men do whom thou beholdest. There are but a few kings in mankind; but many thousands who are very miserable, if compared to thee. However, it is a huge folly rather to grieve for the good of others, than to rejoice for that good which God hath given us of our own.

And yet there is no wise or good man that would change persons or conditions entirely with any man in the world. It may be, he would have one man's wealth added to himself, or the power of a second, or the learning of a third; but still he would receive these into his own person, because he loves that best, and therefore esteems it best, and therefore over-values all that which he is, before all that which any other man in the world can be. Would any man be Dives to have his wealth, or Judas for his office, or Saul for his kingdom, or Absalom for

[o] Πᾶν το εὔλογον, φορητόν.

his beauty, or Achitophel for his policy? It is likely he would wish all these, and yet he would be the same person still. For every man hath desires of his own, and objects just fitted to them, without which he cannot be, unless he were not himself. And let every man, that loves himself so well as to love himself before all the world, consider if he have not something for which on the whole he values himself far more than he can value any man else. There is therefore no reason to take the finest feathers from all the winged nation to deck that bird, that thinks already she is more valuable than any of the inhabitants of the air. Either change all or none. Cease to love yourself best, or be content with that portion of being and blessing for which you love yourself so well.

3. It conduces much to our content, if we pass by those things which happen to our trouble, and consider that which is pleasing and prosperous, that, by the representation of the better, the worse may be blotted out: and, at the worst, you have enough to keep you alive, and to keep up and to improve your hopes of heaven. If I be overthrown in my suit at law, yet my house is left me still and my land; or I have a virtuous wife, or hopeful children, or kind friends, or good hopes. If I have lost one child, it may be I have two or three still left me. Or else reckon the blessings, which already you have received, and therefore be pleased in the change and variety of affairs, to receive evil from the hand of God as well as good. Antipater of Tarsus used this art to support his sorrows on his death-bed, and reckoned the good things of his past life, not forgetting to recount it as a blessing, an argument that God took care of him, that he had a prosperous journey from Cilicia to Athens. Or else please thyself with hopes of the future:[p] for we were born with this sadness upon us; and it was a change, that brought us into it, and a change may bring us out again. Harvest will come, and then every farmer is rich, at least for a month or two.[q] It may be thou art entered into the cloud, which will bring a gentle shower to refresh thy sorrows.

Now suppose thyself in as great a sadness as ever did load thy spirit, wouldst thou not bear it cheerfully and nobly, if thou wert sure that within a certain space some strange excellent fortune would relieve thee, and enrich thee, and recompense thee, so as to overflow all thy hopes, and thy desires, and capacities? Now then, when a sadness lies heavy upon thee, remember that thou art a christian designed to the inheritance of Jesus: and what dost thou think concerning thy great fortune, thy lot and portion of eternity? Dost thou think thou shalt be saved or damned? Indeed if thou thinkest thou shalt perish, I cannot blame thee to be sad, till thy heart-strings crack: but then why art thou troubled at the loss of thy money? What should a damned man do with money, which in so great a sadness it is impossible for him to enjoy? Did ever any man upon the rack afflict himself because he had received a cross answer from his mistress? or call for the particulars of a purchase upon the gallows? If thou dost really believe thou shalt be damned, I do not say, it will cure the sadness of thy poverty, but it will swallow it up. But if thou believest thou shalt be saved, consider, how great is that joy, how infinite is that change, how unspeakable is the glory, how excellent is the recompence, for all the sufferings in the world, if they were all laden upon the spirit? So that let thy condition be what it will, if thou considerest thy own present condition, and comparest it to thy future possibility, thou canst not feel the present smart of a cross fortune to any great degree, either because thou hast a far bigger sorrow, or a far bigger joy. Here thou art but a stranger travelling to thy country, where the glories of a kingdom are prepared for thee; it is therefore a huge folly to be much afflicted because thou hast a less convenient inn to lodge in by the way.

But these arts of looking forwards and backwards, are more than enough to support the spirit of a christian: there is no man, but hath blessings enough in present possession to outweigh the evils of a great affliction. Tell the joints of thy body, and do not accuse the universal Providence for a lame leg, or the want of a finger, when all the rest is perfect, and you have a noble soul, a particle of divinity, the image of God himself: and, by the want of a finger, you may the better know how to estimate the remaining parts, and to account for every degree of the surviving blessings. Aristippus, in a great suit at law, lost a farm, and to a gentleman, who in civility pitied, and deplored his loss, he answered, "I have two farms left still, and that is more than I have lost, and more than you have by one." If you miss an office, for which you stood candidate, then, besides that you are quit of the cares and the envy of it, you still have all those excellencies, which rendered you capable to receive it, and they are better than the best office in the commonwealth. If your estate be lessened, you need the less to care who governs the province, whether he be rude or gentle. I am crossed in my journey, and yet I escaped robbers; and I consider, that if I had been set upon by villains, I would have redeemed that evil by this, which I now suffer, and have counted it a deliverance; or if I did fall into the hands of thieves, yet they did not steal my land. Or I am fallen into the hands of publicans and sequestrators, and they have taken all from me; what now? let me look about me. They have left me the sun and moon, fire and water, a loving wife, and many friends to pity me, and some to relieve me, and I can still discourse; and, unless I list, they have not taken away my merry countenance, and my cheerful spirit, and a good conscience: they still have left me the providence of God, and all the promises of the gospel, and my religion, and my hopes of heaven, and my charity to them too; and still I sleep and digest, I eat and drink, I read and meditate, I can walk in my neighbour's pleasant fields, and see the varieties of natural beauties, and delight in all that in which God delights, that is, in

[p] La speranza è il pan de poveri.
Non si malè nunc, et olim sic erit.—Hor. ii. 10.

[q] Αἰὶ γεωργὸς εἰς νέωτα πλούσιος.

virtue and wisdom, in the whole creation, and in God himself. And he that hath so many causes of joy, and so great, is very much in love with sorrow and peevishness, who loses all these pleasures, and chooses to sit down upon his little handful of thorns. Such a person is fit to bear Nero company in his funeral sorrow for the loss of one of Poppea's hairs, or help to mourn for Lesbia's sparrow: and because he loves it, he deserves to starve in the midst of plenty, and to want comfort while he is encircled with blessings.

4. Enjoy the present, whatsoever it be, and be not solicitous for the future; for if you take your foot from the present standing, and thrust it forward towards to-morrow's event, you are in a restless condition: it is like refusing to quench your present thirst, by fearing you shall want drink the next day.[r] If it be well to-day, it is madness to make the present miserable by fearing it may be ill to-morrow; when your belly is full of to-day's dinner, to fear you shall want the next day's supper; for it may be you shall not, and then to what purpose was this day's affliction? But if to-morrow you shall want, your sorrow will come time enough, though you do not hasten it; let your trouble tarry till its own day comes. But if it chance to be ill to-day, do not increase it by the care of to-morrow. Enjoy the blessings of this day, if God sends them, and the evils of it bear patiently and sweetly; for this day is only ours; we are dead to yesterday, and we are not yet born to the morrow. He, therefore, that enjoys the present, if it be good, enjoys as much as is possible; and if only that day's trouble leans upon him, it is singular and finite. "Sufficient to the day (said Christ) is the evil thereof:" sufficient, but not intolerable. But if we look abroad, and bring into one day's thoughts the evil of many, certain and uncertain, what will be, and what will never be, our load will be as intolerable as it is unreasonable. To reprove this instrument of discontent, the ancients feigned, that in hell stood a man twisting a rope of hay; and still he twisted on, suffering an ass to eat up all that was finished; so miserable is he, who thrusts his passions forwards, towards future events, and suffers all that he may enjoy to be lost and devoured by folly and inconsideration, thinking nothing fit to be enjoyed but that which is not or cannot be had. Just so, many young persons are loath to die, and therefore desire to live to old age and when they are come thither, are troubled that they are come to that state of life, to which before they were come they were hugely afraid they should never come.

5. Let us prepare our minds against changes, always expecting them, that we be not surprised when they come; for nothing is so great an enemy to tranquillity and a contented spirit, as the amazement and confusions of unreadiness and inconsideration; and when our fortunes are violently changed, our spirits are unchanged, if they always stood in the suburbs and expectation of sorrows. "O death, how bitter art thou to a man that is at rest in his possessions!" And to the rich man, who had promised to himself ease and fulness for many years, it was a sad arrest that his soul was surprised the first night; but the apostles, who every day knocked at the gate of death, and looked upon it continually, went to their martyrdom in peace and evenness.

6. Let us often frame to ourselves and represent to our considerations, the images of those blessings we have, just as we usually understand them when we want them. Consider how desirable health is to a sick man, or liberty to a prisoner; and if but a fit of the toothache seizes us with violence, all those troubles, which in our health afflicted us, disband instantly, and seem inconsiderable. He that in his health is troubled that he is in debt, and spends sleepless nights, and refuses meat because of his infelicity, let him fall into a fit of the stone or a high fever, he despises the arrest of all his first troubles, and is as a man unconcerned. Remember then, that God hath given thee a blessing, the want of which is infinitely more trouble than thy present debt or poverty or loss; and therefore is now more to be valued in the possession, and ought to outweigh thy trouble. The very privative blessings, the blessings of immunity, safeguard, liberty, and integrity, which we commonly enjoy, deserve the thanksgiving of a whole life. If God should send a cancer upon thy face, or a wolf into thy side, if he should spread a crust of leprosy upon thy skin, what wouldst thou give to be but as now thou art? Wouldst thou not, on that condition, be as poor as I am, or as the meanest of thy brethren? Would you not choose your present loss and affliction as a thing extremely eligible, and a redemption to thee, if thou mightest exchange the other for this? Thou art quit from a thousand calamities, every one of which, if it were upon thee, would make thee insensible of thy present sorrow: and therefore let thy joy (which should be as great for thy freedom from them, as is thy sadness when thou feelest any of them) do the same cure upon thy discontent. For if we be not extremely foolish or vain, thankless or senseless, a great joy is more apt to cure sorrow and discontent, than a great trouble is. I have known an affectionate wife, when she hath been in fear of parting with her beloved husband, heartily desire of God his life or society upon any conditions that were not sinful; and choose to beg with him, rather than to feast without him: and the same person hath, upon that consideration, borne poverty nobly, when God hath heard her prayer in the other matter. What wise man in the world is there, who does not prefer a small fortune with peace before a great one with contention, and war, and violence? And then he is no longer wise, if he alters his opinion when he hath his wish.

7. If you will secure a contented spirit you must

[r] Quid sit futurum cras, fuge quærere, et
Quem fors dierum cunque dabit, lucro
Appone. Hor. l. i. Od. 9.
Prudens futuri temporis exitum
Caliginosâ nocte premit Deus,
Ridetque, si mortalis ultra
Fas trepidet: quod adest, memento
Componere æquus. Hor. l. iii. Od. 29.
Τὸ σήμερον μέλει μοι·
Τὸ δ' αὔριον τίς οἶδεν; Anacr. Od. 15.

measure your desires by your fortune and condition, not your fortunes by your desires: that is, be governed by your needs, not by your fancy; by nature, not by evil customs and ambitious principles.[s] He that would shoot an arrow out of a plough, or hunt a hare with an elephant, is not unfortunate for missing the mark of prey; but he is foolish for choosing such unapt instruments; and so is he, that runs after his content with appetites not springing from natural needs, but from artificial, fantastical, and violent necessities. These are not to be satisfied; or if they were, a man hath chosen an evil instrument towards his content: nature did not intend rest to a man by filling of such desires. Is that beast better, that hath two or three mountains to graze on, than a little bee that feeds on dew or manna, and lives upon what falls every morning from the storehouses of heaven, clouds and providence? Can a man quench his thirst better out of a river than a full urn, or drink better from the fountain which is finely paved with marble, than when it swells over the green turf?[t] Pride and artificial gluttonies do but adulterate nature, making our diet healthless, our appetites impatient and unsatisfiable, and the taste mixed, fantastical, and meretricious. But that which we miscall poverty, is indeed nature: and its proportions are the just measures of a man, and the best instruments of content. But when we create needs, that God or nature never made, we have erected to ourselves an infinite stock of trouble, that can have no period. Sempronius complained of want of clothes, and was much troubled for a new suit, being ashamed to appear in the theatre with his gown a little threadbare: but when he got it, and gave his old clothes to Codrus, the poor man was ravished with joy, and went and gave God thanks for his new purchase; and Codrus was made richly fine and cheerfully warm by that which Sempronius was ashamed to wear; and yet their natural needs were both alike: the difference only was, that Sempronius had some artificial and fantastical necessities superinduced, which Codrus had not; and was harder to be relieved, and could not have joy at so cheap a rate; because he only lived according to nature, the other by pride and ill customs, and measures taken by other men's eyes and tongues, and artificial needs. He that propounds to his fancy things greater than himself or his needs, and is discontent and troubled, when he fails of such purchases, ought not to accuse Providence, or blame his fortune, but his folly. God and nature made no more needs than they mean to satisfy; and he that will make more, must look for satisfaction when he can.

8. In all troubles and sadder accidents, let us take sanctuary in religion, and by innocence cast out anchors for our souls to keep them from shipwreck, though they be not kept from storm.[u] For what philosophy shall comfort a villain, that is haled to the rack for murdering his prince, or that is broken upon the wheel for sacrilege? His cup is full of pure and unmingled sorrow: his body is rent with torment, his name with ignominy, his soul with shame and sorrow, which are to last eternally. But when a man suffers in a good cause, or is afflicted, and yet walks not perversely with his God, then "Anytus and Melitus may kill me, but they cannot hurt me:" then St. Paul's character is engraved in the forehead of our fortune;[v] "We are troubled on every side, but not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed. And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?"[w] For indeed every thing in the world is indifferent, but sin: and all the scorchings of the sun are very tolerable in respect of the burnings of a fever or a calenture. The greatest evils are from within us: and from ourselves also we must look for our greatest good; for God is the fountain of it, but reaches it to us by our own hands: and when all things look sadly round about us, then only we shall find, how excellent a fortune it is to have God to our friend; and, of all friendships, that only is created to support us in our needs. For it is sin that turns an ague into a fever, and a fever to the plague, fear into despair, anger into rage, and loss into madness, and sorrow to amazement and confusion: but if either we were innocent, or else, by the sadness, are made penitent, we are put to school, or into the theatre, either to learn how, or else actually to combat for a crown; the accident may serve an end of mercy, but is not a messenger of wrath.

Let us therefore be governed by external, and present, and seeming things; nor let us make the same judgment of things that common and weak understandings do; nor make other men, and they not the wisest, to be judges of our felicity, so that we be happy or miserable, as they please to think us: but let reason, and experience, and religion, and hope relying upon the Divine promises, be the measure of our judgment. No wise man did ever describe felicity without virtue;[x] and no good man did ever think virtue could depend upon the variety of a good or bad fortune. It is no evil to be poor, but to be vicious and impatient.

Means to obtain Content by way of considerations.

To these exercises and spiritual instruments, if we add the following considerations concerning the nature and circumstances of human chance, we may

[s] Assai basta per chi non è ingordo.

[t] ——————Quantò præstantius esset
Numen aquæ, viridi si margine clauderet undas
Herba, nec ingenuum violarent marmora tophum.
JUV. iii. 20.

——————me pascunt olivæ,
Me cichorea, levesque malvæ.
Frui paratis et valido mihi,
Latoe, dones. HORAT. l. i. OD. 31.

Amabo levem cupressum,
Omissis Cretæ pascuis:
Terræ mihi datum est parùm;
Careo interim doloribus.—PINDAR. frag. 43.

[u] Vacare culpâ in calamitatibus maximum solatium.

[v] 2 Cor. iv. 8, 9. [w] 1 Pet. iii. 13. iv. 15, 16.

[x] Beatitudo pendet à rectis consiliis in affectionem animi constantem desinentibus.—PLUT.

better secure our peace. For as to children, who are afraid of vain images, we use to persuade confidence by making them to handle and look nearer such things, that when, in such a familiarity, they perceive them innocent, they may overcome their fears: so must timorous, fantastical, sad, and discontented persons, be treated; they must be made to consider, and on all sides to look upon, the accident, and to take all its dimensions, and consider its consequences, and to behold the purpose of God, and the common mistakes of men, and their evil sentences then usually pass upon them. For then we shall perceive, that, like colts or unmanaged horses, we start at dead bones and lifeless blocks, things that are inactive as they are innocent. But if we secure our hopes and our fears, and make them moderate and within government, we may the sooner overcome the evil of the accident; for nothing that we feel is so bad as what we fear.

1. Consider that the universal providence of God hath so ordered it, that the good things of nature and fortune are divided, that we may know how to bear our own, and relieve each other's wants and imperfections. It is not for a man, but for a God, to have all excellencies and all felicities.[y] He supports my poverty with his wealth; I counsel and instruct him with my learning and experience. He hath many friends, I many children; he hath no heir, I have no inheritance: and any one great blessing, together with the common portions of nature and necessity, is a fair fortune, if it be but health or strength, or the swiftness of Ahimaaz. For it is an unreasonable discontent to be troubled, that I have not so good cocks or dogs or horses as my neighbour, being more troubled that I want one thing that I need not, than thankful for having received all that I need. Nero had this disease, that he was not content with the fortune of the whole empire, but put the fiddlers to death for being more skilful in the trade than he was: and Dionysius the elder was so angry at Philoxenus for singing, and with Plato for disputing, better than he did, that he sold Plato a slave into Ægina, and condemned the other to the quarries.

This consideration is to be enlarged by adding to it, that there are some instances of fortune and a fair condition, that cannot stand with some others; but if you desire this, you must lose that, and unless you be content with one, you lose the comfort of both. If you covet learning, you must have leisure and a retired life; if to be a politician, you must go abroad and get experience, and do all businesses, and keep all company, and have no leisure at all. If you will be rich, you must be frugal; if you will be popular, you must be bountiful; if a philosopher, you must despise riches. The Greek, that designed to make the most exquisite picture that could be imagined, fancied the eye of Chione, and the hair of Pægnium, and Tarsia's lip, Philenium's chin, and the forehead of Delphia, and set all these upon Milphidippa's neck, and thought that he should outdo both art and nature. But when he came to view the proportions, he found, that what was excellent in Tarsia, did not agree with the other excellency of Philenium; and although, singly, they were rare pieces, yet in the whole, they made a most ugly face. The dispersed excellencies and blessings of many men, if given to one, would not make a handsome, but a monstrous fortune. Use therefore that faculty which nature hath given thee, and thy education hath made actual, and thy calling hath made a duty. But if thou desirest to be a saint, refuse not his persecution; if thou wouldst be famous as Epaminondas or Fabricius, accept also of their poverty; for that added lustre to their persons, and envy to their fortune, and their virtue without it could not have been so excellent. Let Euphorion sleep quietly with his old rich wife; and let Medius drink on with Alexander; and remember thou canst not have the riches of the first, unless you have the old wife too; nor the favour, which the second had with his prince, unless you buy at his price,[z] that is, lay thy sobriety down at first, and thy health a little after; and then their condition, though it look splendidly, yet when you handle it on all sides, it will prick your fingers.

2. Consider, how many excellent personages in all ages have suffered as great or greater calamities than this, which now tempts thee to impatience. Agis was the most noble of the Greeks, and yet his wife bore a child by Alcibiades: and Philip was prince of Ituræa, and yet his wife ran away with his brother Herod into Galilee; and certainly, in a great fortune, that was a great calamity. But these are but single instances. Almost all the ages of the world have noted, that their most eminent scholars were most eminently poor, some by choice, but most by chance, and an inevitable decree of Providence; and, in the whole sex of women, God hath decreed the sharpest pains of child-birth, to show, that there is no state exempt from sorrow, and yet that the weakest persons have strength more than enough to bear the greatest evil; and the greatest queens, and the mothers of saints and apostles, have no charter of exemption from this sad sentence. But the Lord of men and angels was also the King of sufferings; and if thy coarse robe trouble thee, remember the swaddling-clothes of Jesus; if thy bed be uneasy, yet it is not worse than his manger; and it is no sadness to have a thin table, if thou callest to mind, that the King of heaven and earth was fed with a little breast-milk; and yet, besides this, he suffered all the sorrows which we deserved. We therefore have great reason to sit down upon our own hearths, and warm ourselves at our own fires, and feed upon content at home; for it were a strange pride to expect to be more gently treated by the Divine Providence, than the best and wisest men, than apostles and saints, nay, the Son of the eternal God, the heir of both the worlds.

This consideration may be enlarged by surveying all the states and families of the world; and he[a] that

[y] Non te ad omnia læta genuit, O Agamemnon, Atreus. Opus est te gaudere et mœrere: mortalis enim natus es, et ut haud velis: superi sic constituerunt.

[z] Prandet Aristoteles, quando Philippo lubet; Diogenes, quando Diogeni.

[a] Servius Sulpicius.

at once saw Ægina and Megara, Pyræus and Corinth, lie gasping in their ruins, and almost buried in their own heaps, had reason to blame Cicero for mourning impatiently the death of one woman. In the most beauteous and splendid fortune, there are many cares and proper interruptions and allays; in the fortune of a prince there is not the coarse robe of beggary; but there are infinite cares; and the judge sits upon the tribunal with great ceremony and ostentation of fortune,[b] and yet, at his house or in his breast, there is something that causes him to sigh deeply. Pittacus was a wise and valiant man, but his wife overthrew the table when he had invited his friends; upon which the good man, to excuse her incivility and his own misfortune, said, "That every man had one evil, and he was most happy that had but that alone." And if nothing else happens, yet sicknesses so often do imbitter the fortune and content of a family, that a physician, in a few years, and with the practice upon a very few families, gets experience enough to administer to almost all diseases. And when thy little misfortune troubles thee, remember that thou hast known the best of kings and the best of men put to death publicly by his own subjects.

3. There are many accidents, which are esteemed great calamities, and yet we have reason enough to bear them well and unconcernedly; for they neither touch our bodies nor our souls: our health and our virtue remain entire, our life and our reputation. It may be I am slighted, or I have received ill language; but my head aches not for it, neither hath it broke my thigh, nor taken away my virtue, unless I lose my charity or my patience. Inquire, therefore, what you are the worse, either in your soul or in your body, for what hath happened: for upon this very stock many evils will disappear, since the body and the soul make up the whole man.[c] And when the daughter of Stilpo proved a wanton, he said it was none of his sin, and therefore there was no reason it should be his misery. And if an enemy hath taken all that from a prince whereby he was a king, he may refresh himself by considering all that is left him whereby he is a man.

4. Consider, that sad accidents and a state of affliction is a school of virtue: it reduces our spirits to soberness, and our counsels to moderation: it corrects levity, and interrupts the confidence of sinning. "It is good for me (said David) that I have been afflicted, for thereby I have learned thy law."[d] And "I know (O Lord) that thou of very faithfulness hast caused me to be troubled." For God, who, in mercy and wisdom, governs the world, would never have suffered so many sadnesses, and have sent them especially to the most virtuous and the wisest men, but that he intends they should be the seminary of comfort, the nursery of virtue, the exercise of wisdom, the trial of patience, the venturing for a crown, and the gate of glory.

5. Consider, that afflictions are oftentimes the occasions of great temporal advantages; and we must not look upon them, as they sit down heavily upon us, but as they serve some of God's ends, and the purposes of universal Providence. And when a prince fights justly, and yet unprosperously, if he could see all those reasons for which God hath so ordered it, he would think it the most reasonable thing in the world, and that it would be very ill to have it otherwise. If a man could have opened one of the pages of the Divine counsel, and could have seen the event of Joseph's being sold to the merchants of Amalek, he might, with much reason, have dried up the young man's tears: and when God's purposes are opened in the events of things, as it was in the case of Joseph, when he sustained his father's family and became lord of Egypt, then we see, what ill judgment we made of things, and that we were passionate as children, and transported with sense and mistaken interest. The case of Themistocles was almost like that of Joseph; for being banished into Egypt, he also grew in favour with the king, and told his wife, "he had been undone, unless he had been undone." For God esteems it one of his glories, that he brings good out of evil; and therefore it were but reason we should trust God to govern his own world as he pleases; and that we should patiently wait till the change cometh, or the reason be discovered.

And this consideration is also of great use to them, who envy at the prosperity of the wicked, and the success of persecutors, and the baits of fishes, and the bread of dogs. God fails not to sow blessings in the long furrows, which the ploughers plough upon the back of the church: and this success, which troubles us, will be a great glory to God, and a great benefit to his saints and servants, and a great ruin to the persecutors, who shall have but the fortune of Theramenes, one of the thirty tyrants of Athens, who escaped, when his house fell upon him, and was shortly after put to death with torments by his colleagues in the tyranny.

To which also may be added, that the great evils, which happen to the best and wisest men, are one of the great arguments upon the strength of which we can expect felicity to our souls and the joys of another world. And certainly they are then very tolerable and eligible, when, with so great advantages, they minister to the faith and hope of a christian. But if we consider what unspeakable tortures are provided for the wicked to all eternity, we should not be troubled to see them prosperous here, but rather wonder, that their portion in this life is not bigger, and that ever they should be sick, or crossed, or affronted, or troubled with the contradiction and

[b] Hic in foro beatus esse creditur,
Cùm foribus apertis sit suis miserrimus;
Imperat mulier, jubet omnia, semper litigat.
Multa adferunt illi dolorem, nihil mihi.—
Ferre, quam sortem patiuntur omnes,
Nemo recusat.

[c] Si natus es tu, Trophime, solus omnium
Hac lege, partu cum te mater edidit,
Ut semper eant tibi res arbitrio tuo,—
Felicitatem hanc si quis promisit deûm,
Irascereris jure: nam mala is fide
Et, &c. Plutarch. *Xyl.* t. ii. p. 103.

[d] Psalm cxix. part 10. ver. 3.

disease of their own vices, since, if they were fortunate beyond their own ambition, it could not make them recompence for one hour's torment in hell, which yet they shall have for their eternal portion.

After all these considerations deriving from sense and experience, grace and reason, there are two remedies still remaining, and they are, necessity and time.

6. For it is but reasonable to bear that accident patiently which God sends, since impatience does but entangle us, like the fluttering of a bird in a net, but cannot at all ease our trouble, or prevent the accident:[e] it must be run through, and therefore it were better we compose ourselves to a patient, than to a troubled and miserable suffering.

7. But however, if you will not otherwise be cured, time at last will do it alone; and then consider, do you mean to mourn always, or but for a time? If always, you are miserable and foolish. If for a time, then why will you not apply those reasons to your grief at first, with which you will cure it at last? or if you will not cure it with reason, see how little of a man there is in you, that you suffer time to do more with you than reason or religion! You suffer yourself to be cured, just as a beast or a tree is; let it alone, and the thing will heal itself; but this is neither honourable to thy person, nor of reputation to thy religion. However, be content to bear thy calamity, because thou art sure, in a little time, it will sit down gentle and easy; for to a mortal man no evil is immortal. And here let the worst thing happen that can, it will end in death, and we commonly think that to be near enough.

8. Lastly, of those things which are reckoned amongst evils, some are better than their contraries; and to a good man, the very worst is tolerable.

Poverty or a low fortune.

1. Poverty is better than riches, and a mean fortune to be chosen before a great and splendid one. It is indeed despised, and makes men contemptible: it exposes a man to the insolence of evil persons, and leaves a man defenceless: it is always suspected: its stories are accounted lies, and all its counsels follies: it puts a man from all employment: it makes a man's discourses tedious, and his society troublesome. This is the worst of it: and yet all this, and far worse than this, the apostles suffered for being christians: and christianity itself may be esteemed an affliction as well as poverty, if this be all that can be said against it; for the apostles and the most eminent christians were really poor, and were used contemptuously: and yet, that poverty is despised may be an argument to commend it, if it be despised by none but persons vicious and ignorant.[f] However, certain it is, that a great fortune is a great vanity, and riches is nothing but danger, trouble, and temptation; like a garment that is too long, and bears a train; not so useful to one, but it is troublesome to two, to him that bears the one part upon his shoulders, and to him that bears the other part in his hand. But poverty is the sister of a good mind, the parent of sober counsels, and the nurse of all virtue.

For what is it that you admire in the fortune of a great king? Is it, that he always goes in a great company? You may thrust yourself into the same crowd, or go often to church, and then you have as great a company as he hath; and that may, upon as good grounds, please you as him, that is, justly neither: for so impertinent and useless pomp, and the other circumstances of his distance, are not made for him, but for his subjects, that they may learn to separate him from common usages, and be taught to be governed.[g] But if you look upon them as fine things in themselves, you may quickly alter your opinion, when you shall consider, that they cannot cure the toothache, nor make one wise, or fill the belly, or give one night's sleep, (though they help to break many,) not satisfying any appetite of nature, or reason, or religion; but they are states of greatness, which only make it possible for a man to be made extremely miserable. And it was long ago observed by the Greek tragedians, and from them by Arrianus,[h] saying, "That all our tragedies are of kings and princes, and rich or ambitious personages; but you never see a poor man have a part, unless it be as a chorus, or to fill up the scenes, to dance or to be derided; but the kings and the great generals. First, (says he,) they begin with joy, *στέψατε δώματα*, crown the houses; but about the third or fourth act they cry out, O Citheron! why didst thou spare my life to reserve me for this more sad calamity?" And this is really true in the great accidents of the world: for a great estate hath great crosses, and a mean fortune hath but small ones. It may be, the poor man loses a cow; for if his child dies, he is quit of his biggest care; but such an accident in a rich and splendid family doubles upon the spirits of the parents. Or, it may be, the poor man is troubled to pay his rent, and that is his biggest trouble: but it is a bigger care to secure a great fortune in a troubled estate, or with equal greatness, or with the circumstances of honour, and the niceness of reputation to defend a law-suit; and that, which will secure a common man's whole estate, is not enough to defend a great man's honour.

And therefore it was not without mystery observed among the ancients, that they, who made gods of gold and silver, of hope and fear, peace and fortune, garlic and onions, beasts and serpents, and a quartan ague, yet never deified money:[i] meaning, that however wealth was admired by common or abused

[e] Nemo recusat ferre, quod necesse est pati.

[f] Alta fortuna alto travaglio apporta.

[g] Da autorita la ceremonia al atto.

[h] Οὐδεὶς δὲ *πένης τραγῳδίαν συμπληροῖ, εἰ μὴ χορευτής.*
Bis sex dierum mensurâ consero ego agros,
Berecynthia arva.
Animusque meus sursùm usque evectus ad polum
Decidit humi, et me sic videtur alloqui;
Disce haud nimis magnificare mortalia.
TANTAL. in Tragœd.

[i] ——— funesta Pecunia, templo
Nondum habitas, nullas nummorum ereximus aras,
Ut colitur Pax atque Fides ———
Juv. i. 113.

understandings: yet from riches, that is, from that proportion of good things which is beyond the necessities of nature, no moment could be added to a man's real content or happiness. Corn from Sardinia, herds of Calabrian cattle, meadows through which pleasant Liris glides, silks from Tyrus, and golden chalices to drown my health in, are nothing but instruments of vanity or sin, and suppose a disease in the soul of him, that longs for them, or admires them. And this I have otherwhere represented more largely; to which I here add, that riches have very great dangers to their souls, not only who covet them, but to all that have them.[k] For if a great personage undertakes an action passionately and upon great interest, let him manage it indiscreetly, let the whole design be unjust, let it be acted with all the malice and impotency in the world, he shall have enough to flatter him, but not enough to reprove him. He had need be a bold man, that shall tell his patron, he is going to hell; and that prince had need be a good man, that shall suffer such a monitor; and though it be a strange kind of civility, and an evil dutifulness in friends and relatives, to suffer him to perish without reproof or medicine, rather than to seem unmannerly to a great sinner; yet it is none of their least infelicities, that their wealth and greatness shall put them into sin, and yet put them past reproof. I need not instance in the habitual intemperance of rich tables, nor the evil accidents and effects of fulness, pride and lust, wantonness and softness of disposition, huge talking and an imperious spirit, despite of religion, and contempt of poor persons; at the best, "it is a great temptation for a man to have in his power whatsoever he can have in his sensual desires:"[l] and therefore riches is a blessing, like to a present made of a whole vintage to a man in a hectic fever; he will be much tempted to drink of it; and if he does, he is inflamed, and may chance to die with the kindness.

Now besides what hath been already noted in the state of poverty, there is nothing to be accounted for but the fear of wanting necessaries; of which if a man could be secured, that he might live free from care, all the other parts of it might be reckoned amongst the advantages of wise and sober persons, rather than objections against that state of fortune.

But concerning this I consider, that there must needs be great security to all christians, since Christ not only made express promises, that we should have sufficient for this life, but also took great pains and used many arguments to create confidence in us: and such they were, which by their own strength were sufficient, though you abate the authority of the speaker. The Son of God told us, his Father takes care of us: he that knew all his Father's counsels and his whole kindness towards mankind, told us so. How great is that truth, how certain, how necessary, which Christ himself proved by arguments! The excellent words and most comfortable sentences, which are our bills of exchange, upon the credit of which we lay our cares down, and receive provisions for our need, are these: "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you, by taking thought, can add one cubit to his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Therefore if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or wherewithal shall we be clothed? (for after all these things do the gentiles seek;) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself: sufficient to the day is the evil thereof."[m] The same discourse is repeated by St. Luke:[n] and accordingly our duty is urged, and our confidence abetted, by the disciples of our Lord, in divers places of Holy Scripture. So St. Paul: "Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God."[o] And again, "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy."[p] And yet again, "Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee: so that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper."[q] And all this is by St. Peter summed up in our duty, thus: "Cast all your care upon him, for he careth for you." Which words he seems to have borrowed out of the fifty-fifth Psalm, ver. 22. where David saith the same thing almost in the same words. To which I only add the observation made by him, and the argument of experience; "I have been young, and now am old, and yet saw I never the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread." And now after all this, a fearless confidence in God, and concerning a provision of necessaries, is so reasonable, that it is become a duty; and he is scarce a christian, whose faith is so little as to be jealous of God, and suspicious concerning meat and clothes: that man hath nothing in him of the nobleness or confidence of charity.

Does not God provide for all the birds, and beasts, and fishes? Do not the sparrows fly from their bush, and every morning find meat, where they laid it not? Do not the young ravens call to

[k] Chap. iv. Sect. 8. Title, of Covetousness.
[l] Jam. ii. 5—7.
[m] Matt. vi. 25, &c.
[n] Luke xii. 22—31.
[o] Phil. iv. 6.
[p] 1 Tim. vi. 17.
[q] Heb. xiii. 5, 6.

God, and he feeds them? And were it reasonable, that the sons of the family should fear the father would give meat to the chickens and the servants, his sheep and his dogs, but give none to them? He were a very ill father that should do so; or he were a very foolish son, that should think so of a good father. But, besides the reasonableness of this faith and this hope, we have infinite experience of it. How innocent, how careless, how secure, is infancy! and yet how certainly provided for! We have lived at God's charges all the days of our life, and have (as the Italian proverb says) set down to meat at the sound of a bell; and hitherto he hath not failed us: we have no reason to suspect him for the future: we do not use to serve men so; and less time of trial creates great confidences in us towards them, who for twenty years together never broke their word with us; and God hath so ordered it, that a man shall have had the experience of many years' provision, before he shall understand how to doubt; that he may be provided for an answer against the temptation shall come, and the mercies felt in his childhood may make him fearless when he is a man. Add to this, that God hath given us his Holy Spirit: he hath promised heaven to us: he hath given us his Son; and we are taught from Scripture to make this inference from hence, "How should not he with him give us all things else?"

The Charge of many Children.

We have a title to be provided for as we are God's creatures, another title as we are his children, another because God hath promised; and every of our children hath the same title: and therefore it is a huge folly and infidelity to be troubled and full of care because we have many children. Every child we have to feed, is a new revenue, a new title to God's care and providence; so that many children are a great wealth: and if it be said, they are chargeable, it is no more than all wealth and great revenues are. For what difference is it? Titius keeps ten ploughs, Cornelia hath ten children: he hath land enough to employ and to feed all his hinds: she, blessings and promises, and the provisions and the truth of God, to maintain all her children. His hinds and horses eat up all his corn, and her children are sufficiently maintained with her little. They bring in and eat up; and she indeed eats up, but they also bring in from the storehouses of heaven, and the granaries of God: and my children are not so much mine as they are God's: he feeds them in the womb by ways secret and insensible; and would not work a perpetual miracle to bring them forth, and then to starve them.

Violent Necessities.

But some men are highly tempted, and are brought to a strait; that, without a miracle, they cannot be relieved: what shall they do? It may be their pride or vanity hath brought the necessity upon them, and it is not a need of God's making; and if it be not, they must cure it themselves, by lessening their desires, and moderating their appetites: and yet, if it be innocent, though unnecessary, God does usually relieve such necessities; and he does not only upon our prayers grant us more than he promised of temporal things, but also he gives many times more than we ask. This is no object for our faith, but ground enough for a temporal and prudent hope; and, if we fail in the particular, God will turn it to a bigger mercy, if we submit to his dispensation, and adore him in the denial. But if it be a matter of necessity, let not any man, by way of impatience, cry out, that God will not work a miracle; for God, by miracle, did give meat and drink to his people in the wilderness, of which he made no particular promise in any covenant: and if all natural means fail. it is certain, that God will rather work a miracle than break his word: he can do that; he cannot do this. Only we must remember, that our portion of temporal things is but food and raiment. God hath not promised us coaches and horses, rich houses and jewels, Tyrian silks and Persian carpets; neither hath he promised to minister to our needs in such circumstances as we shall appoint, but such as himself shall choose. God will enable either thee to pay thy debt, (if thou beggest it of him,) or else he will pay it for thee; that is, take thy desire as a discharge of thy duty, and pay it to thy creditor in blessings, or in some secret of his providence. It may be he hath laid up the corn, that shall feed thee, in the granary of thy brother; or will clothe thee with his wool. He enabled St. Peter to pay his gabel by the ministry of a fish; and Elias to be waited on by a crow, who was both his minister and his steward for provisions: and his holy Son rode in triumph upon an ass, that grazed in another man's pastures. And if God gives to him the dominion, and reserves the use to thee, thou hast the better half of the two: but the charitable man serves God and serves thy need; and both join to provide for thee, and God blesses both. But if he takes away the flesh-pots from thee, he can also alter the appetite, and he hath given thee power and commandment to restrain it: and if he lessens the revenue, he will also shrink the necessity; or if he gives but a very little, he will make it go a great way; or if he sends thee but a coarse diet, he will bless it and make it healthful, and can cure all the anguish of thy poverty by giving thee patience, and the grace of contentedness. For the grace of God secures you of provisions, and yet the grace of God feeds and supports the spirit in the want of provisions: and if a thin table be apt to enfeeble the spirits of one used to feed better, yet the cheerfulness of a spirit that is blessed will make a thin table become a delicacy, if the man was as well taught as he was fed, and learned his duty when he received the blessing. Poverty, therefore, is in some senses eligible, and to be preferred before riches; but, in all senses, it is very tolerable.

Death of Children, or nearest Relatives and Friends.

There are some persons, who have been noted for excellent in their lives and passions, rarely innocent, and yet hugely penitent for indiscretions and harmless infirmities; such as was Paulina, one of

the ghostly children of St. Jerome; and yet when any of her children died, she was arrested with a sorrow so great, as brought her to the margent of her grave. And the more tender our spirits are made by religion, the more easy we are to let in grief, if the cause be innocent, and be but in any sense twisted with piety and due affections. To cure which, we may consider, that all the world must die, and therefore to be impatient at the death of a person, concerning whom it was certain and known that he must die, is to mourn because thy friend or child was not born an angel; and, when thou hast awhile made thyself miserable by an importunate and useless grief, it may be thou shalt die thyself, and leave others to their choice, whether they will mourn for thee or no; but, by that time, it will appear, how impertinent that grief was, which served no end of life, and ended in thy own funeral. But what great matter is it, if sparks fly upward, or a stone falls into a pit; if that which was combustible, be burned, or that which was liquid, be melted, or that which is mortal, to die? It is no more than a man does every day; for every night death hath gotten possession of that day, and we shall never live that day over again; and when the last day is come, there are no more days left for us to die. And what is sleeping and waking, but living and dying? what is spring and autumn, youth and old age, morning and evening, but real images of life and death, and really the same to many considerable effects and changes?

Untimely Death.

But it is not mere dying, that is pretended by some as the cause of their impatient mourning; but that the child died young, before he knew good and evil, his right hand from his left, and so lost all his portion of this world, and they know not of what excellency his portion in the next shall be. If he died young, he lost but little; for he understood but little, and had not capacities of great pleasures or great cares; but yet he died innocent, and before the sweetness of his soul was deflowered and ravished from him by the flames and follies of a froward age; he went out from the dining-room, before he had fallen into error by the intemperance of his meat, or the deluge of drink: and he hath obtained this favour of God, that his soul hath suffered a less imprisonment, and her load was sooner taken off, that he might, with lesser delays, go and converse with immortal spirits; and the babe is taken into paradise before he knows good and evil. (For that knowledge threw our great father out, and this ignorance returns the child thither.) But (as concerning thy own particular) remove thy thoughts back to those days in which thy child was not born, and you are now but as then you was, and there is no difference, but that you had a son born; and if you reckon that for evil, you are unthankul for the blessing; if it be good, it is better that you had the blessing for awhile, than not at all; and yet, if he had never been born, this sorrow had not been at all.[r] But be no more displeased at God for giving you a blessing for awhile, than you would have been if he had not given it all; and reckon that intervening blessing for a gain, but account it not an evil; and if it be a good, turn it not into sorrow and sadness. But if we have great reason to complain of the calamities and evils of our life, then we have the less reason to grieve, that those whom we loved have so small a portion of evil assigned to them. And it is no small advantage, that our children dying young receive; for their condition of a blessed immortality is rendered to them secure by being snatched from the dangers of an evil choice, and carried to their little cells of felicity, where they can weep no more. And this the wisest of the gentiles understood well, when they forbade any offerings or libations to be made for dead infants, as was usual for their other dead; as believing they were entered into a secure possession, to which they went with no other condition, but that they passed into it through the way of mortality, and, for a few months, wore an uneasy garment. And let weeping parents say, if they do not think that the evils their little babes have suffered are sufficient. If they be, why are they troubled, that they were taken from those many and greater, which, in succeeding years, are great enough to try all the reason and religion which art, and nature, and the grace of God have produced in us, to enable us for such sad contentions? And, possibly, we may doubt concerning men and women, but we cannot suspect, that to infants death can be such an evil, but that it brings to them much more good than it takes from them in this life.

Death unseasonable.

But others can well bear the death of infants; but when they have spent some years of childhood or youth, and are entered into arts and society, when they are hopeful and provided for, when the parents are to reap the comfort of all their fears and cares, then it breaks the spirit to lose them. This is true in many; but this is not love to the dead, but to themselves; for they miss what they had flattered themselves into by hope and opinion: and if it were kindness to the dead, they may consider, that, since we hope he is gone to God and to rest, it is an ill expression of our love to them, that we weep for their good fortune. For that life is not best which is longest; and when they are descended into the grave, it shall not be inquired how long they have lived, but how well: and yet this shortening of their days is an evil wholly depending upon opinion.[s] For if men did naturally live but twenty years, then we should be satisfied, if they died about sixteen or eighteen; and yet eighteen years now are as long as eighteen years would be then: and if a man were but of a day's life, it is well if he lasts till evensong,

[r] Itidem si puer parvulus occidat, æquo animo ferendum putant; si verò in cunis, ne querendum quidem; atqui hoc acerbius exegit natura quod dederat. At id quidem in cæteris rebus melius putatur, aliquam partem quàm nullam attingere. —Senec.

[s] Juvenis relinquit vitam, quem Dii diligunt.—Menand. Clerc. p. 46.

and then says his compline an hour before the time: and we are pleased, and call not that death immature, if he lives till seventy; and yet this age is as short of the old periods before and since the flood, as this youth's age (for whom you mourn) is of the present fulness. Suppose therefore a decree passed upon this person, (as there have been many upon all mankind,) and God hath set him a shorter period; and then we may as well bear the immature death of the young man as the death of the oldest men: for they also are immature and unseasonable in respect of the old periods of many generations. And why are we troubled, that he had arts and sciences before he died? or are we troubled, that he does not live to make use of them? The first is cause of joy, for they are excellent in order to certain ends; and the second cannot be cause of sorrow, because he hath no need to use them, as the case now stands, being provided for with the provisions of an angel, and the manner of eternity. However, the sons and the parents, friends and relatives, are in the world, like hours and minutes to a day. The hour comes, and must pass; and some stay by minutes, and they also pass, and shall never return again. But let it be considered, that from the time in which a man is conceived, from that time forward to eternity he shall never cease to be: and let him die young or old, still he hath an immortal soul, and hath laid down his body only for a time, as that which was the instrument of his trouble and sorrow, and the scene of sicknesses and disease. But he is in a more noble manner of being after death than he can be here: and the child may, with more reason, be allowed to cry for leaving his mother's womb for this world, than a man can for changing this world for another.

Sudden Death or violent.

Others are yet troubled at the manner of their child's or friend's death. He was drowned, or lost his head, or died of the plague; and this is a new spring of sorrow. But no man can give a sensible account how it shall be worse for a child to die with drowning in half an hour, than to endure a fever of one-and-twenty days. And if my friend lost his head, so he did not lose his constancy and his religion, he died with huge advantage.

Being Childless.

But, by this means, I am left without an heir. Well, suppose that: thou hast no heir, and I have no inheritance; and there are many kings and emperors that have died childless, many royal lines are extinguished: and Augustus Cæsar was forced to adopt his wife's son to inherit all the Roman greatness. And there are many wise persons that never married: and we read no where that any of the children of the apostles did survive their fathers: and all that inherit any thing of Christ's kingdom, come to it by adoption, not by natural inheritance: and to die without a natural heir is no intolerable evil, since it was sanctified in the person of Jesus, who died a virgin.

Evil or unfortunate Children.

And by this means, we are freed from the greater sorrows of having a fool, a swine, or a goat, to rule after us in our families: and yet even this condition admits of comfort.[t] For all the wild Americans are supposed to be the sons of Dodonaim; and the sons of Jacob are now the most scattered and despised people in the whole world. The son of Solomon was but a silly weak man; and the son of Hezekiah was wicked: and all the fools and barbarous people, all the thieves and pirates, all the slaves and miserable men and women of the world, are the sons and daughters of Noah; and we must not look to be exempted from that portion of sorrow which God gave to Noah, and Adam, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; I pray God send us into the lot of Abraham. But if any thing happens worse to us, it is enough for us, that we bear it evenly.[u]

Our own Death.

And how, if you were to die yourself? You know you must. Only be ready for it, by the preparations of a good life:[v] and then it is the greatest good that ever happened to thee; else there is nothing that can comfort you. But if you have served God in a holy life, send away the women and the weepers; tell them it is as much intemperance to weep too much as to laugh too much: and when thou art alone, or with fitting company, die as thou shouldst, but do not die impatiently, and like a fox catched in a trap. For if you fear death, you shall never the more avoid it, but you make it miserable. Fannius, that killed himself for fear of death, died as certainly as Portia, that ate burning coals, or Cato, that cut his own throat. To die is necessary and natural, and it may be honourable: but to die poorly, and basely, and sinfully, that alone is it that can make a man unfortunate.[w] No man can be a slave, but he that fears pain, or fears to die. To such a man, nothing but chance and peaceable times can secure his duty, and he depends upon things without for his felicity; and so is well but during the pleasure of his enemy, or a thief, or a tyrant, or it may be of a dog or a wild bull.

Prayers for the several Graces and Parts of Christian Sobriety.

A Prayer against Sensuality.

O eternal Father, thou that sittest in heaven invested with essential glories and divine perfections, fill my soul with so deep a sense of the excellencies of spiritual and heavenly things, that my affections, being weaned from the pleasures of the world, and the false allurements of sin, I may, with great severity, and the prudence of a holy discipline and

[t] Κρεῖσσον υἱὸν κακὸν εἶναι, ἢ σε κακοδαίμονα.—EPICT. c. 16.

[u] Σοὶ δ' ἀρκεέτω τὸ εὐσταθεῖν.

[v] Ad fines cùm perveneris, ne revertito.—PYTHAG.

[w] Οὐ καθανεῖν γὰρ, &c.—EURIP.

strict desires, with clear resolutions and a free spirit, have my conversation in heaven and heavenly employments; that being, in affections as in my condition, a pilgrim and a stranger here, I may covet after and labour for an abiding city, and at last may enter into, and for ever dwell in, the celestial Jerusalem, which is the mother of us all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For Temperance.

O Almighty God and gracious Father of men and angels, who openest thy hand and fillest all things with plenty, and hast provided for thy servant sufficient to satisfy all my needs; teach me to use thy creatures soberly and temperately, that I may not, with loads of meat or drink, make the temptations of my enemy to prevail upon me, or my spirit unapt for the performance of my duty, or my body healthless, or my affections sensual and unholy. O my God, never suffer that the blessings which thou givest me may either minister to sin or sickness, but to health and holiness and thanksgiving; that in the strength of thy provisions I may cheerfully and actively and diligently serve thee; that I may worthily feast at thy table here, and be accounted worthy, through thy grace, to be admitted to thy table hereafter, at the eternal supper of the Lamb, to sing an hallelujah to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen.

For Chastity; to be said especially by unmarried Persons.

Almighty God, our most holy and eternal Father, who art of pure eyes, and canst behold no uncleanness; let thy gracious and holy Spirit descend upon thy servant, and reprove the spirit of fornication and uncleanness, and cast him out, that my body may be a holy temple, and my soul a sanctuary to entertain the Prince of purities, the holy and eternal Spirit of God. O let no impure thoughts pollute that soul, which God hath sanctified; no unclean words pollute that tongue, which God hath commanded to be an organ of his praises; no unholy and unchaste action rend the veil of that temple, where the holy Jesus hath been pleased to enter, and hath chosen for his habitation: but seal up all my senses from all vain objects, and let them be entirely possessed with religion, and fortified with prudence, watchfulness, and mortification; that I, possessing my vessel in holiness, may lay it down with a holy hope, and receive it again in a joyful resurrection, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Prayer for the Love of God, to be said by Virgins and Widows, professed or resolved so to live: and may be used by any one.

O holy and purest Jesus, who wert pleased to espouse every holy soul, and join it to thee with a holy union and mysterious instruments of religious society and communications; O fill my soul with religion, and desires holy as the thoughts of cherubim, passionate beyond the love of women; that I may love thee as much as ever any creature loved thee, even with all my soul and all my faculties, and all the degrees of every faculty: let me know no loves but those of duty and charity, obedience and devotion; that I may for ever run after thee, who art the King of virgins, and with whom whole kingdoms are in love, and for whose sake queens have died, and at whose feet kings, with joy, have laid their crowns and sceptres. My soul is thine, O dearest Jesu; thou art my Lord, and hast bound up my eyes and heart from all stranger affections; give me for my dowry purity and humility, modesty and devotion, charity and patience, and at last bring me into the bride-chamber to partake of the felicities, and to lie in the bosom, of the Bridegroom to eternal ages, O holy and sweetest Saviour Jesus. Amen.

A Prayer to be said by married Persons in behalf of themselves and each other.

O eternal and gracious Father, who hast consecrated the holy estate of marriage to become mysterious, and to represent the union of Christ and his church, let thy Holy Spirit so guide me in the doing the duties of this state, that it may not become a sin unto me; nor that liberty, which thou hast hallowed by the holy Jesus, become an occasion of licentiousness by my own weakness and sensuality: and do thou forgive all those irregularities and too sensual applications, which may have, in any degree, discomposed my spirit and the severity of a christian. Let me, in all accidents and circumstances, be severe in my duty towards thee, affectionate and dear to my wife, (or *husband,*) a guide and good example to my family, and in all quietness, sobriety, prudence, and peace, a follower of those holy pairs, who have served thee with godliness and a good testimony. And the blessings of the eternal God, blessings of the right hand and of the left, be upon the body and soul of thy servant my wife, (or *husband,*) and abide upon her (or *him*) till the end of a holy and happy life; and grant that both of us may live together for ever in the embraces of the holy and eternal Jesus, our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

A Prayer for the Grace of Humility.

O holy and most gracious Master and Saviour Jesus, who, by thy example and by thy precept, by the practice of a whole life and frequent discourses, didst command us to be meek and humble in imitation of thy incomparable sweetness and great humility; be pleased to give me the grace, as thou hast given me the commandment: enable me to do whatsoever thou commandest, and command whatsoever thou pleasest. O mortify in me all proud thoughts and vain opinions of myself: let me return to thee the acknowledgment and the fruits of all those good things thou hast given me, that by confessing I am wholly in debt to thee for them, I may not boast myself for what I have received, and for what I am highly accountable: and for what is my own, teach me to be ashamed and humbled, it being nothing but sin and misery, weakness and uncleanness. Let me go before my brethren in nothing but in striving to do them honour and thee glory, never to seek my own praise, never to delight in it when it is offered; that, despising myself, I may be

accepted by thee in the honours with which thou shalt crown thy humble and despised servants, for Jesus's sake, in the kingdom of eternal glory. Amen.

Acts of Humility and Modesty by way of Prayer and Meditation.

I.

Lord, I know that my spirit is light and thorny, my body is brutish and exposed to sickness; I am constant to folly, and inconstant in holy purposes. My labours are vain and fruitless; my fortune full of change and trouble, seldom pleasing, never perfect: my wisdom is folly; being ignorant even of the parts and passions of my own body; and what am I, O Lord, before thee, but a miserable person, hugely in debt, not able to pay?

II.

Lord, I am nothing, and I have nothing of myself; I am less than the least of all thy mercies.

III.

What was I before my birth? First, nothing, and then uncleanness. What during my childhood? Weakness and folly. What in my youth? Folly still, and passion, lust, and wildness. What in my whole life? A great sinner, a deceived and an abused person. Lord, pity me; for it is thy goodness that I am kept from confusion and amazement, when I consider the misery and shame of my person, and the defilements of my nature.

IV.

Lord, what am I? And, Lord, what art thou? "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou so regardest him?"

V.

"How can man be justified with God? Or how can he be clean that is born of a woman? Behold, even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in his sight: how much less man, that is a worm, and the son of man, which is a worm!" Job xxv. 4, &c.

A Prayer for a contented Spirit, and the Grace of Moderation and Patience.

O Almighty God, Father and Lord of all the creatures, who hast disposed all things and all chances so as may best glorify thy wisdom, and serve the ends of thy justice, and magnify thy mercy, by secret and indiscernible ways bringing good out of evil; I most humbly beseech thee to give me wisdom from above, that I may adore thee, and admire thy ways and footsteps, which are in the great deep and not to be searched out: teach me to submit to thy providence in all things, to be content in all changes of person and condition, to be temperate in prosperity, and to read my duty in the lines of thy mercy; and, in adversity, to be meek, patient, and resigned; and to look through the cloud, that I may wait for the consolation of the Lord, and the day of redemption; in the mean time doing my duty with an unwearied diligence, and an undisturbed resolution, having no fondness for the vanities or possessions of this world; but laying up my hopes in heaven and the rewards of holy living, and being strengthened with the spirit of the inner man, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

CHAPTER III.

OF CHRISTIAN JUSTICE.

JUSTICE is, by the christian religion, enjoined in all its parts by these two propositions in Scripture: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, even so do to them." This is the measure of commutative justice, or of that justice which supposes exchange of things profitable for things profitable: that as I supply your need, you may supply mine; as I do a benefit to you, I may receive one by you: and because every man may be injured by another, therefore his security shall depend upon mine; if he will not let me be safe, he shall not be safe himself; (only the manner of his being punished is, upon great reason, both by God and all the world, taken from particulars, and committed to a public disinterested person, who will do justice, without passion, both to him and to me;) if he refuses to do me advantage, he shall receive none, when his needs require it. And thus God gave necessities to man, that all men might need; and several abilities to several persons, that each man might help to supply the public needs, and by joining to fill up all wants, they may be knit together by justice, as the parts of the world are by nature: and he hath made all obnoxious to injuries, and made every little thing strong enough to do us hurt by some instrument or other; and hath given us all a sufficient stock of self-love and desire of self-preservation, to be as the chain to tie together all the parts of society, and to restrain us from doing violence, lest we be violently dealt withal ourselves.

The other part of justice is commonly called distributive, and is commanded in this rule, "Render to all their dues; tribute, to whom tribute is due; custom, to whom custom; fear, to whom fear;

honour, to whom honour. Owe no man any thing, but to love one another."[x] This justice is distinguished from the first: because the obligation depends not upon contract or express bargain, but passes upon us by virtue of some command of God, or of our superior, by nature or by grace, by piety or religion, by trust or by office, according to that commandment, "As every man hath received the gift, so let him minister the same, one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."[y] And as the first considers an equality of persons in respect of the contract or particular necessity, this supposes a difference of persons, and no particular bargains, but such necessary intercourses, as by the laws of God or man are introduced. But I shall reduce all the particulars of both kinds to these four heads: 1. Obedience; 2. Provision; 3. Negociation; 4. Restitution.

SECTION I.

Of Obedience to our Superiors.

OUR superiors are set over us in affairs of the world, or the affairs of the soul, and things pertaining to religion, and are called accordingly ecclesiastical or civil. Towards whom our duty is thus generally described in the New Testament. For temporal or civil governors the commands are these: 'Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's;" and, "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers: for there is no power but of God: the powers that be, are ordained of God: whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist, shall receive to themselves damnation:"[z] and, "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, and to obey magistrates:"[a] and, "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake; whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil-doers, and the praise of them that do well."[b]

For spiritual or ecclesiastical governors, thus we are commanded: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give an account:"[c] and, "Hold such in reputation:"[d] and, "To this end did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things,"[e] said St. Paul to the church of Corinth. Our duty is reducible to practice by the following rules.

Acts and duties of Obedience to all our Superiors.

1. We must obey all human laws appointed and constituted by lawful authority, that is, of the supreme power, according to the constitution of the place in which we live; all laws, I mean, which are not against the law of God.

2. In obedience to human laws, we must observe the letter of the law where we can, without doing violence to the reason of the law, and the intention of the lawgiver: but, where they cross each other, the charity of the law is to be preferred before its discipline; and the reason of it, before the letter.

3. If the general reason of the law ceases in our particular, and a contrary reason rises upon us, we are to procure dispensation, or leave to omit the observation of it in such circumstances, if there be any persons or office appointed for granting it: but if there be none, or if it is not easily to be had, or not without an inconvenience greater than the good of the observation of the law in our particular, we are dispensed withal in the nature of the thing, without further process or trouble.

4. As long as the law is obligatory, so long our obedience is due; and he that begins a contrary custom without reason, sins: but he that breaks the law, when the custom is entered and fixed, is excused; because it is supposed the legislative power consents, when, by not punishing, it suffers disobedience to grow to a custom.[f]

5. Obedience to human laws must be for conscience' sake; that is, because, in such obedience, public order, and charity, and benefit, are concerned, and because the law of God commands us: therefore we must make a conscience in keeping the just laws of superiors: and, although the matter before the making of the law was indifferent, yet now the obedience is not indifferent;[g] but, next to the laws of God, we are to obey the laws of all our superiors, who the more public they are, the first they are to be in the order of obedience.

6. Submit to the punishment and censure of the laws, and seek not to reverse their judgment by opposing, but by submitting, or flying, or silence, to pass through it or by it, as we can: and although from inferior judges we may appeal, where the law permits us, yet we must sit down and rest in the judgment of the supreme; and if we be wronged, let us complain to God of the injury, not of the persons; and he will deliver thy soul from unrighteous judges.

7. Do not believe thou hast kept the law when thou hast suffered the punishment. For although patiently to submit to the power of the sword be a part of obedience, yet this is such a part, as supposes another left undone: and the law punishes, not because she is as well pleased in taking vengeance as in being obeyed; but, because she is pleased, she uses punishment as a means to secure obedience for the future, or in others. Therefore, although in such cases the law is satisfied, and the injury and the injustice are paid for, yet the sins of irreligion, and scandal, and disobedience to God, must still be so accounted for, as to crave pardon, and be washed off by repentance.

8. Human laws are not to be broken with scan-

[x] Rom. xiii. 7.
[y] 1 Pet. iv. 10.
[z] Rom. xiii. 1.
[a] Titus iii. 1.
[b] 1 Pet. ii. 13.
[c] Heb. xiii. 17.
[d] Phil. ii. 29.
[e] 2 Cor. ii. 9.

[f] Mores leges perduxerunt jam in potestatem suam. Leges mori serviunt.—ERNESTI, vol. ii. p. 421.

[g] Ἐξ ἀρχῆς μὲν, οὐδὲν διαφέρει· ὅταν δὲ θῶνται, διαφέρει. —ARIST. eth. 5. cap. 7.

dal, nor at all without r ason; for he that does it causelessly, is a despiser of the law, and undervalues the authority. For human laws differ from Divine laws principally in this: 1. That the positive commands of a man may be broken upon smaller and more reasons than the positive commands of God; we may, upon a smaller reason, omit to keep any of the fasting-days of the church, than omit to give alms to the poor: only this, the reason must bear weight according to the gravity and concernment of the law; a law, in a small matter, may be omitted for a small reason; in a great matter, not without a greater reason. And, 2. The negative precepts of men may cease by many instruments, by contrary customs, by public disrelish, by long omission; but the negative precepts of God never can cease, but when they are expressly abrogated by the same authority. But what those reasons are, that can dispense with the command of a man, a man may be his own judge, and sometimes take his proportions from his own reason and necessity, sometimes from public fame, and the practice of pious and severe persons, and from popular customs; in which a man shall walk most safely, when he does not walk alone, but a spiritual man takes him by the hand.

9. We must not be too forward in procuring dispensations, nor use them any longer than the reason continues for which we first procured them: for to be dispensed withal is an argument of natural infirmity, if it be necessary; but, if it be not, it signifies an undisciplined and unmortified spirit.

10. We must not be too busy in examining the prudence and unreasonableness of human laws: for although we are not bound to believe them all to be the wisest; yet if, by inquiring into the lawfulness of them, or by any other instrument, we find them to fail of that wisdom, with which some others are ordained, yet we must never make use of it to disparage the person of the lawgiver, or to countenance any man's disobedience, much less our own.

11. Pay that reverence to the person of thy prince, of his ministers, of thy parents and spiritual guides, which, by the customs of the place thou livest in, are usually paid to such persons in their several degrees: that is, that the highest reverence be paid to the highest person, and so still in proportion; and that this reverence be expressed in all the circumstances and manners of the city and nation.

12. Lift not up thy hand against thy prince or parent, upon what pretence soever; but bear all personal affronts and inconveniences at their hands, and seek no remedy but by patience and piety, yielding and praying, or absenting thyself.

13. Speak not evil of the ruler of thy people, neither curse thy father or mother, nor revile thy spiritual guides, nor discover and lay naked their infirmities; but treat them with reverence and religion, and preserve their authority sacred by esteeming their persons venerable.

14. Pay tribute and customs to princes according to the laws, and maintenance to thy parents according to their necessity, and honourable support to the clergy, according to the dignity of the work and the customs of the place.

15. Remember always, that duty to our superiors is not an act of commutative justice, but of distributive; that is, although kings and parents and spiritual guides are to pay a great duty to their inferiors, the duty of their several charges and government; yet the good government of a king and of parents are actions of religion, as they relate to God, and of piety, as they relate to their people and families. And although we usually call them just princes, who administer their laws exactly to the people, because the actions are in the manner of justice; yet, in propriety of speech, they are rather to be called pious and religious. For as he is not called a just father, that educates his children well, but pious; so that prince, who defends and well rules his people, is religious, and does that duty for which alone he is answerable to God. The consequence of which is this, so far as concerns our duty: If the prince or parent fail of their duty, we must not fail of ours; for we are answerable to them and to God too, as being accountable to all our superiors, and so are they to theirs; they are above us, and God is above them.

Remedies against Disobedience, and means to endear our Obedience; by way of consideration.

1. Consider, that all authority descends from God, and our superiors bear the image of the Divine power, which God imprints on them as on an image of clay, or a coin upon a less perfect metal, which whoso defaces, shall not be answerable for the loss or spoil of the materials, but the defacing the king's image; and, in the same measure, will God require it at our hands, if we despise his authority, upon whomsoever he hath imprinted it. "He that despiseth you, despiseth me." And Dathan and Abiram were said to be "gathered together against the Lord." And this was St. Paul's argument for our obedience: "The powers that be, are ordained of God."

2. There is very great peace and immunity from sin, in resigning our wills up to the command of others; for provided that our duty to God be secured, their commands are warrants to us in all things else; and the case of conscience is determined, if the command be evident and pressing; and it is certain, the action, that is but indifferent, and without reward, if done only upon our own choice, is an act of duty and of religion, and rewardable by the grace and favour of God, if done in obedience to the command of our superiors. For since naturally we desire what is forbidden us, (and sometimes there is no other evil in the thing, but that it is forbidden us,) God hath in grace enjoined and proportionably accepts obedience, as being directly opposed to the former irregularity; and it is acceptable, although there be no other good in the thing, that is commanded us, but that it is commanded.

3. By obedience, we are made a society and a republic, and distinguished from herds of beasts, and heaps of flies, who do what they list, and are incapable of laws, and obey none; and therefore are

killed and destroyed, though never punished, and they never can have a reward.

4. By obedience, we are rendered capable of all the blessings of government, signified by St. Paul in these words, "He is the minister of God to thee for good;"[h] and by St. Peter in these, "Governors are sent by him for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well."[i] And he that ever felt, or saw, or can understand, the miseries of confusion in public affairs, or amazement in a heap of sad, tumultuous, and indefinite thoughts, may, from thence, judge of the admirable effects of order, and the beauty of government. What health is to the body, and peace is to the spirit, that is government to the societies of men; the greatest blessing which they can receive in that temporal capacity.

5. No man shall ever be fit to govern others, that knows not first how to obey. For if the spirit of a subject be rebellious, in a prince it will be tyrannical and intolerable; and of so ill example, that as it will encourage the disobedience of others, so it will render it unreasonable for him to exact of others what in the like case he refused to pay.

6. There is no sin in the world, which God hath punished with so great severity and high detestation, as this of disobedience. For the crime of idolatry God sent the sword amongst his people; but it was never heard that the earth opened and swallowed up any but rebels against their prince.

7. Obedience is better than the particular actions of religion; and he serves God better, that follows his prince in lawful services, than he that refuses his command upon pretence he must go say his prayers. But rebellion is compared to that sin, which of all sin seems the most unnatural and damned impiety,—"Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft."

8. Obedience is a complicated act of virtue, and many graces are exercised in one act of obedience. It is an act of humility, of mortification and self-denial, of charity to God, of care of the public, of order and charity to ourselves and all our society, and a great instance of a victory over the most refractory and unruly passions.

9. To be a subject is a greater temporal felicity, than to be a king: for all eminent governments, according to their height, have a great burden, huge care, infinite business,[k] little rest, innumerable fears; and all that he enjoys above another is, that he does enjoy the things of the world with other circumstances, and a bigger noise; and if others go at his single command, it is also certain, he must suffer inconvenience at the needs and disturbances of all his people: and the evils of one man and of one family are not enough for him to bear, unless also he be almost crushed with the evils of mankind. He therefore is an ungrateful person, that will press the scales down with a voluntary load, and, by disobedience, put more thorns into the crown or mitre of his superior. Much better is the advice of St. Paul; "Obey them that have the rule over you, as they that must give an account for your souls; that they may do it with joy and not with grief: for (besides that it is unpleasant to them) it is unprofitable for you."

10. The angels are ministering spirits, and perpetually execute the will and commandment of God: and all the wise men and all the good men of the world are obedient to their governors; and the eternal Son of God esteemed it his "meat and drink to do the will of his Father," and for his obedience alone obtained the greatest glory: and no man ever came to perfection, but by obedience: and thousands of saints have chosen such institutions and manners of living, in which they might not choose their own work, nor follow their own will, nor please themselves, but be accountable to others, and subject to discipline, and obedient to command; as knowing this to be the highway of the cross, the way that the King of sufferings and humility did choose, and so became the King of glory.

11. No man ever perished, who followed first the will of God, and then the will of his superiors: but thousands have been damned merely for following their own will, and relying upon their own judgments, and choosing their own work, and doing their own fancies. For if we begin with ourselves, whatsoever seems good in our eyes is most commonly displeasing in the eyes of God.

12. The sin of rebellion, though it be a spiritual sin, and imitable by devils, yet it is of that disorder, unreasonableness, and impossibility, amongst intelligent spirits, that they never murmured or mutinied in their lower stations against their superiors. Nay, the good angels of an inferior order durst not revile a devil of a higher order. This consideration, which I reckon to be most pressing in the discourses of reason, and obliging next to the necessity of a divine precept, we learn from St. Jude 8, 9. "Likewise also these filthy dreamers despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities. And yet Michael the archangel, when, contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation."

But because our superiors rule by their example, by their word or law, and by the rod, therefore in proportion there are several degrees and parts of obedience, of several excellencies and degrees towards perfection.

Degrees of Obedience.

1. The first is the obedience of our outward work: and this is all that human laws of themselves regard; for because man cannot judge the heart, therefore it prescribes nothing to it: the public end is served, not by good wishes, but by real and actual performances; and, if a man obeys against his will, he is not punishable by the laws.

2. The obedience of the will: and this is also necessary in our obedience to human laws, not because man requires it for himself, but because God

[h] Rom. xiii. 4.
[i] 1 Pet. ii. 14.

[k] Οὐ χρὴ πανύχιον εὕδειν βουληφόρον ἄνδρα,
Ὧ λαοί τ' ἐπιτετράφαται, καὶ τόσσα μέμηλε.
Homer. Il. β'. 24.

commands it towards man; and of it, although man cannot, yet God will demand an account. For we are to do it as to the Lord, and not to men; and therefore we must do it willingly. But by this means our obedience in private is secured against secret arts and subterfuges: and when we can avoid the punishment, yet we shall not decline our duty, but serve man for God's sake, that is, cheerfully, promptly, vigorously; for these are the proper parts of willingness and choice.

3. The understanding must yield obedience in general, though not in the particular instance; that is, we must be firmly persuaded of the excellency of the obedience, though we be not bound, in all cases, to think the particular law to be most prudent. But, in this, our rule is plain enough. Our understanding ought to be inquisitive, whether the civil constitution agree with our duty to God; but we are bound to inquire no further: and therefore beyond this, although he who, having no obligation to it, (as counsellors have,) inquires not at all into the wisdom or reasonableness of the law, be not always the wisest man; yet he is ever the best subject. For when he hath given up his understanding to his prince and prelate, provided that his duty to God be secured by a precedent search, he hath also with the best and with all the instruments in the world, secured his obedience to man.

SECTION II.

Of Provision, or that Part of Justice which is due from Superiors to Inferiors.

As God hath imprinted his authority in several parts upon several estates of men, as princes, parents, spiritual guides; so he hath also delegated and committed parts of his care and providence unto them, that they may be instrumental in the conveying such blessings, which God knows we need, and which he intends should be the effects of government. For since God governs all the world as a king, provides for us as a father, and is the great guide and conductor of our spirits as the head of the church, and the great shepherd and bishop of our souls, they, who have portions of these dignities, have also their share of the administration; the sum of all which is usually signified in these two words, *governing* and *feeding*, and is particularly recited in these following rules.

Duties of Kings, and all the Supreme Power, as Lawgivers.

1. Princes of the people, and all that have legislative power, must provide useful and good laws for the defence of property, for the encouragement of labour, for the safeguard of their persons, for determining controversies, for reward of noble actions and excellent arts and rare inventions, for promoting trade, and enriching their people.

2. In the making laws, princes must have regard to the public dispositions, to the affections and disaffections of the people, and must not introduce a law with public scandal and displeasure; but consider the public benefit, and the present capacity of affairs, and general inclinations of men's minds.[l] For he, that enforces a law upon a people against their first and public apprehensions, tempts them to disobedience, and makes laws to become snares and hooks to catch the people, and to enrich the treasury with the spoil and tears and curses of the commonalty, and to multiply their mutiny and their sin.

3. Princes must provide, that the laws be duly executed; for a good law, without execution, is like an unperformed promise; and therefore they must be severe exactors of accounts from their delegates and ministers of justice.

4. The severity of laws must be tempered with dispensations, pardons, and remissions, according as the case shall alter, and new necessities be introduced, or some singular accident shall happen, in which the law would be unreasonable or intolerable, as to that particular.[m] And thus the people, with their importunity, prevailed against Saul in the case of Jonathan, and obtained his pardon for breaking the law which his father made, because his necessity forced him to taste honey; and his breaking the law, in that case, did promote that service, whose promotion was intended by the law.

5. Princes must be fathers of the people, and provide such instances of gentleness, ease, wealth, and advantages, as may make mutual confidence between them; and must fix their security under God in the love of the people; which therefore they must, with all arts of sweetness, remission, popularity, nobleness, and sincerity, endeavour to secure to themselves.

6. Princes must not multiply public oaths without great, eminent, and violent necessity; lest the security of the king become a snare to the people, and they become false, when they see themselves suspected; or impatient, when they are violently held fast: but the greater and more useful caution is upon things than upon persons; and if security of kings can be obtained otherwise, it is better that oaths should be the last refuge, and when nothing else can be sufficient.

7. Let not the people be tempted with arguments to disobey, by the imposition of great and unnecessary taxes: for that lost to the son of Solomon the dominion of the ten tribes of Israel.[n]

8. Princes must, in a special manner, be guardians of pupils and widows, not suffering their persons to be oppressed, or their states imbeciled, or in any sense be exposed to the rapine of covetous persons; but be provided for by just laws, and provident judges, and good guardians, ever having an ear ready open to their just complaints, and a heart full of pity, and one hand to support them, and the other to avenge them.

9. Princes must provide, that the laws may be

[l] Omittenda potiùs prævalida et adulta vitia, quàm hoc adsequi, ut palàm fiat, quibus flagitiis impares simus.—TACIT.

[m] Ἐπιείκειά ἐστιν ἐπανόρθωμα νόμου, ᾗ ἐλλείπει διὰ τὸ καθόλου.—Eth. 5. c. 10.

[n] L'avaritia de re, peste de regni.

so administered, that they may be truly and really an ease to the people, not an instrument of vexation: and therefore must be careful, that the shortest and most equal ways of trials be appointed, fees moderated, and intricacies and windings as much cut off as may be, lest injured persons be forced to perish under the oppression, or under the law, in the injury, or in the suit. Laws are like princes, those best and most beloved, who are most easy of access.

10. Places of judicature ought, at no hand, to be sold by pious princes, who remember themselves to be fathers of the people. For they that buy the office will sell the act;[o] and they that, at any rate, will be judges, will not, at any easy rate, do justice; and their bribery is less punishable, when bribery opened the door by which they entered.

11. Ancient privileges, favours, customs, and acts of grace indulged by former kings to their people, must not, without high reason and great necessities, be revoked by their successors, nor forfeitures be exacted violently, nor penal laws urged rigorously, nor in light cases; nor laws be multiplied without great need; nor vicious persons, which are publicly and deservedly hated, be kept in defiance of popular desires; nor any thing, that may unnecessarily make the yoke heavy and the affection light, that may increase murmurs and lessen charity; always remembering, that the interest of the prince and the people is so enfolded in a mutual embrace, that they cannot be untwisted without pulling a limb off, or dissolving the bands and conjunction of the whole body.

12. All princes must esteem themselves as much bound by their word, by their grants, and by their promises, as the meanest of their subjects are by the restraint and penalty of laws:[p] and although they are superior to the people, yet they are not superior to their own voluntary concessions and engagements, their promises and oaths, when once they are passed from them.

The Duty of Superiors as they are Judges.

1. Princes in judgment and their delegate judges must judge the causes of all persons uprightly and impartially, without any personal consideration of the power of the mighty, or the bribe of the rich, or the needs of the poor. For although the poor must fare no worse for his poverty, yet, in justice, he must fare no better for it: and although the rich must be no more regarded, yet he must not be less. And to this purpose the tutor of Cyrus instructed him, when in a controversy, where a great boy would have taken a large coat from a little boy, because his own was too little for him, and the other's was too big, he adjudged the great coat to the great boy: his tutor answered, "Sir, if you were made a judge of decency or fitness, you had judged well in giving the biggest to the biggest; but when you are appointed judge, not whom the coat did fit, but whose it was, you should have considered the title and the possession, who did the violence, and who made it, or who bought it." And so it must be in judgments between the rich and the poor: it is not to be considered what the poor man needs, but what is his own.

2. A prince may not, much less may inferior judges, deny justice, when it is legally and competently demanded: and if the prince will use his prerogative in pardoning an offender, against whom justice is required, he must be careful to give satisfaction to the injured person, or his relatives, by some other instrument; and be watchful to take away the scandal, that is, lest such indulgence might make persons more bold to do injury: and if he spares the life, let him change the punishment into that which may make the offender, if not suffer justice, yet do justice, and more real advantage to the injured person.

These rules concern princes and their delegates in the making or administering laws, in the appointing rules of justice, and doing acts of judgment. The duty of parents to their children and nephews is briefly described by St. Paul.

The Duty of Parents to their Children.

1. "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath:"[q] that is, be tender-bowelled, pitiful, and gentle, complying with all the infirmities of the children, and, in their several ages, proportioning to them several usages according to their needs and their capacities.

2. "Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord:" that is, secure their religion; season their younger years with prudent and pious principles; make them in love with virtue; and make them habitually so, before they come to choose or to discern good from evil, that their choice may be with less difficulty and danger. For while they are under discipline, they suck in all that they are first taught, and believe it infinitely. Provide for them wise, learned, and virtuous tutors, and good company and discipline, seasonable baptism, catechism, and confirmation.[r] For it is great folly to heap up much wealth for our children, and not to take care concerning the children for whom we get it. It is as if a man should take more care about his shoe than about his foot.

3. Parents must show piety at home;[s] that is, they must give good example and reverend deportment in the face of their children; and all those instances of charity which usually endear each other,—sweetness of conversation, affability, frequent admonitions, all significations of love and tenderness, care and watchfulness, must be expressed towards children, that they may look upon their parents as their friends and patrons, their defence and sanctuary, their treasure and their guide. Hither is to be reduced the nursing of children,

[o] Chi compra il magistrato, forza è, che vendra la giustitia.

[p] Nulla lex (civilis) sibi soli conscientiam justitiæ suæ debet, sed eis à quibus obsequium expectat.—TERTUL. Apologet.

[q] Ephes. vi. 4.

[r] Potior mihi ratio vivendi honestè, quàm et optimè dicendi videtur.—QUINTIL. lib. 1. cap. 2.

[s] Heb. xii. 9. Crates apud Plutarch. de Liber. Educand. 1 Tim. v. 4.

which is the first, and most natural, and necessary instance of piety which mothers can show to their babes; a duty, from which nothing will excuse, but a disability, sickness, danger, or public necessity.

4. Parents must provide for their own, according to their condition, education, and employment; called by St. Paul, "a laying up for the children,"[t] that is, an enabling them, by competent portions, or good trades, arts, or learning, to defend themselves against the chances of the world, that they may not be exposed to temptation, to beggary, or unworthy arts. And although this must be done without covetousness, without impatient and greedy desires of making them rich; yet it must be done with much care and great affection, with all reasonable provision, and according to our power: and if we can, without sin, improve our estates for them, that also is part of the duty we owe to God for them. And this rule is to extend to all that descend from us, although we have been overtaken in a fault, and have unlawful issue; they also become part of our care, yet so as not to injure the production of the lawful bed.

5. This duty is to extend to a provision of conditions and an estate of life.[u] Parents must, according to their power and reason, provide husbands or wives for their children.[v] In which they must secure piety and religion,[w] and the affection and love of the interested persons; and, after these, let them make what provisions they can for other conveniences or advantages: ever remembering, that they can do no injury more afflictive to the children, than to join them with cords of a disagreeing affection: it is like tying a wolf and a lamb, or planting the vine in a garden of coleworts. Let them be persuaded with reasonable inducements to make them willing, and to choose according to the parent's wish; but, at no hand, let them be forced. Better to sit up all night, than to go to bed with a dragon.

[t] 1 Tim. v. 1.

[u] Νυμφευμάτων μὲν τῶν ἐμῶν πατὴρ ἐμὸς
Μέριμναν ἕξει, κοὐκ ἐμὸν κρίνειν τάδε.—EURIP. And. 988.
Me tibi Tyndareus vitâ gravis auctor et annis
Tradidit: arbitrium neptis habebat avus.
OVID. in Epist. Hermiones.

[v] Liberi sine consensu parentum contrahere non debent. Andromacha apud Euripidem, cùm petita fuit ad nuptias, respondit, patris sui esse sponsalium suorum curam habere: et Achilles apud Homerum regis filiam sine patris sui consensu noluit ducere. Il. 9. 393. Ἤν γὰρ δή με σόωσι θεοὶ, καὶ οἶκαδ' ἵκωμαι, Πηλεὺς θήν μοι ἔπειτα γυναῖκα γαμέσσεται αὐτός. Et Justinianus Imp. ait, naturali simul et civili rationi congruere, ne filii ducant uxores citra parentum authoritatem. Simo Terentianus parat abdicationem, quia Pamphilus clam ipso duxisset uxorem. Istiusmodi sponsalia fiunt irrita, nisi velint parentes: at si subsequuta est copula, nè temere rescindantur connubia, multæ suadent cautiones et pericula. Liberi, autem, quamdiu secundùm leges patrias sui juris non sunt, clandestinas nuptias si ineant, peccant contra quintum præceptum, et jus naturale secundarium. Propriè enim loquendo parentes non habent ἐξουσίαν, sive potestatem, sed authoritatem; habent jus jubendi aut prohibendi, sed non irritum faciendi. Atque etiam ista authoritas exercenda est secundùm æquum et bonum; scil. ut nè morosus et difficilis sit pater. Mater enim vix habet aliquod juris præter suasionis et amoris et gratitudinis. Si autem pater filiam non collocâsset ante 25 annos, filia nubere poterat cui voluerat, ex jure Romanorum. Patrum enim authoritas major aut minor est ex legibus patriis, et solet extendi ad certam ætatem, et tum exspirat quoad matrimonium; et est major in filias quàm filios.—Num. 30.

[w] Eosdem quos maritus nôsse deos et colere solos uxor debet; supervacaneis autem religionibus et alienis superstitionibus fores occludere. Nulli enim deûm grata sunt sacra, quæ mulier clanculùm et furtim facit.—PLUTARCH. Conjug. Præcept. Gen. 24. Vocemus puellam, et quæramus os ejus.

Rules for Married Persons.

1. Husbands must give to their wives love,[x] maintenance, duty, and the sweetnesses of conversation; and wives[y] must pay to them all they have or can, with the interest of obedience and reverence: and they must be complicated in affections and interest, that there be no distinction between them of mine and thine. And if the title be the man's, or the woman's, yet the use must be common; only the wisdom of the man is to regulate all extravagances and indiscretions. In other things, no question is to be made; and their goods should be as their children, not to be divided, but of one possession and provision: whatsoever is otherwise, is not marriage, but merchandise. And upon this ground I suppose it was, that St. Basil commended that woman who took part of her husband's goods to do good works withal:[z] for supposing him to be unwilling, and that the work was his duty or hers alone, or both theirs in conjunction, or of great advantage to either of their souls, and no violence to the support of their families, she had right to all that: and Abigail, of her own right, made a costly present to David, when her husband Nabal had refused it. The husband must[a] rule over his wife, as the soul does over the body, obnoxious to the same sufferings, and bound by the same affections, and doing or suffering by the permissions and interest of each other: that (as the old philosopher said) as the humours of the body are mingled with each other in the whole substances, so marriage may be a mixture of interests, of bodies, of minds, of friends, a conjunction[b] of the whole life, and the noblest of friendships. But if, after all the fair deportments and innocent chaste compliances, the husband be morose and ungentle, let the[c] wife discourse thus: "If, while I do my duty, my husband neglects me; what will he do, if I neglect him?" And if she

The Duty of Husbands, &c.
See Chap. ii. Sect. 3.

[x] Σοὶ δε θεοὶ τόσα δοῖεν———
Ἄνδρα τε καὶ οἶκον, καὶ ὁμοφροσύνην ὀπάσειαν
Ἐσθλήν· οὐ μὲν γὰρ τοῦ γε κρεῖσσον καὶ ἄρειον,
Ἢ ὅθ' ὁμοφρονέοντε νόημασιν οἶκον ἔχητον
Ἀνὴρ ἠδὲ γυνή· πόλλ' ἄλγεα δυσμενέεσσι,
Χάρματα δ' εὐμενέτῃσι· μάλιστα δέ τ' ἔκλυον αὐτοί.
ODYSS. 6. 180.

[y] Ἐνεστ' ἀληθὲς φίλτρον εὐγνώμων τρόπος·
Τούτῳ κατακρατεῖν ἀνδρὸς εἰωθεν γυνή.—MENAN.
Ἦ μοῦνοι φιλέουσ' ἀλόχους μερόπων ἀνθρώπων
Ἀτρεῖδαι; ἐπεὶ, ὅστις ἀνὴρ ἀγαθὸς καὶ ἐχέφρων,
Τὴν αὐτοῦ φιλέει καὶ κήδεται· ὡς καὶ ἐγὼ τὴν
Ἐκ θυμοῦ φιλέον δουρικτητήν περ ἐοῦσαν.
HOM. Il. 9. 340.

[z] Κλέψασα καλὰ κλέμματα ἄνευ ἀνδρὸς τὰς εὐποιίας ἐποίησε.

[a] Lætum esse debet et officiosum mariti imperium.—PLUT. Namque es ei pater et frater, venerandaque mater: nec minus facit ad dignitatem viri, si mulier eum suum præceptorem, philosophum, magistrumque appellet.—PLUTARCH.

[b] Convictio est quasi quædam intensio benevolentiæ.

[c] Οὐ χρυσὸς, οὐ τυραννὶς, οὐ πλούτου χλιδὴ
Τοσοῦτον εἶχεν διαφόρους τὰς ἡδονὰς,
Ὡς ἀνδρὸς ἐσθλοῦ καὶ γυναικὸς εὐσεβοῦς
Γνώμη δικαία, καὶ φρονοῦσα τ' ἀνδρικά.
Inferior matrona suo sit, sexte, marito;
Non aliter fiunt fœmina virque pares.

thinks to be separated by reason of her husband's unchaste life, let her consider, that then the man will be incurably ruined, and her rivals could wish nothing more than that they might possess him alone.

The Duty of Masters of Families.

1. The same care is to extend to all of our family, in their proportions, as to our children: for as, by St. Paul's economy, the heir differs nothing from a servant, while he is in minority, so a servant should differ nothing from a child, in the substantial part of the care; and the difference is only in degrees. Servants and masters are of the same kindred, of the same nature, and heirs of the same promises; and therefore, 1. must be provided of necessaries, for their support and maintenance. 2. They must be used with mercy. 3. Their work must be tolerable and merciful. 4. Their restraints must be reasonable. 5. Their recreations fitting and healthful. 6. Their religion and the interest of souls taken care of. 7. And masters must correct their servants with gentleness, prudence, and mercy; not for every slight fault, not always, not with upbraiding and disgraceful language, but with such only as may express and reprove the fault, and amend the person. But, in all these things, measures are to be taken by the contract made, by the laws and customs of the place, by the sentence of prudent and merciful men, and by the cautions and remembrances given us by God; such as is that written by St. Paul, "as knowing that we also have a Master in heaven." The master must not be a lion in his house, lest his power be obeyed, and his person hated; his eye be waited on, and his business be neglected in secret. No servant will do his duty, unless he make a conscience, or love his master: if he does it not for God's sake or his master's, he will not need to do it always for his own.

The Duty of Guardians or Tutors.

Tutors and guardians are in the place of parents; and what they are in fiction of law, they must remember as an argument to engage them to do, in reality of duty. They must do all the duty of parents, excepting those obligations which are merely natural.

¶ The duty of ministers and spiritual guides to the people is of so great burden, so various rules, so intricate and busy caution, that it requires a distinct tractate by itself.

SECTION III.

Of Negociation, or Civil Contracts.

This part of justice is such as depends upon the laws of man directly, and upon the laws of God only by consequence and indirect reason; and from civil laws or private agreements it is to take its estimate and measures: and although our duty is plain and easy, requiring of us honesty in contracts, sincerity in affirming, simplicity in bargaining, and faithfulness in performing; yet it may be helped by the addition of these following rules and considerations.

Rules and Measures of Justice in Bargaining.

1. In making contracts, use not many words; for all the business of a bargain is summed up in few sentences: and he that speaks least, means fairest, as having fewer opportunities to deceive.

2. Lie not at all, neither in a little thing nor in a great, neither in the substance nor in the circumstance, neither in word nor deed: that is, pretend not what is false; cover not what is true; and let the measure of your affirmation or denial be the understanding of your contractor; for he, that deceives the buyer or the seller by speaking what is true in a sense, not intended or understood by the other, is a liar and a thief. For, in bargains, you are to avoid not only what is false, but that also which deceives.

3. In prices of bargaining concerning uncertain merchandises, you may buy as cheap, ordinarily, as you can; and sell as dear as you can, so it be, 1. without violence; and, 2. when you contract on equal terms with persons in all senses (as to the matter and skill of bargaining) equal to yourself, that is, merchants with merchants, wise men with wise men, rich with rich; and, 3. when there is no deceit, and no necessity, and no monopoly: for in these cases, viz. when the contractors are equal, and no advantage on either side, both parties are voluntary, and therefore there can be no injustice or wrong to either. But then add also this consideration, that the public be not oppressed by unreasonable and unjust rates: for which, the following rules are the best measure.

4. Let your prices be according to that measure of good and evil, which is established in the fame and common accounts of the wisest and most merciful men, skilled in that manufacture or commodity; and the gain such, which, without scandal, is allowed to persons in all the same circumstances.

5. Let no prices be heightened by the necessity or unskilfulness of the contractor: for the first is direct uncharitableness to the person, and injustice in the thing; because the man's necessity could not naturally enter into the consideration of the value of the commodity; and the other is deceit and oppression: much less must any man make necessities; as by engrossing a commodity, by monopoly, by detaining corn, or the like indirect arts; for such persons are unjust to all single persons, with whom, in such cases, they contract, and oppressors of the public.

6. In intercourse with others, do not do all which you may lawfully do; but keep something within thy power: and, because there is a latitude of gain in buying and selling, take not thou the utmost penny that is lawful, or which thou thinkest so; for although it be lawful, yet it is not safe; and he that gains all, that he can gain lawfully, this year, possibly, next year, will be tempted to gain something unlawfully.

7. He that sells dearer, by reason he sells not for ready money, must increase his price no higher,

than to make himself recompence for the loss, which, according to the rules of trade, he sustained by his forbearance, according to common computation, reckoning in also the hazard, which he is prudently, warily, and charitably to estimate. But although this be the measure of his justice, yet because it happens either to their friends, or to necessitous and poor persons, they are, in these cases, to consider the rules of friendship and neighbourhood, and the obligations of charity, lest justice turn into unmercifulness.

8. No man is to be raised in his price or rents in regard of any accident, advantage, or disadvantage, of his person.[d] A prince must be used conscionably, as well as a common person; and a beggar be treated justly, as well as a prince: with this only difference, that to poor persons the utmost measure and extent of justice is unmerciful, which to a rich person is innocent, because it is just, and he needs not thy mercy and remission.

9. Let no man, for his own poverty, become more oppressing and cruel in his bargain, but quietly, modestly, diligently, and patiently, recommend his estate to God, and follow its interest, and leave the success to him: for such courses will more probably advance his trade; they will certainly procure him a blessing and a recompence; and, if they cure not his poverty, they will take away the evil of it: and there is nothing else in it that can trouble him.

10. Detain not the wages of the hireling; for every degree of detention of it beyond the time is injustice and uncharitableness, and grinds his face, till tears and blood come out: but pay him exactly according to covenant, or according to his needs.

11. Religiously keep all promises and covenants, though made to your disadvantage, though afterwards you perceive, you might have been better: and let not any precedent act of yours be altered by any after-accident. Let nothing make you break your promise, unless it be unlawful, or impossible: that is, either out of your natural, or out of your civil power, yourself being under the power of another; or that it be intolerably inconvenient to yourself, and of no advantage to another; or that you have leave expressed, or reasonably presumed.[e]

12. Let no man take wages or fees for a work that he cannot do, or cannot with probability undertake, or in some sense profitably, and with ease, or with advantage manage. Physicians must not meddle with desperate diseases, and known to be incurable, without declaring their sense beforehand; that if the patient please, he may entertain him at adventure, or to do him some little ease. Advocates must deal plainly with their clients, and tell them the true state and danger of their case; and must not pretend confidence in an evil cause: but when he hath so cleared his own innocence, if the client will have collateral and legal advantages obtained by his industry, he may engage his endeavour, provided he do no injury to the right cause, or any man's person.

13. Let no man appropriate to his own use what God, by a special mercy, or the republic, hath made common;[f] for that is both against justice and charity too: and, by miraculous accidents, God hath declared his displeasure against such enclosure. When the kings of Naples enclosed the gardens of Œnotria, where the best manna of Calabria descends, that no man might gather it without paying tribute, the manna ceased till the tribute was taken off; and then it came again: and so when, after the third trial, the princes found they could not have that in proper, which God made to be common, they left it as free as God gave it. The like happened in Epire; when Lysimachus laid an impost upon the Tragasæan salt, it vanished, till Lysimachus left it public.[g] And when the procurators of King Antigonus imposed a rate upon the sick people, that came to Edepsum to drink the waters, which were lately sprung, and were very healthful, instantly the waters dried up, and the hope of gain perished.

The sum of all is in these words of St. Paul, "Let no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter; because the Lord is the avenger of all such."[h] And our blessed Saviour, in enumerating the duties of justice, besides the commandment of "Do not steal," adds, "Defraud not,"[i] forbidding (as a distinct explication of the old law) the tacit and secret theft of abusing our brother in civil contracts. And it needs no other arguments to enforce this caution, but only, that the Lord hath undertaken to avenge all such persons. And as he always does it in the great day of recompences; so very often he does it here, by making the unclean portion of injustice to be as a canker-worm eating up all the other increase: it procures beggary, and a declining estate, or a caitiff, cursed spirit, an ill name, the curse of the injured and oppressed person, and a fool or a prodigal to be his heir.

SECTION IV.

Of Restitution.

RESTITUTION is that part of justice, to which a man is obliged by a precedent contract, or a foregoing fault, by his own act or another man's, either with or without his will. He that borrows is bound to pay, and much more he that steals or cheats.[k] For if he that borrows, and pays not when he is able, be an unjust person and a robber, because he possesses another man's goods, to the right owner's prejudice; then he that took them at first without leave, is the same thing in every instant of his possession, which the debtor is after the time in which he should, and could, have made payment. For, in all sins, we are to distinguish the

[d] Mercantia non vuol nè amici nè parenti.

[e] Surgam ad sponsalia, quia promisi, quamvis non concoxerim: sed non, si febricitavero: subest enim tacita exceptio, si potero, si debebo. Effice ut idem status sit, cùm exigitur, qui fuit, cùm promitterem. Destituere levitas non erit, si aliquid intervenit novi. Eadem mihi omnia præsta: et idem sum.—Seneca De Benefic. lib. iv. cap. 39. RUHK. vol. iv. p. 197.

[f] Brassavol. in exam. simpl.

[g] Cælius Rhod. l. ix. c. 12. Athenæ. Deipnos. l. iii.

[h] 1 Thess. iv. 6. [i] Lev. xix. 13. 1 Cor. iv. 8. Matt. x. 19.

[k] Chi non vuol rendere, fa mal a prendere.

transient or passing act from the remaining effect or evil. The act of stealing was soon over, and cannot be undone; and for it the sinner is only answerable to God, or his vicegerent; and he is, in a particular manner, appointed to expiate it by suffering punishment, and repenting, and asking pardon, and judging and condemning himself, doing acts of justice and charity, in opposition and contradiction to that evil action. But because, in the case of stealing, there is an injury done to our neighbour; and the evil still remains after the action is past; therefore for this we are accountable to our neighbour, and we are to take the evil off from him which we brought upon him; or else he is an injured person, a sufferer all the while: and that any man should be the worse for me, and my direct act, and by my intention, is against the rule of equity, of justice, and of charity;[1] I do not that to others, which I would have done to myself; for I grow richer upon the ruins of his fortune. Upon this ground, it is a determined rule in divinity, "Our sin can never be pardoned, till we have restored what we unjustly took, or wrongfully detain:" restored it (I mean) actually, or in purpose and desire, which we must really perform, when we can. And this doctrine, besides its evident and apparent reasonableness, is derived from the express words of Scripture, reckoning restitution to be a part of repentance, necessary in order to the remission of our sins. "If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, &c. he shall surely live, he shall not die."[m] The practice of this part of justice is to be directed by the following rules.

Rules of making Restitution.

1. Whosoever is an effective real cause of doing his neighbour wrong, by what instrument soever he does it, (whether by commanding or encouraging it, by counselling or commending it,[n] by acting it, or not hindering it, when he might, and ought,[o] by concealing it, or receiving it,) is bound to make restitution to his neighbour; if, without him, the injury had not been done, but, by him or his assistance, it was. For, by the same reason, that every one of these is guilty of the sin, and is cause of the injury, by the same they are bound to make reparation; because by him his neighbour is made worse, and therefore is to be put into that state from whence he was forced. And suppose that thou hast persuaded an injury to be done to thy neighbour, which others would have persuaded if thou hadst not, yet thou art still obliged, because thou really didst cause the injury; just as they had been obliged, if they had done it: and thou art not at all the less bound, by having persons as ill-inclined as thou wert.

2. He that commanded the injury to be done, is first bound; then he that did it; and after these, they also are obliged who did so assist, as without them the thing would not have been done. If satisfaction be made by any of the former, the latter is tied to repentance, but no restitution: but if the injured person be not righted, every one of them is wholly guilty of the injustice; and therefore bound to restitution, singly and entirely.

3. Whosoever intends a little injury to his neighbour, and acts it, and by it a greater evil accidentally comes, he is obliged to make an entire reparation of all the injury, of that which he intended; and of that which he intended not, but yet acted by his own instrument going further than he at first purposed it.[p] He that set fire on a plane-tree to spite his neighbour, and the plane-tree set fire on his neighbour's house, is bound to pay for all the loss, because it did all rise from his own ill intention. It is like murder committed by a drunken person, involuntary in some of the effect, but voluntary in the other parts of it, and in all the cause; and therefore the guilty person is answerable for all of it. And when Ariarathes, the Cappadocian king, had, but in wantonness, stopped the mouth of the river Melanus, although he intended no evil, yet Euphrates being swelled by that means, and bearing away some of the strand of Cappadocia, did great spoil to the Phrygians and Galatians; he therefore by the Roman senate was condemned in three hundred talents, towards reparation of the damage. Much rather therefore, when the lesser part of the evil was directly intended.

4. He that hinders a charitable person from giving alms to a poor man, is tied to restitution, if he hindered him by fraud or violence; because it was a right which the poor man had, when the good man had designed and resolved it, and the fraud or violence hinders the effect, but not the purpose: and therefore he who used the deceit or the force, is injurious, and did damage to the poor man. But if the alms were hindered only by entreaty, the hinderer is not tied to restitution, because entreaty took not liberty away from the giver, but left him still master of his own act, and he had power to alter his purpose, and so long there was no injustice done.[q] The same is the case of a testator giving a legacy, either by kindness, or by promise, and common right. He that hinders the charitable legacy by fraud or violence, or the due legacy by entreaty, is equally obliged to restitution. The reason of the latter part of this case is, because he that entreats or persuades to a sin, is as guilty as he that acts it: and if, without his persuasion, the sin and the injury would not be acted, he is in his kind the entire cause, and therefore obliged to repair the in-

[1] Si tuâ culpâ datum est damnum, jure super his satisfacere te oportet.

[m] Ezek. xxxiii. 15.

[n] Ὁ γὰρ ἐπαινέσας τὸν δεδρακότα, οὐδέν τι ἧσσον τῶν πεπραγμένων αὐτοῦργος γίνεται.—Totilas apud Procop. Goth. 3. Qui laudat servum fugitivum, tenetur. Non enim oportet laudando augeri malum. - Ulpian. in lib. i. cap. de servo corrupto.

[o] Ὁ ἐμπρησμένος τοῦ ἀνάψαντος ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῦ κατασβῆσαι δυναμένου, δρᾶσαι δὲ τοιοῦτο ὅλως μὴ βουληθέντος.—Nicet. Choniat. in Michael. Comnen. Sic Syri ab Amphyctionibus judicio damnati, quia piraticam non prohibuerunt, cùm poterant.

[p] Etiamsi partem damni dare noluisti, in totum quasi prudens dederis, tenendus es. Ex toto enim noluisse debet qui imprudentiâ defenditur. Sen. Contr. Involuntarium ortum ex voluntario censetur pro voluntario.—Strabo.

[q] Πλεονεκτεῖ οὐδὲν ὁ οὐ βοηθήσας χρήμασι δι' ἀνελευθερίαν. —Eth. l. v. c. 4.

jury as much as the person that does the wrong immediately.

5. He that refuses to do any part of his duty (to which he is otherwise obliged) without a bribe, is bound to restore that money, because he took it in his neighbour's wrong, and not as a salary for his labour, or a reward for his wisdom, (for his stipend hath paid all that,) or he hath obliged himself to do it by his voluntary undertaking.

6. He that takes any thing from his neighbour, which was justly forfeited, but yet takes it not as a minister of justice, but to satisfy his own revenge or avarice, is tied to repentance, but not to restitution. For my neighbour is not the worse for my act, for thither the law and his own demerits bore him; but because I took the forfeiture indirectly, I am answerable to God for my unhandsome, unjust, or uncharitable circumstances. Thus Philip of Macedon was reproved by Aristides for destroying the Phocenses; because although they deserved it, yet he did it not in prosecution of the law of nations, but to enlarge his own dominions.

7. The heir of an obliged person is not bound to make restitution, if the obligation passed only by a personal act; but, if it passed from his person to his estate, then the estate passes with all its burden. If the father, by persuading his neighbour to do injustice, be bound to restore, the action is extinguished by the death of the father, because it was only the father's sin that bound him, which cannot directly bind the son: therefore the son is free. And this is so in all personal actions, unless where the civil law interposes and alters the case.

¶ These rules concern the persons that are obliged to make restitution: the other circumstances of it are thus described.

8. He that by fact, or word, or sign, either fraudulently or violently, does hurt to his neighbour's body, life, goods, good name, friends, or soul, is bound to make restitution in the several instances, according as they are capable to be made. In all these instances, we must separate entreaty and enticements from deceit or violence. If I persuade my neighbour to commit adultery, I still leave him or her in their own power: and, though I am answerable to God for my sin, yet not to my neighbour. For I made her to be willing; yet she was willing,[r] that is, the same at last, as I was at first. But if I have used fraud, and made her to believe a lie,[s] upon which confidence she did the act, and, without, she would not, (as if I tell a woman, her husband is dead, or intended to kill her, or is himself an adulterous man,) or if I use violence, that is, either force her, or threaten her with death, or a grievous wound, or any thing that takes her from the liberty of her choice, I am bound to restitution; that is, to restore her to a right understanding of things, and to a full liberty, by taking from her the deceit or the violence.

9. An adulterous person is tied to restitution of the injury, so far as it is reparable, and can be made to the wronged person; that is, to make provision for the children begotten in unlawful embraces, that they may do no injury to the legitimate by receiving a common portion: and if the injured person do account of it, he must satisfy him with money, for the wrong done to his bed. He is not tied to offer this, because it is no proper exchange; but he is bound to pay it, if it be reasonably demanded: for every man hath justice done him, when himself is satisfied, though by a word, or an action, or a penny.

10. He that hath killed a man, is bound to restitution, by allowing such a maintenance to the children, and near relatives of the deceased, as they have lost by his death, considering and allowing for all circumstances of the man's age, and health, and probability of living. And thus Hercules is said to have made expiation for the death of Iphitus, whom he slew, by paying a mulct to his children.[t]

11. He that hath really lessened the fame of his neighbour by fraud or violence, is bound to restore it by its proper instruments; such as are confession of his fault, giving testimony of his innocence or worth, doing him honour, or (if that will do it, and both parties agree, by money, which answers all things.[u]

12. He that hath wounded his neighbour, is tied to the expenses of the surgeon and other incidences, and to repair whatever loss he sustains by his disability to work or trade; and the same is in the case of false imprisonment; in which cases only the real effect and remaining detriment are to be mended and repaired; for the action itself is to be punished or repented of, and enters not into the question of restitution. But, in these and all other cases, the injured person is to be restored to that perfect and good condition, from which he was removed by my fraud or violence, so far as is possible. Thus a ravisher must repair the temporal detriment or injury done to the maid, and give her a dowry, or marry her, if she desire it. For this restores her into that capacity of being a good wife, which by the injury was lost, as far as it can be done.

13. He that robbeth his neighbour of his goods, or detains any thing violently or fraudulently, is bound not only to restore the principal, but all its fruits and emoluments, which would have accrued to the right owner during the time of their being detained. By proportion to these rules we may judge of the obligation that lies upon all sorts of injurious persons: the sacrilegious, the detainers of tithes, cheaters of men's inheritances, unjust judges, false witnesses and accusers; those, that do fraudulently or violently bring men to sin, that force men to drink, that laugh at and disgrace virtue, that persuade servants to run away, or commend such purposes; violent persecutors of religion in any instance; and all of the same nature.

14. He that hath wronged so many, or in that

[r] Δι' ἀλλότριον ἔργον πταίει οὐδείς.—EPICT.

[s] Πᾶσα ψυχὴ ἄκουσα στερεῖται τῆς ἀληθείας.—PLATO. Non licet suffurari mentem vel Samaritani.—R. MAIMON. Can. Eth.

[t] ὃ γὰρ ἡ γυνὴ, ἢ οἱ παῖδες, ἢ οἱ συγγενεῖς τοῦ φονευθέντος ἔλαβεν, τρόπον τινὰ ἐκείνῳ δέδοται.—MICH. Eph. ad 5. Eth.

[u] Sic Vivianus resipuit de injustâ accusatione: apud CASSIODO. 4. 41

manner, (as in the way of daily trade,) that he knows not in what measure he hath done it, or who they are, must redeem his fault by alms and largesses to the poor, according to the value of his wrongful dealing, as near as he can proportion it. Better it is to go begging to heaven, than to go to hell laden with the spoils of rapine and injustice.

15. The order of paying the debts of contract or restitution, is, in some instances, set down by the civil laws of a kingdom, in which cases their rule is to be observed. In destitution or want of such rules, we are, 1. to observe the necessity of the creditor; 2. then the time of the delay; and, 3. the special obligations of friendship or kindness; and according to these, in their several degrees, make our restitution, if we be not able to do all that we should; but, if we be, the best rule is, to do it so soon as we can; taking our accounts in this, as in our human actions, according to prudence, and civil or natural conveniences or possibilities; only securing these two things: 1. That the duty be not wholly omitted; and, 2. That it be not deferred at all out of covetousness, or any other principle that is vicious. Remember, that the same day in which Zaccheus made restitution to all whom he had injured, the same day Christ himself pronounced, that salvation was come to his house.[w]

16. But besides the obligation arising from contract or default, there is one of another sort, which comes from kindness, and the acts of charity and friendship.[x] He that does me a favour, hath bound me to make him a return of thankfulness. The obligation comes not by covenant, not by his own express intention, but by the nature of the thing; and is a duty springing up within the spirit of the obliged person, to whom it is more natural to love his friend, and to do good for good, than to return evil for evil: because a man may forgive an injury, but he must never forget a good turn. For every thing that is excellent, and every thing that is profitable, whatsoever is good in itself or good to me, cannot but be beloved; and what we love we naturally cherish, and do good to. He, therefore, that refuses to do good to them whom he is bound to love, or to love that which did him good, is unnatural and monstrous in his affections, and thinks all the world born to minister to him, with a greediness worse than that of the sea; which although it receives all rivers into itself, yet it furnishes the clouds and springs with a return of all they need.

Our duty to benefactors is to esteem and love their persons; to make them proportionable returns of service, or duty, or profit, according as we can, or as they need, or as opportunity presents itself, and according to the greatnesses of their kindness; and to pray to God to make them recompence for all the good they have done to us: which last office is also requisite to be done for our creditors, who, in charity, have relieved our wants.

[w] Luke xix. 9.

Prayers to be said, in Relation to the several Obligations and Offices of Justice.

A Prayer for the Grace of Obedience, to be said by all Persons under Command.

O eternal God, great Ruler of men and angels, who hast constituted all things in a wonderful order, making all the creatures subject to man, and one man to another, and all to thee, the last link of this admirable chain being fastened to the foot of thy throne; teach me to obey all those whom thou hast set over me, reverencing their persons, submitting indifferently to all their lawful commands, cheerfully undergoing those burdens which the public wisdom and necessity shall impose upon me; at no hand murmuring against government, lest the spirit of pride and mutiny, of murmur and disorder, enter into me, and consign me to the portion of the disobedient and rebellious, of the despisers of dominion, and revilers of dignity. Grant this, O holy God, for his sake, who for his obedience to the Father, hath obtained the glorification of eternal ages, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Prayers for Kings and all Magistrates, for our Parents spiritual and natural, are in the following Litanies, at the End of the Fourth Chapter.

A Prayer to be said by Subjects, when their Land is invaded and overrun by barbarous or wicked People, Enemies of the Religion or the Government.

I.

O eternal God, thou alone rulest in the kingdoms of men; thou art the great God of battles and recompences; and by thy glorious wisdom, by thy almighty power, and by thy secret providence, dost determine the events of war, and the issues of human counsels, and the returns of peace and victory: now at last be pleased to let the light of thy countenance, and the effects of a glorious mercy and a gracious pardon, return to this land. Thou seest how great evils we suffer under the power and tyranny of war; and, although we submit to and adore thy justice in our sufferings, yet be pleased to pity our misery, to hear our complaints, and to provide us of remedy against our present calamities; let not the defenders of a righteous cause go away ashamed, nor our counsels be for ever confounded, nor our parties defeated, nor religion suppressed, nor learning discountenanced, and we be spoiled of all the exterior ornaments, instruments, and advantages of piety, which thou hast been pleased formerly to minister to our infirmities, for the interests of learning and religion. Amen.

II.

We confess, dear God, that we have deserved to be totally extinct and separate from the communion of saints and the comforts of religion, to be made servants to ignorant, unjust, and inferior persons, or

[x] Gratitude.

to suffer any other calamity, which thou shalt allot us as the instrument of thy anger, whom we have so often provoked to wrath and jealousy. Lord, we humbly lie down under the burden of thy rod, begging of thee to remember our infirmities, and no more to remember our sins, to support us with thy staff, to lift us up with thy hand, to refresh us with thy gracious eye: and, if a sad cloud of temporal infelicities must still encircle us, open unto us the window of heaven, that, with an eye of faith and hope, we may see beyond the cloud, looking upon those mercies which, in thy secret providence and admirable wisdom, thou designest to all thy servants, from such unlikely and sad beginnings. Teach us diligently to do all our duty, and cheerfully to submit to all thy will; and, at last, be gracious to thy people, that call upon thee, that put their trust in thee, that have laid up all their hopes in the bosom of God, that, besides thee, have no helper. Amen.

III.

Place a guard of angels about the person of the king, and immure him with the defence of thy right hand, that no unhallowed arm may do violence to him. Support him with aids from heaven in all his battles, trials, and dangers; that he may, in every instant of his temptation, become dearer to thee; and do thou return to him with mercy and deliverance. Give unto him the hearts of all his people; and put into his hand a prevailing rod of iron, a sceptre of power, and a sword of justice; and enable him to defend and comfort the churches under his protection.

IV.

Bless all his friends, relatives, confederates, and lieges; direct their counsels, unite their hearts, strengthen their hands, bless their actions. Give unto them holiness of intention, that they may, with much candour and ingenuity, pursue the cause of God and the king. Sanctify all the means and instruments of their purposes, that they may not, with cruelty, injustice, or oppression, proceed towards the end of their just desires: and do thou crown all their endeavours with a prosperous event, that all may co-operate to, and actually produce, those great mercies which we beg of thee; honour and safety to our sovereign, defence of his just rights, peace to his people, establishment and promotion to religion, advantages and encouragement to learning and holy living, deliverance to all the oppressed, comfort to all thy faithful people, and from all these, glory to thy holy name. Grant this, O King of kings, for his sake, by whom thou hast consigned us to all thy mercies and promises, and to whom thou hast given all power in heaven and earth, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

A Prayer to be said by Kings or Magistrates, for themselves and their People.

O my God and King, thou rulest in the kingdoms of men; by thee kings reign, and princes decree justice: thou hast appointed me under thyself [*and under my prince*[y]] to govern this portion of thy church, according to the laws of religion and the commonwealth. O Lord, I am but an infirm man, and know not how to decree certain sentences without erring in judgment: but do thou give to thy servant an understanding heart to judge this people, that I may discern between good and evil. Cause me to walk before thee and all the people in truth and righteousness, and in sincerity of heart, that I may not regard the person of the mighty, nor be afraid of his terror, nor despise the person of the poor, and reject his petition; but that, doing justice to all men, I, and my people, may receive mercy of thee, peace and plenty in our days, and mutual love, duty, and correspondence; that there be no leading into captivity, no complaining in our streets; but we may see the church in prosperity all our days, and religion established and increasing. Do thou establish the house of thy servant, and bring me to a participation of the glories of thy kingdom, for his sake, who is my Lord and King, the holy and ever blessed Saviour of the world, our Redeemer, Jesus. Amen.

A Prayer to be said by Parents for their Children.

O almighty and most merciful Father, who hast promised children as a reward to the righteous, and hast given them to me as a testimony of thy mercy, and an engagement of my duty; be pleased to be a Father unto them, and give them healthful bodies, understanding souls, and sanctified spirits, that they may be thy servants and thy children, all their days. Let a great mercy and providence lead them through the dangers and temptations and ignorances of their youth, that they may never run into folly, and the evils of an unbridled appetite. So order the accidents of their lives, that, by good education, careful tutors, holy example, innocent company, prudent counsel, and thy restraining grace, their duty to thee may be secured in the midst of a crooked and untoward generation: and if it seem good in thy eyes, let me be enabled to provide conveniently for the support of their persons, that they may not be destitute and miserable in my death; or if thou shalt call me off from this world by a more timely summons, let their portion be, thy care, mercy, and providence, over their bodies and souls: and may they never live vicious lives, nor die violent or untimely deaths; but let them glorify thee here with a free obedience, and the duties of a whole life; that, when they have served thee in their generations, and have profited the christian commonwealth, they may be coheirs with Jesus, in the glories of thy eternal kingdom, through the same our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

A Prayer to be said by Masters of Families, Curates, Tutors, or other obliged Persons, for their Charges.

O Almighty God, merciful and gracious, have mercy upon my family [or *pupils*, or *parishioners*, &c.] and all committed to my charge: sanctify them with thy grace, preserve them with thy providence, guard them from all evil by the custody of angels,

[y] These words to be added by a delegate or inferior.

direct them in the ways of peace and holy religion by my ministry and the conduct of thy most Holy Spirit, and consign them all, with the participation of thy blessings and graces in this world, with healthful bodies, with good understandings, and sanctified spirits, to a full fruition of thy glories hereafter, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

A Prayer to be said by Merchants, Tradesmen, and Handicraftsmen.

O eternal God, thou fountain of justice, mercy, and benediction, who, by my education and other effects of thy providence hast called me to this profession, that, by my industry, I may, in my small proportion, work together for the good of myself and others; I humbly beg thy grace to guide me in my intention, and in the transaction of my affairs, that I may be diligent, just, and faithful: and give me thy favour, that this my labour may be accepted by thee as a part of my necessary duty: and give me thy blessing to assist and prosper me in my calling, to such measures, as thou shalt, in mercy, choose for me: and be pleased to let the Holy Spirit be for ever present with me, that I may never be given to covetousness and sordid appetites, to lying and falsehood, or any other base, indirect, and beggarly arts; but give me prudence, honesty, and Christian sincerity, that my trade may be sanctified by my religion; my labour, by my intention and thy blessing; that, when I have done my portion of work thou hast allotted me, and improved the talent thou hast intrusted to me, and served the commonwealth in my capacity, I may receive the mighty price of my high calling, which I expect and beg, in the portion and inheritance of the ever-blessed Saviour and Redeemer, Jesus. Amen.

A Prayer to be said by Debtors, and all Persons obliged whether by Crime or Contract.

O Almighty God, who art rich unto all, the treasury and fountain of all good, of all justice, and all mercy, and all bounty, to whom we owe all that we are and all that we have, being thy debtors by reason of our sins, and by thy own gracious contract made with us in Jesus Christ; teach me, in the first place, to perform all my obligations to thee, both of duty and thankfulness; and, next, enable me to pay my duty to all my friends, and my debts to all my creditors, that none be made miserable or lessened in his estate by his kindness to me, or traffic with me. Forgive me all those sins and irregular actions, by which I entered into debt further than my necessity required, or by which such necessity was brought upon me: but let not them suffer by occasion of my sin. Lord, reward all their kindness into their bosoms, and make them recompence, where I cannot; and make me very willing in all that I can, and able for all, that I am obliged to: or, if it seem good in thine eyes to afflict me by the continuance of this condition, yet make it up by some means to them, that the prayer of thy servant may obtain of thee, at least, to pay my debt in blessings. Amen.

V.

Lord, sanctify and forgive all that I have tempted to evil by my discourse or my example: instruct them in the right way, whom I have led to error, and let me never run further on the score of sin: but do thou blot out all the evils I have done, by the spunge of thy passion, and the blood of thy cross; and give me a deep and an excellent repentance, and a free and a gracious pardon, that thou mayest answer for me, O Lord, and enable me to stand upright in judgment; for in thee, O Lord, have I trusted: let me never be confounded. Pity me and instruct me, guide me and support me, pardon me and save me, for my sweet Saviour, Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

A Prayer for Patron and Benefactors.

O Almighty God, thou fountain of all good, of all excellency both to men and angels, extend thine abundant favour and loving-kindness to my patron, to all my friends and benefactors: reward them and make them plentiful recompence for all the good, which, from thy merciful providence, they have conveyed unto me. Let the light of thy countenance shine upon them, and let them never come into any affliction or sadness, but such as may be an instrument of thy glory and their eternal comfort. Forgive them all their sins; let thy Divine Spirit preserve them from all deeds of darkness. Let thy ministering angels guard their persons from the violence of the spirits of darkness. And thou, who knowest every degree of their necessity by thy infinite wisdom, give supply to all their needs by thy glorious mercy, preserving their persons, sanctifying their hearts, and leading them in the ways of righteousness, by the waters of comfort, to the land of eternal rest and glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

CHAPTER IV.

OF CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

RELIGION, in a large sense, doth signify the whole duty of man, comprehending in it justice, charity, and sobriety; because all these being commanded by God, they become a part of that honour and worship which we are bound to pay to him. And thus the word is used in St. James, "Pure religion

and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."[z] But in a more restrained sense, it is taken for that part of duty, which particularly relates to God in our worshippings and adoration of him, in confessing his excellencies, loving his person, admiring his goodness, believing his word, and doing all that, which may, in a proper and direct manner, do him honour. It contains the duties of the first table only; and so it is called godliness,[a] and is by St. Paul distinguished from justice and sobriety. In this sense I am now to explicate the parts of it.

Of the internal Actions of Religion.

Those I call the internal actions of religion, in which the soul only is employed, and ministers to God in the special actions of faith, hope, and charity. Faith believes the revelations of God; hope expects his promises; and charity loves his excellencies and mercies. Faith gives us understanding to God; hope gives up all the passions and affections to heaven and heavenly things; and charity gives the will to the service of God. Faith is opposed to infidelity, hope to despair, charity to enmity and hostility: and these three sanctify the whole man, and make our duty to God and obedience to his commandments to be chosen, reasonable, and delightful, and therefore to be entire, persevering, and universal.

SECTION I.

OF FAITH.

The Acts and Offices of Faith are,

1. To believe every thing which God hath revealed to us;[b] and, when once we are convinced that God hath spoken it, to make no further inquiry, but humbly to submit; ever remembering, that there are some things, which our understanding cannot fathom, nor search out their depth.

2. To believe nothing concerning God, but what is honourable and excellent, as knowing that belief to be no honouring of God, which entertains of him any dishonourable thoughts. Faith is the parent of charity; and whatsoever faith entertains must be apt to produce love to God: but he that believes God to be cruel or unmerciful, or a rejoicer in the unavoidable damnation of the greatest part of mankind, or that he speaks one thing and privately means another, thinks evil thoughts concerning God, and such, as for which we should hate a man, and therefore are great enemies of faith, being apt to destroy charity. Our faith concerning God must be, as himself hath revealed and described his own excellencies: and, in our discourses, we must remove from him all imperfection, and attribute to him all excellency.

3. To give ourselves wholly up to Christ, in heart and desire, to become disciples of his doctrine with choice, (besides conviction,) being in the presence of God but as idiots, that is, without any principles of our own to hinder the truth of God; but sucking in greedily all that God hath taught us, believing it infinitely, and loving to believe it. For this is an act of love, reflected upon faith; or an act of faith, leaning upon love.

4. To believe all God's promises, and that whatsoever is promised in Scripture shall, on God's part, be as surely performed as if we had it in possession. This act makes us to rely upon God with the same confidence, as we did on our parents when we were children, when we made no doubt, but whatsoever we needed we should have it, if it were in their power.

5. To believe also the conditions of the promise, or that part of the revelation which concerns our duty. Many are apt to believe the article of remission of sins, but they believe it without the condition of repentance, or the fruits of holy life: and that is to believe the article otherwise than God intended it. For the covenant of the gospel is the great object of faith, and that supposes our duty to answer his grace; that God will be our God, so long as we are his people. The other is not faith, but flattery.

6. To profess publicly the doctrine of Jesus Christ, openly owning whatsoever he hath revealed and commanded, not being ashamed of the word of God, or of any practices enjoined by it; and this, without complying with any man's interest, not regarding favour, nor being moved with good words, not fearing disgrace, or loss, or inconvenience, or death itself.

7. To pray without doubting, without weariness, without faintness, entertaining no jealousies or suspicions of God, but being confident of God's hearing us, and of his returns to us, whatsoever the manner or the instance be, that, if we do our duty, it will be gracious and merciful.

These acts of faith are, in several degrees, in the servants of Jesus; some have it but as a grain of mustard-seed; some grow up to a plant; some have the fulness of faith: but the least faith that is must be a persuasion so strong, as to make us undertake the doing of all that duty which Christ built upon the foundation of believing. But we shall best discern the truth of our faith by these following signs. St. Jerome reckons three.[c]

Signs of true Faith.

1. An earnest and vehement prayer: for it is impossible we should heartily believe the things of God, and the glories of the gospel, and not most importunately desire them. For every thing is desired according to our belief of its excellency and possibility.

2. To do nothing for vain-glory, but wholly for the interests of religion, and these articles we be-

[z] James i. 27.
[a] Tit. ii. 12.

[b] Demus, Deum aliquid posse, quod nos fateamur investigare non posse.—ST. AUG. l. xxi. c. 7. de Civitat.
[c] Dial. adver. Lucif.

lieve; valuing not at all the rumours of men, but the praise of God, to whom, by faith, we have given up all our intellectual faculties.

3. To be content with God for our judge, for our patron, for our Lord, for our friend, desiring God to be all in all to us, as we are, in our understanding and affections, wholly his.

Add to these;

4. To be a stranger upon earth in our affections, and to have all our thoughts and principal desires fixed upon the matters of faith, the things of heaven. For, if a man were adopted heir to Cæsar, he would (if he believed it real and effective) despise the present, and wholly be at court in his father's eye; and his desires would outrun his swiftest speed, and all his thoughts would spend themselves in creating ideas and little fantastic images of his future condition. Now God hath made us heirs of his kingdom, and co-heirs with Jesus: if we believed this, we would think, and affect, and study accordingly. But he that rejoices in gain, and his heart dwells in the world, and is espoused to a fair estate, and transported with a light, momentary joy, and is afflicted with losses, and amazed with temporal persecutions, and esteems disgrace or poverty in a good cause to be intolerable; this man either hath no inheritance in heaven, or believes none; and believes not, that he is adopted to be the son of God, the heir of eternal glory.

5. St. James's sign is the best: "Show me thy faith by thy works." Faith makes the merchant diligent and venturous, and that makes him rich. Ferdinando, of Arragon, believed the story told him by Columbus, and therefore he furnished him with ships, and got the West Indies by his faith in the undertaker. But Henry the Seventh of England believed him not; and therefore trusted him not with shipping, and lost all the purchase of that faith. It is told us by Christ, "He that forgives shall be forgiven:" if we believe this, it is certain we shall forgive our enemies; for none of us all but need and desire to be forgiven. No man can possibly despise or refuse to desire such excellent glories, as are revealed to them that are servants of Christ, and yet we do nothing that is commanded us as a condition to obtain them. No man could work a day's labour without faith: but because he believes he shall have his wages at the day's or week's end, he does his duty. But he only believes, who does that thing, which other men, in the like cases, do when they do believe. He that believes money, gotten with danger, is better than poverty with safety, will venture for it in unknown lands or seas; and so will he that believes it better to get heaven with labour, than to get hell with pleasure.

6. He that believes does not make haste, but waits patiently till the times of refreshment come, and dares trust God for the morrow, and is no more solicitous for the next year, than he is for that which is past: and it is certain, that man wants faith, who dares be more confident of being supplied, when he hath money in his purse, than when he hath it only in bills of exchange from God; or that relies more upon his own industry than upon God's providence, when his own industry fails him. If you dare trust to God, when the case, to human reason, seems impossible, and trust to God then also out of choice, not because you have nothing else to trust to, but because he is the only support of a just confidence, then you give a good testimony of your faith.

7. True faith is confident, and will venture all the world upon the strength of its persuasion. Will you lay your life on it, your estate, your reputation, that the doctrine of Jesus Christ is true in every article? Then you have true faith. But he that fears men more than God, believes men more than he believes in God.

8. Faith, if it be true, living, and justifying, cannot be separated from a good life: it works miracles, makes a drunkard become sober, a lascivious person become chaste, a covetous man become liberal; "it overcomes the world—it works righteousness,"[d] and makes us diligently to do, and cheerfully to suffer, whatsoever God hath placed in our way to heaven.

The Means and Instruments to obtain Faith are,

1. A humble, willing, and docile mind, or desire to be instructed in the way of God: for persuasion enters like a sunbeam, gently, and without violence: and open but the window, and draw the curtain, and the Sun of righteousness will enlighten your darkness.

2. Remove all prejudice and love to every thing, which may be contradicted by faith. "How can ye believe (said Christ) that receive praise one of another?" An unchaste man cannot easily be brought to believe, that, without purity, he shall never see God. He that loves riches, can hardly believe the doctrine of poverty and renunciation of the world: and alms and martyrdom and the doctrine of the cross is folly to him, that loves his ease and pleasures. He, that hath within him any principle contrary to the doctrines of faith, cannot easily become a disciple.

3. Prayer, which is instrumental to every thing, hath a particular promise in this thing. "He that lacks wisdom, let him ask it of God:" and, "If you give good things to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give his Spirit to them that ask him!"

4. The consideration of the Divine omnipotence and infinite wisdom, and our own ignorance, are great instruments of curing all doubting, and silencing the murmurs of infidelity.[e]

5. Avoid all curiosity of inquiry into particulars and circumstances and mysteries: for true faith is full of ingenuity and hearty simplicity, free from suspicion, wise and confident, trusting upon generals, without watching and prying into unnecessary or indiscernible particulars. No man carries his bed into his field, to watch how his corn grows, but believes upon the general order of Providence and

[d] 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Rom. viii. 10.

[e] In rebus miris summa credendi ratio est omnipotentia Creatoris.—St. Aug.

nature; and, at harvest, finds himself not deceived.

6. In time of temptation, be not busy to dispute, but rely upon the conclusion, and throw yourself upon God; and contend not with him but in prayer, and in the presence, and with the help, of a prudent untempted guide: and be sure to esteem all changes of belief, which offer themselves in the time of your greatest weakness, (contrary to the persuasions of your best understanding,) to be temptations, and reject them accordingly.

7. It is a prudent course, that, in our health and best advantages, we lay up particular arguments and instruments of persuasion and confidence, to be brought forth and used in the great day of expense; and that especially, in such things in which we use to be most tempted, and in which we are least confident, and which are most necessary, and which commonly the devil uses to assault us withal, in the days of our visitation.

8. The wisdom of the church of God is very remarkable in appointing festivals or holy days, whose solemnity and offices have no other special business but to record the article of the day; such as Trinity Sunday, Ascension, Easter, Christmas day; and to those persons, who can only believe, not prove or dispute, there is no better instrument to cause the remembrance and plain notion, and to endear the affection and hearty assent to the article, than the proclaiming and recommending it by the festivity and joy of a holy day.

SECTION II.

Of the Hope of a Christian.

Faith differs from hope, in the extension of its object, and in the intention of degree. St. Austin thus accounts their differences.[f] Faith is of all things revealed, good and bad, rewards and punishments, of things past, present, and to come, of things that concern us, of things that concern us not; but hope hath for its object things only that are good, and fit to be hoped for, future, and concerning ourselves: and because these things are offered to us upon conditions of which we may so fail, as we may change our will, therefore our certainty is less than the adherences of faith; which (because faith relies only upon one proposition, that is, the truth of the word of God) cannot be made uncertain in themselves, though the object of our hope may become uncertain to us, and to our possession. For it is infallibly certain, that there is heaven for all the godly, and for me amongst them all, if I do my duty. But that I shall enter into heaven, is the object of my hope, not of my faith; and is so sure, as it is certain I shall persevere in the ways of God.

The Acts of Hope are,

1. To rely upon God with a confident expectation of his promises; ever esteeming, that every promise of God is a magazine of all that grace and relief, which we can need in that instance for which the promise is made. Every degree of hope is a degree of confidence.

2. To esteem all the danger of an action, and the possibilities of miscarriage, and every cross accident that can intervene, to be no defect on God's part, but either a mercy on his part, or a fault on ours; for then we shall be sure to trust in God, when we see him to be our confidence, and ourselves the cause of all mischances. The hope of a christian is prudent and religious.

3. To rejoice in the midst of a misfortune or seeming sadness, knowing, that this may work for good, and will, if we be not wanting to our souls. This is a direct act of hope, to look through the cloud, and look for a beam of the light from God; and this is called in Scripture, "rejoicing in tribulation, when the God of hope fills us with all joy in believing." Every degree of hope brings a degree of joy.

4. To desire, to pray, and to long for, the great object of our hope, the mighty price of our high calling; and to desire the other things of this life, as they are promised; that is, so far as they are made necessary and useful to us, in order to God's glory and the great end of souls. Hope and fasting are said to be the two wings of prayer. Fasting is but as the wing of a bird; but hope is like the wing of an angel, soaring up to heaven, and bears our prayers to the throne of grace. Without hope it is impossible to pray; but hope makes our prayers reasonable, passionate, and religious; for it relies upon God's promise, or experience, or providence, and story. Prayer is always in proportion to our hope, zealous and affectionate.

5. Perseverance is the perfection of the duty of hope, and its last act; and so long as our hope continues, so long we go on in duty and diligence; but he that is to raise a castle in an hour, sits down and does nothing towards it: and Herod, the sophister, left off to teach his son, when he saw that twenty-four pages, appointed to wait on him, and called by the several letters of the alphabet, could never make him to understand his letters perfectly.

Rules to govern our Hope.

1. Let your hope be moderate; proportioned to your state, person, and condition, whether it be for gifts or graces, or temporal favours. It is an ambitious hope for persons, whose diligence is like them that are least in the kingdom of heaven, to believe themselves endeared to God as the greatest saints; or that they shall have a throne equal to St. Paul, or the blessed Virgin Mary. A stammerer cannot, with moderation, hope for the gift of tongues; or a peasant to become learned as Origen; or if a beggar desires, or hopes, to become a king, or asks for a thousand pound a year, we call him impudent, not passionate, much less reasonable. Hope that God will crown your endeavours with equal measures of that reward, which he indeed freely gives, but yet gives according to our proportions. Hope for good success according to, or not much beyond, the efficacy of the causes and the instrument; and

[f] Enchirid. c. 8.

let the husbandman hope for a good harvest, not for a rich kingdom, or a victorious army.

2. Let your hope be well founded, relying upon just confidences; that is, upon God, according to his revelations and promises. For it is possible for a man to have a vain hope upon God: and, in matters of religion, it is presumption to hope, that God's mercies will be poured forth upon lazy persons, that do nothing towards holy and strict walking, nothing (I say) but trust, and long for an event besides, and against, all disposition of the means. Every false principle in religion is a reed of Egypt, false and dangerous. Rely not in temporal things upon uncertain prophecies and astrology, not upon our own wit or industry, not upon gold or friends, not upon armies and princes; expect not health from physicians, that cannot cure their own breath, much less their mortality: use all lawful instruments, but expect nothing from them above their natural or ordinary efficacy, and, in the use of them, from God expect a blessing. A hope that is easy and credulous, is an arm of flesh, an ill supporter without a bone.[g]

3. Let your hope be without vanity, or garishness of spirit; but sober, grave, and silent, fixed in the heart, not borne upon the lip, apt to support our spirits within, but not to provoke envy abroad.

4. Let your hope be of things possible, safe, and useful.[h] He that hopes for an opportunity of acting his revenge, or lust, or rapine, watches to do himself a mischief. All evils of ourselves or brethren, are objects of our fear, not hope: and, when it is truly understood, things useless and unsafe can no more be wished for, than things impossible can be obtained.

5. Let your hope be patient, without tediousness of spirit, or hastiness of prefixing time. Make no limits or prescriptions to God; but let your prayers and endeavours go on still with a constant attendance on the periods of God's providence. The men of Bethulia resolved to wait upon God but five days longer; but deliverance stayed seven days, and yet came at last. And take not every accident for an argument of despair; but go on still in hoping; and begin again to work, if any ill accident have interrupted you.

Means of Hope, and Remedies against Despair.

The means to cure despair, and to continue or increase hope, are, partly by consideration, partly by exercise.

1. Apply your mind to the cure of all the proper causes of despair: and they are, weakness of spirit, or violence of passion. He that greedily covets, is impatient of delay, and desperate in contrary accidents; and he that is little of heart, is also of little hope, and apt to sorrow and suspicion.[i]

2. Despise the things of the world, and be indifferent to all changes and events of Providence: and, for the things of God, the promises are certain to be performed in kind; and, where there is less variety of chance, there is less possibility of being mocked:[k] but he that creates to himself thousands of little hopes, uncertain in the promise, fallible in the event, and depending upon ten thousand circumstances, (as are all the things of this world,) shall often fail in his expectations, and be used to arguments of distrust in such hopes.

3. So long as your hopes are regular and reasonable, though in temporal affairs, such as are deliverance from enemies, escaping a storm or shipwreck, recovery from a sickness, ability to pay your debts, &c. remember that there are some things ordinary, and some things extraordinary, to prevent despair. In ordinary remember, that the very hoping in God is an endearment of him, and a means to obtain the blessing; "I will deliver him, because he hath put his trust in me." 2. There are in God all those glorious attributes and excellencies, which, in the nature of things, can possibly create or confirm hope. God is, 1. strong; 2. wise; 3. true; 4. loving. There cannot be added another capacity to create a confidence; for, upon these premises, we cannot fail of receiving what is fit for us. 3. God hath obliged himself by promise, that we shall have the good of every thing we desire; for even losses and denials shall work for the good of them that fear God. And, if we will trust the truth of God for performance of the general, we may well trust his wisdom to choose for us the particular. But the extraordinaries of God are apt to supply the defect of all natural and human possibilities. 1. God hath, in many instances, given extraordinary virtue to the active causes and instruments: to a jaw-bone, to kill a multitude; to three hundred men. to destroy a great army; to Jonathan and his armour-bearer, to rout a whole garrison. 2. He hath given excellent sufferance and vigorousness to the sufferers, arming them with strange courage, heroical fortitude, invincible resolution, and glorious patience; and thus he lays no more upon us than we are able to bear; for when he increases our sufferings, he lessens them by increasing our patience. 3. His providence is extra-regular, and produces strange things beyond common rules: and he, that led Israel through a sea, and made a rock pour forth waters, and the heavens to give them bread and flesh, and whole armies to be destroyed with fantastic noises, and the fortune of all France to be recovered and entirely revolved, by the arms and conduct of a girl, against the torrent of the English fortune and chivalry; can do what he please; and still retain the same affections to his people, and the same providence over mankind as ever. And it is impossible for that man to despair, who remembers, that his helper is omnipotent, and can do what he please.[l] Let us rest there awhile; he can if he please: and he is infinitely loving, willing enough: and he is

[g] Jer. xvii. 5.

[h] Di cosi fuori di credenza, Non vuoler far speranza.

[i] Μικρόψυχοι μακρόλυποι.

[k] Ἐλπὶς καὶ σὺ Τύχη, μέγα χαίρετε· τὴν ὁδὸν εὗρον·
Οὐκ ἔτι γὰρ σφετέροις ἐπιτέρπομαι· ἔρρετε ἄμφω·
Οὕνεκεν ἐν μερόπεσσι πολυπλανέες μάλα ἐστέ·
Ὅσσα γὰρ ἀτρεκέως οὐκ ἔσσεται, ὔμμες ἐν ἡμῖν
Φάσματα, ὡς ἐν ὕπνῳ, ἐμβάλλετε, οἷά τ' ἐόντα·
Παίζοιτε, στροφεοιτε, ὅσους ἐμεῦ ὕστερον ὄντας
Εὕροιτ' οὐ νοέοντας ὅπερ θέμις ἐστὶ νοῆσαι.—
Pallad. Brunck. Anthol.

[l] Heb. ii. 18.

infinitely wise; choosing better for us than we can do for ourselves. This, in all ages and chances, hath supported the afflicted people of God, and carried them on dry ground through a Red sea. God invites and cherishes the hopes of men, by all the variety of his providence.

4. If your case be brought to the last extremity, and that you are at the pit's brink, even the very margin of the grave, yet then despair not; at least put it off a little longer: and remember, that whatsoever final accident takes away all hope from you, if you stay a little longer, and, in the mean while, bear it sweetly, it will also take away all despair too. For, when you enter into the regions of death, you rest from all your labours and your fears.

5. Let them who are tempted to despair of their salvation, consider, how much Christ suffered to redeem us from sin and its eternal punishment; and he that considers this must needs believe, that the desires which God had to save us were not less than infinite, and therefore not easily to be satisfied without it.

6. Let no man despair of God's mercies to forgive him, unless he be sure that his sins are greater than God's mercies. If they be not, we have much reason to hope, that the stronger ingredient will prevail, so long as we are in the time and state of repentance, and within the possibilities and latitude of the covenant, and as long as any promise can but reflect upon him with an oblique beam of comfort. Possibly the man may err in his judgment of circumstances; and therefore let him fear: but, because it is not certain he is mistaken, let him not despair.

7. Consider that God, who knows all the events of men, and what their final condition shall be, who shall be saved and who will perish; yet he treateth them as his own, calls them to be his own, offers fair conditions as to his own, gives them blessings, arguments of mercy, and instances of fear, to call them off from death, and to call them home to life; and, in all this, shows no despair of happiness to them; and therefore much less should any man despair for himself, since he never was able to read the scrolls of the eternal predestination.

8. Remember, that despair belongs only to passionate fools or villains, such as were Achitophel and Judas, or else to devils and damned persons: and as the hope of salvation is a good disposition towards it; so is despair a certain consignation to eternal ruin. A man may be damned for despairing to be saved. Despair is the proper passion of damnation. "God hath placed truth and felicity in heaven; curiosity and repentance upon earth; but misery and despair are the portions of hell."[m]

9. Gather together into your spirit, and its treasure-house, the memory, not all the promises of God, but also the remembrances of experience, and the former senses of the Divine favours, that, from thence, you may argue from times past to the present, and enlarge to the future, and to greater blessings. For although the conjectures and expectations of hope are not like the conclusions of faith, yet they are a helmet against the scorching of despair in temporal things, and an anchor of the soul sure and stedfast against the fluctuations of the spirit in matters of the soul. St. Bernard reckons divers principles of hope, by enumerating the instances of the Divine mercy; and we may, by them, reduce this rule to practice, in the following manner: 1. God hath preserved me from many sins: his mercies are infinite: I hope he will still preserve me from more, and for ever. 2. I have sinned, and God smote me not: his mercies are still over the penitent: I hope he will deliver me from all the evils I have deserved. He hath forgiven me many sins of malice; and therefore surely he will pity my infirmities. 3. God visited my heart, and changed it: he loves the work of his own hands; and so my heart is now become: I hope he will love this too. 4. When I repented he received me graciously; and therefore I hope, if I do my endeavour, he will totally forgive me. 5. He helped my slow and beginning endeavours; and therefore I hope he will lead me to perfection. 6. When he had given me something first, then he gave me more: I hope, therefore, he will keep me from falling, and give me the grace of perseverance. 7. He hath chosen me to be a disciple of Christ's institution: he hath elected me to his kingdom of grace; and therefore, I hope, also to the kingdom of his glory. He died for me when I was his enemy; and therefore, I hope, he will save me, when he hath reconciled me to him, and is become my friend. 9. "God hath given us his Son: how should not he, with him, give us all things else?" All these St. Bernard reduces to these three heads, as the instruments of all our hopes: 1. The charity of God adopting us; 2. The truth of his promises; 3. The power of his performance: which if any truly weighs, no infirmity or accident can break his hopes into indiscernible fragments, but some good planks will remain after the greatest storm and shipwreck. This was St. Paul's instrument: "Experience begets hope, and hope maketh not ashamed."

10. Do thou take care only of thy duty, of the means and proper instruments of thy purpose, and leave the end to God: lay that up with him, and he will take care of all that is intrusted to him: and this, being an act of confidence in God, is also a means of security to thee.

11. By special arts of spiritual prudence and arguments, secure the confident belief of the resurrection, and thou canst not but hope for every thing else, which you may reasonably expect, or lawfully desire, upon the stock of the Divine mercies and promises.

12. If a despair seizes you in a particular temporal instance, let it not defile thy spirit with impure mixture, or mingle in spiritual considerations: but rather let it make thee fortify thy soul in matters of religion, that, by being thrown out of your earthly dwelling and confidence, you may retire into the strengths of grace, and hope the more strongly in that, by how much you are the more defeated in this, that despair of a fortune or a success may become the necessity of all virtue.

[m] V. Bede.

SECTION III.

Of Charity, or the Love of God.

LOVE is the greatest thing that God can give us; for himself is love: and it is the greatest thing we can give to God; for it will also give ourselves, and carry with it all that is ours. The apostle calls it the band of perfection; it is the old, and it is the new, and it is the great commandment, and it is all the commandments; for it is the fulfilling of the law. It does the work of all other graces, without any instrument but its own immediate virtue. For as the love to sin makes a man sin against all his own reason, and all the discourses of wisdom, and all the advices of his friends, and without temptation, and without opportunity; so does the love of God; it makes a man chaste without the laborious arts of fasting and exterior disciplines, temperate in the midst of feasts, and is active enough to choose it without any intermedial appetites, and reaches at glory through the very heart of grace, without any other arms but those of love. It is a grace, that loves God for himself; and our neighbours, for God. The consideration of God's goodness and bounty, the experience of those profitable and excellent emanations from him, may be, and most commonly are, the first motive of our love; but when we are once entered, and have tasted the goodness of God, we love the spring for its own excellency, passing from passion to reason, from thanking to adoring, from sense to spirit, from considering ourselves to a union with God; and this is the image and little representation of heaven; it is beatitude in picture, or rather the infancy and beginnings of glory.

We need no incentives by way of special enumeration to move us to the love of God; for we cannot love any thing for any reason real or imaginary, but that excellency is infinitely more eminent in God. There can but two things create love, perfection and usefulness; to which answer on our part, 1. Admiration; and, 2. Desire; and both these are centred in love. For the entertainment of the first, there is in God an infinite nature, immensity or vastness without extension or limit, immutability, eternity, omnipotence, omniscience, holiness, dominion, providence, bounty, mercy, justice, perfection in himself, and the end to which all things and all actions must be directed, and will, at last, arrive. The consideration of which may be heightened, if we consider our distance from all these glories, our smallness and limited nature, our nothing, our inconstancy, our age like a span, our weakness and ignorance, our poverty, our inadvertency and inconsideration, our disabilities and disaffections to do good, our harsh natures and unmerciful inclinations, our universal iniquity, and our necessities and dependencies, not only on God originally and essentially, but even our need of the meanest of God's creatures, and our being obnoxious to the weakest and most contemptible. But, for the entertainment of the second, we may consider, that in him is a torrent of pleasure for the voluptuous; he is the fountain of honour for the ambitious; an inexhaustible treasure for the covetous. Our vices are in love with fantastic pleasures and images of perfection, which are truly and really to be found no where but in God. And therefore our virtues have such proper objects, that it is but reasonable they should all turn into love; for certain it is, that this love will turn all into virtue. For in the scrutinies for righteousness and judgment, when it is inquired whether such a person be a good man or no, the meaning is not, What does he believe? or what does he hope? but what he loves.[n]

The Acts of Love to God are,

1. Love does all things which may please the beloved person; it performs all his commandments: and this is one of the greatest instances and arguments of our love, that God requires of us,—this is love, "That we keep his commandments." Love is obedient.

2. It does all the intimations and secret significations of his pleasure, whom we love; and this is an argument of a great degree of it. The first instance is, it makes the love accepted; but this gives a greatness and singularity to it. The first is the least, and less than it cannot do our duty; but, without this second, we cannot come to perfection. Great love is also pliant and inquisitive in the instances of its expression.

3. Love gives away all things, that so he may advance the interest of the beloved person: it relieves all that he would have relieved, and spends itself in such real significations, as it is enabled withal. He never loved God, that will quit any thing of his religion to save his money. Love is always liberal and communicative.

4. It suffers all things that are imposed by its beloved, or that can happen for his sake, or that intervene in his service, cheerfully, sweetly, willingly; expecting that God should turn them into good, and instruments of felicity. "Charity hopeth all things, endureth all things."[o] Love is patient and content with any thing, so it be together with its beloved.

5. Love is also impatient of any thing that may displease the beloved person; hating all sin as the enemy of its friend; for love contracts all the same relations, and marries the same friendships and the same hatreds; and all affection to a sin is perfectly inconsistent with the love of God. Love is not divided between God and God's enemy; we must love God with all our heart; that is, give him a whole and undivided affection, having love for nothing else, but such things which he allows, and which he commands, or loves himself.

6. Love endeavours for ever to be present, to converse with, to enjoy, to be united with its object; loves to be talking of him, reciting his praises, telling his stories, repeating his words, imitating his gestures, transcribing his copy in every thing; and every degree of union and every degree of likeness

[n] St. Aug. l. ii. Confes. c. 6.

[o] 1 Cor. xiii.

is a degree of love; and it can endure any thing but the displeasure and the absence of its beloved. For we are not to use God and religion, as men use perfumes, with which they are delighted when they have them, but can very well be without them. True charity is restless, till it enjoys God in such instances in which it wants him: it is like hunger and thirst, it must be fed, or it cannot be answered:[p] and nothing can supply the presence, or make recompence for the absence of God, or of the effects of his favour and the light of his countenance.

7. True love in all accidents looks upon the beloved person, and observes his countenance, and how he approves or disapproves, and, accordingly, looks sad or cheerful. He that loves God, is not displeased at those accidents which God chooses; nor murmurs at those changes which he makes in his family; nor envies at those gifts he bestows; but chooses as he likes, and is ruled by his judgment, and is perfectly of his persuasion; loving to learn where God is the teacher, and being content to be ignorant or silent where he is not pleased to open himself.

8. Love is curious of little things, of circumstances and measures, and little accidents; not allowing to itself any infirmity which it strives not to master, aiming at what it cannot yet reach, desiring to be of an angelical purity, and of a perfect innocence, and a seraphical fervour, and fears every image of offence; is as much afflicted at an idle word, as some at an act of adultery, and will not allow to itself so much anger, as will disturb a child, nor endure the impurity of a dream.[q] And this is the curiosity and niceness of divine love: this is the fear of God, and is the daughter and production of love.

The Measures and Rules of Divine Love.

But because this passion is pure as the brightest and smoothest mirror, and, therefore, is apt to be sullied with every impurer breath, we must be careful, that our love to God be governed by these measures.

1. That our love to God be sweet, even, and full of tranquillity; having in it no violences or transportations, but going on in a course of holy actions and duties, which are proportionable to our condition and present state; not to satisfy all the desire, but all the probabilities and measures of our strength. A new beginner in religion hath passionate and violent desires; but they must not be the measure of his actions: but he must consider his strength, his late sickness and state of death, the proper temptations of his condition, and stand at first upon his defence; not go to storm a strong fort, or attack a potent enemy, or do heroical actions, and fitter for giants in religion. Indiscreet violences and untimely forwardness are the rocks of religion, against which tender spirits often suffer shipwreck.

2. Let our love be prudent and without illusion: that is, that it express itself in such instances which God hath chosen, or which we choose ourselves by proportion to his rules and measures. Love turns into doating, when religion turns into superstition. No degree of love can be imprudent, but the expressions may: we cannot love God too much, but we may proclaim it in indecent manners.

3. Let our love be firm, constant, and inseparable; not coming and returning like the tide, but descending like a never-failing river, ever running into the ocean of Divine excellency, passing on in the channels of duty and a constant obedience, and never ceasing to be what it is, till it comes to be what it desires to be: still being a river, till it be turned into sea and vastness, even the immensity of a blessed eternity.

Although the consideration of the Divine excellencies and mercies be infinitely sufficient to produce in us love to God (who is invisible, and yet not distant from us, but we feel him in his blessings, he dwells in our hearts by faith, we feed on him in the sacrament, and are made all one with him in the incarnation and glorifications of Jesus); yet, that we may the better enkindle and increase our love to God, the following advices are not useless.

Helps to increase our Love to God, by Way of Exercise.

1. Cut off all earthly and sensual loves; for they pollute and unhallow the pure and spiritual love. Every degree of inordinate affection to the things of this world, and every act of love to a sin, is a perfect enemy to the love of God: and it is a great shame to take any part of our affection from the eternal God, to bestow it upon his creature in defiance of the Creator; or to give it to the devil, our open enemy, in disparagement of him, who is the fountain of all excellencies and celestial amities.

2. Lay fetters and restraints upon the imaginative and fantastic part; because our fancy, being an imperfect and higher faculty, is usually pleased with the entertainment of shadows and gauds: and, because the things of the world fill it with such beauties and fantastic imagery, the fancy presents such objects as are amiable to the affections and elective powers. Persons of fancy, such as are women and children, have always the most violent loves: but, therefore, if we be careful with what representments we fill our fancy, we may the sooner rectify our love. To this purpose it is good that we transplant the instruments of fancy into religion: and for this reason music was brought into churches, and ornaments, and perfumes, and comely garments, and solemnities, and decent ceremonies, that the busy and less discerning fancy, being bribed with its proper objects, may be instrumental to a more celestial and spiritual love.

3. Remove solicitude or worldly cares, and multitudes of secular businesses: for, if these take up the intention and actual application of our thoughts and our employments, they will also possess our passions; which, if they be filled with one object, though ignoble, cannot attend another, though more excellent. We always contract a friendship and relation with those with whom we converse: our

[p] Amoris ut morsum qui verè senserit.

[q] Plutarchus citans carmen de suo Apolline, adjicit ex Herodoto quasi de suo, De eo os meum continens esto.

very country is dear to us, for our being in it; and the neighbours of the same village, and those that buy and sell with us, have seized upon some portions of our love; and, therefore, if we dwell in the affairs of the world, we shall also grow in love with them; and all our love or all our hatred, all our hopes or all our fears, which the eternal God would willingly secure to himself, and esteem amongst his treasures and precious things, shall be spent upon trifles and vanities.

4. Do not only choose the things of God, but secure your inclinations and aptnesses for God and for religion. For it will be a hard thing for a man, to do such a personal violence to his first desires, as to choose whatsoever he hath no mind to. A man will many times satisfy the importunity and daily solicitations of his first longings; and, therefore, there is nothing can secure our loves to God, but stopping the natural fountains, and making religion to grow near the first desires of the soul.

5. Converse with God, by frequent prayer. In particular, desire that your desires may be right, and love to have your affections regular and holy. To which purpose make very frequent addresses to God by ejaculations and communions, and an assiduous daily devotion; discover to him all your wants; complain to him of all your affronts; do as Hezekiah did, lay your misfortunes and your ill news before him, spread them before the Lord; call to him for health, run to him for counsel, beg of him for pardon; and it is as natural to love him, to whom we make such addresses, and of whom we have such dependencies, as it is for children to love their parents.

6. Consider the immensity and vastness of the Divine love to us, expressed in all the emanations of his providence; 1. In his creation; 2. In his conservation of us. For it is not my prince, or my patron, or my friend, that supports me, or relieves my needs; but God, who made the corn that my friend sends me; who created the grapes, and supported him, who hath as many dependences, and as many natural necessities, and as perfect disabilities as myself. God, indeed, made him the instrument of his providence to me, as he hath made his own land or his own cattle to him: with this only difference, that God, by his ministration to me, intends to do him a favour and a reward, which to natural instruments he does not. 3. In giving his Son; 4. In forgiving our sins; 5. In adopting us to glory; and ten thousand times ten thousand little accidents and instances, happening in the doing every of these: and it is not possible but, for so great love, we should give love again; for God, we should give man; for felicity, we should part with our misery. Nay, so great is the love of the holy Jesus, God incarnate, that he would leave all his triumphant glories, and die once more for man, if it were necessary for procuring felicity to him.[r]

In the use of these instruments, love will grow in several knots and steps, like the sugar-canes of India, according to a thousand varieties in the persons loving; and it will be great or less, in several persons, and in the same, according to his growth in christianity. But, in general discoursing, there are but two states of love; and those are labour of love, and the zeal of love: the first is duty; the second is perfection.

The two States of Love to God.

The least love that is, must be obedient, pure, simple, and communicative; that is, it must exclude all affection to sin, and all inordinate affection to the world, and must be expressive, according to our power, in the instances of duty, and must be love for love's sake; and for this love, martyrdom is the highest instance; that is, a readiness of mind rather to suffer any evil than to do any. Of this our blessed Saviour affirmed, that no man had greater love than this; that is, this is the highest point of duty, the greatest love, that God requires of man. And yet he that is the most imperfect, must have this love also in preparation of mind, and must differ from another in nothing, except in the degrees of promptness and alacrity. And in this sense, he that loves God truly, (though but with a beginning and tender love,) yet he loves God with all his heart, that is, with that degree of love, which is the highest point of our duty, and of God's charge upon us; and he that loves God with all his heart, may yet increase with the increase of God; just as there are degrees of love to God among the saints, and yet each of them love him with all their powers and capacities.

2. But the greater state of love is the zeal of love, which runs out into excrescences and suckers, like a fruitful and pleasant tree; or bursting into gums, and producing fruits, not of a monstrous, but of an extraordinary and heroical greatness. Concerning which, these cautions are to be observed:

Cautions and Rules concerning Zeal.

1. If zeal be in the beginnings of our spiritual birth, or be short, sudden, and transient; or be a consequent of a man's natural temper; or come upon any cause but after a long growth of a temperate and well-regulated love; it is to be suspected for passion and frowardness, rather than the vertical point of love.[s]

2. That zeal only is good, which, in a fervent love, hath temperate expressions. For let the affection boil as high as it can, yet if it boil over into irregular and strange actions, it will have but few, but will need many, excuses. Elijah was zealous for the Lord of hosts; and yet he was so transported with it, that he could not receive answer from God, till, by music, he was recomposed and tamed; and Moses broke both the tables of the law, by being passionately zealous against them that brake the first.

3. Zeal must spend its greatest heat, principally in those things that concern ourselves; but with great care and restraint in those that concern others.

4. Remember that zeal, being an excrescence of

[r] Sic Jesus dixit S. Carpo apud Dionysium epist. ad Demophilum.

[s] Καλὸν δὲ τὸ ζηλοῦσθαι ἐν τῷ καλῷ πάντοτε.—Gal. iv. 18.

divine love, must, in no sense, contradict any action of love. Love to God includes love[t] to our neighbour; and therefore no pretence of zeal for God's glory must make us uncharitable to our brother; for that is just so pleasing to God, as hatred is an act of love.

5. That zeal that concerns others, can spend itself in nothing but arts, and actions, and charitable instruments, for their good: and, when it concerns the good of many that one should suffer, it must be done by persons of a competent authority, and in great necessity, in seldom instances, according to the law of God or man; but never by private right, or for trifling accidents, or in mistaken propositions. The Zelots, in the old law, had authority to transfix and stab some certain persons, but God gave them warrant; it was in the case of idolatry, or such notorious huge crimes, the danger of which was insupportable, and the cognizance of which was infallible: and yet that warrant expired with the synagogue.

6. Zeal, in the instances of our own duty and personal deportment, is more safe than in matters of counsel, and actions besides our just duty, and tending towards perfection. Though, in these instances, there is not a direct sin, even where the zeal is less wary, yet there is much trouble and some danger; as, if it be spent in the too-forward vows of chastity, and restraints of natural and innocent liberties.

7. Zeal may be let loose in the instances of internal, personal, and spiritual actions, that are matters of direct duty: as in prayers, and acts of adoration, and thanksgiving, and frequent addresses: provided that no indirect act pass upon them to defile them; such as complacency, and opinions of sanctity censuring others, scruples and opinions of necessity, unnecessary fears, superstitious numberings of times and hours: but let the zeal be as forward as it will, as devout as it will, as seraphical as it will, in the direct address and intercourse with God there is no danger, no transgression. Do all the parts of your duty as earnestly as if the salvation of all the world, and the whole glory of God, and the confusion of all devils, and all that you hope or desire, did depend upon every one action.[u]

8. Let zeal be seated in the will and choice, and regulated with prudence and a sober understanding, not in the fancies and affections;[v] for *these* will make it full of noise and empty of profit; but *that* will make it deep and smooth, material and devout.

The sum is this: that zeal is not a direct duty, no where commanded for itself, and is nothing but a forwardness and circumstance of another duty, and therefore is then only acceptable, when it advances the love of God and our neighbour, whose circumstance it is.[w] That zeal is only safe, only acceptable, which increases charity directly: and because love to our neighbour and obedience to God are the two great portions of charity, we must never account our zeal to be good, but as it advances both these, if it be in a matter that relates to both; or severally, if it relates severally. St. Paul's zeal was expressed in preaching without any offerings or stipend, in travelling, in spending and being spent for his flock, in suffering, in being willing to be accursed for love of the people of God and his countrymen. Let our zeal be as great as his was, so it be in affections to others, but not at all in angers against them: in the first there is no danger; in the second there is no safety. In brief, let your zeal (if it must be expressed in anger) be always more severe against thyself than against others.[x]

¶ The other part of love to God is love to our neighbour, for which I have reserved the paragraph of alms.

Of the external Actions of Religion.

Religion teaches us to present to God our bodies as well as our souls; for God is the Lord of both; and if the body serves the soul in actions, natural, and civil, and intellectual, it must not be eased in the only offices of religion, unless the body shall expect no portion of the rewards of religion, such as are resurrection, re-union, and glorification. Our bodies are to God a living sacrifice; and to present them to God is holy and acceptable.[y]

The actions of the body, as it serves to religion, and as it is distinguished from sobriety and justice, either relate to the word of God, or to prayer, or to repentance, and make these kinds of external actions of religion: 1. Reading and hearing the word of God; 2. Fasting and corporal austerities, called by St. Paul, bodily exercise; 3. Feasting, or keeping days of public joy and thanksgiving.

SECTION IV.

Of reading or hearing the Word of God.

Reading and hearing the word of God are but the several circumstances of the same duty; instrumental especially to faith, but, consequently, to all other graces of the Spirit. It is all one to us, whether by the eye or by the ear the Spirit conveys his precepts to us. If we hear St. Paul saying to us, that "whoremongers and adulterers God will judge," or read it in one of his epistles; in either of them we are equally and sufficiently instructed. The Scriptures read are the same thing to us, which the same doctrine was when it was preached by the disciples of our blessed Lord; and we are to learn of either, with the same dispositions. There are many that cannot read the word, and they must take it in by the ear; and they, that can read, find the same word of God by the eye. It is necessary, that all men learn it in some way or other, and it is sufficient, in order to their practice, that they learn it any way. The word of God is all those commandments and revelations, those

[t] Phil. iii. 6.

[u] Lavora, come se tu avessi a compar ogni hora: Adora, come se tu avessi a morir allora.

[v] Rom. x. 2.

[w] Tit. ii. 14. Rev. iii. 16.

[x] 2 Cor. vii. 11.

[y] Rom. xii. 1.

promises and threatenings, the stories and sermons recorded in the Bible; nothing else is the word of God, that we know of by any certain instrument. The good books and spiritual discourses, the sermons or homilies written or spoken by men, are but the word of men, or rather explications of, and exhortations according to, the word of God; but, of themselves, they are not the word of God. In a sermon, the text only is in a proper sense to be called God's word; and yet good sermons are of great use and convenience for the advantages of religion. He that preaches an hour together against drunkenness with the tongue of men or angels, hath spoke no other word of God but this, "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess;" and he, that writes that sermon in a book, and publishes that book, hath preached to all, that read it, a louder sermon than could be spoken in a church. This I say to this purpose, that we may separate truth from error, popular opinions from substantial truths. For God preaches to us in the Scripture, and by his secret assistances and spiritual thoughts and holy motions: good men preach to us, when they, by popular arguments, and human arts and compliances, expound and press any of those doctrines, which God hath preached unto us in his holy word. But,

1. The Holy Ghost is certainly the best preacher in the world, and the words of Scripture the best sermons.

2. All the doctrine of salvation is plainly set down there, that the most unlearned person, by hearing it read, may understand all his duty. What can be plainer spoken than this, "Thou shalt not kill. Be not drunk with wine. Husbands love your wives. Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye so to them." The wit of man cannot more plainly tell us our duty, or more fully, than the Holy Ghost hath done already.

3. Good sermons and good books are of excellent use: but yet they can serve no other end, but that we practise the plain doctrines of Scripture.

4. What Abraham, in the parable, said concerning the brethren of the rich man, is here very proper; "They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them: but if they refuse to hear these, neither will they believe, though one should arise from the dead to preach unto them."[z]

5. Reading the Holy Scriptures is a duty expressly commanded us,[a] and is called in Scripture "preaching:" all other preaching is the effect of human skill and industry, and although of great benefit, yet it is but an ecclesiastical ordinance; the law of God concerning preaching being expressed in the matter of reading the Scriptures, and hearing that word of God which is, and as it is, there described.

But this duty is reduced to practice in the following rules.

Rules for hearing or reading the Word of God.

1. Set apart some portion of thy time, according to the opportunities of thy calling and necessary employment, for the reading of Holy Scriptures; and, if it be possible, every day, read or hear some of it read; you are sure, that book teaches all truth, commands all holiness, and promises all happiness.

2. When it is in your power to choose, accustom yourself to such portions, which are most plain and certain duty, and which contain the story of the life and death of our blessed Saviour. Read the gospels, the Psalms of David; and especially those portions of Scripture, which, by the wisdom of the church, are appointed to be publicly read upon Sundays and holidays, viz. the epistles and gospels. In the choice of any other portions, you may advise with a spiritual guide, that you may spend your time with most profit.

3. Fail not diligently to attend to the reading of Holy Scriptures, upon those days wherein it is most publicly and solemnly read in churches; for, at such times, besides the learning our duty, we obtain a blessing along with it; it becoming to us, upon those days, a part of the solemn Divine worship.

4. When the word of God is read or preached to you, be sure you be of a ready heart and mind, free from worldly cares and thoughts, diligent to hear, careful to mark, studious to remember, and desirous to practise all that is commanded, and to live according to it; do not hear for any other end, but to become better in your life, and to be instructed in every good work, and to increase in the love and service of God.

5. Beg of God, by prayer, that he would give you the spirit of obedience and profit, and that he would, by his Spirit, write the word in your heart, and that you describe it in your life. To which purpose serve yourself of some affectionate ejaculations to that purpose, before and after this duty.

Concerning spiritual Books and ordinary Sermons, take in these Advices also.

6. Let not a prejudice to any man's person hinder thee from receiving good by his doctrine, if it be according to godliness; but (if occasion offer it, or especially if duty present it to thee, that is, if it be preached in that assembly where thou art bound to be present) accept the word preached as a message from God, and the minister, as his angel in that ministration.

7. Consider and remark the doctrine that is represented to thee in any discourse; and if the preacher adds accidental advantages, any thing to comply with thy weakness, or to put thy spirit into action or holy resolution, remember it, and make use of it. But if the preacher be a weak person, yet the text is the doctrine thou art to remember, that contains all thy duty; it is worth thy attendance to hear that spoken of, and renewed upon thy thoughts; and though thou beest a learned man, yet the same thing which thou knowest already, if spoken by another, may be made active by that application. I can better be comforted by my own considerations, if another hand applies them, than

[z] Luke xvi. 29, 31.

[a] Deut. xxxi. 13. Luke xxiv. 45. Matt. xxii. 29. Acts xv. 21. Rev. i. 3. 2 Tim. iii. 16.

if I do it myself; because the word of God does not work as a natural agent, but as a Divine instrument; it does not prevail by the force of deduction and artificial discoursings only, but chiefly by way of blessing in the ordinance, and in the ministry of an appointed person. At least, obey the public order, and reverence the constitution, and give good example of humility, charity, and obedience.

8. When Scriptures are read, you are only to inquire, with diligence and modesty, into the meaning of the Spirit; but if homilies or sermons be made upon the words of Scripture, you are to consider, whether all that be spoken be conformable to the Scriptures. For, although you may practise for human reasons, and human arguments, ministered from the preacher's art; yet you must practise nothing but the command of God, nothing but the doctrine of Scripture, that is, the text.

9. Use the advice of some spiritual or other prudent man, for the choice of such spiritual books, which may be of use and benefit for the edification of thy spirit in the ways of holy living; and esteem that time well accounted; for that is prudently and affectionately employed in hearing or reading good books and pious discourses; ever remembering, that God, by hearing us speak to him in prayer, obliges us to hear him speak to us in his word, by what instrument soever it be conveyed.

SECTION V.

Of Fasting.

Fasting, if it be considered in itself, without relation to spiritual ends, is a duty no where enjoined or counselled. But christianity hath to do with it, as it may be made an instrument of the Spirit, by subduing the lusts of the flesh, or removing any hinderances of religion. And it hath been practised by all ages of the church, and advised in order to three ministries; 1. To prayer; 2. To mortification of bodily lusts; 3. To repentance: and it is to be practised according to the following measures.

Rules for Christian Fasting.

1. Fasting, in order to prayer, is to be measured by the proportions of the times of prayer; that is, it ought to be a total fast from all things during the solemnity, unless a probable necessity intervene. Thus the Jews ate nothing upon the sabbath days, till their great offices were performed; that is, about the sixth hour: and St. Peter used it as an argument, that the apostles in Pentecost were not drunk, because it was but the third hour of the day; of such a day, in which it was not lawful to eat or drink till the sixth hour: and the Jews were offended at the disciples for plucking the ears of corn on the sabbath, early in the morning, because it was before the time in which, by their customs, they esteemed it lawful to break their fast. In imitation of this custom, and in prosecution of the reason of it, the christian church hath religiously observed fasting before the holy communion; and the more devout persons (though without any obligation at all) refused to eat or drink, till they had finished their morning devotions: and further yet upon days of public humiliation, which are designed to be spent wholly in devotion, and for the averting God's judgments, (if they were imminent,) fasting is commanded together with prayer: commanded (I say) by the church to this end; that the spirit might be clearer and more angelical, when it is quitted in some proportions from the loads of flesh.

2. Fasting, when it is in order to prayer, must be a total abstinence from all meat, or else an abatement of the quantity: for the help which fasting does to prayer, cannot be served by changing flesh into fish, or milk-meats into dry diet; but by turning much into little, or little into none at all, during the time of solemn and extraordinary prayer.

3. Fasting, as it is instrumental to prayer, must be attended with other aids of the like virtue and efficacy; such as are removing for the time all worldly cares and secular businesses: and therefore our blessed Saviour enfolds these parts within the same caution; "Take heed, lest your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and the cares of this world, and that day overtake you unawares." To which add alms; for, upon the wings of fasting and alms, holy prayer infallibly mounts up to heaven.[b]

4. When fasting is intended to serve the duty of repentance, it is then best chosen, when it is short, sharp, and afflictive; that is, either a total abstinence from all nourishment, according as we shall appoint, or be appointed; during such a time, as is separate for the solemnity and attendance upon the employment: or, if we shall extend our severity beyond the solemn days, and keep our anger against our sin, as we are to keep our sorrow, that is, always in a readiness, and often to be called upon; then, to refuse a pleasant morsel, to abstain from the bread of our desires, and only to take wholesome and less pleasing nourishment, vexing our appetite by the refusing a lawful satisfaction, since, in its petulancy and luxury, it preyed upon an unlawful.

5. Fasting, designed for repentance, must be ever joined with an extreme care that we fast from sin: for there is no greater folly or indecency in the world, than to commit that, for which I am now judging and condemning myself. This is the best fast, and the other may serve to promote the interest of this, by increasing the disaffection to it, and multiplying arguments against it.

6. He that fasts for repentance, must, during that solemnity, abstain from all bodily delights, and the sensuality of all his senses and his appetites; for a man must not, when he mourns in his fast, be merry in his sport; weep at dinner, and laugh all day after; have a silence in his kitchen, and music in his chamber; judge the stomach, and feast the other senses. I deny not, but a man may, in a single instance, punish a particular sin with a proper instrument. If a man have offended in his palate, he may choose to fast only; if he have sinned in softness and in his touch, he may choose to lie hard, or

[b] Jejunium sine eleemosyna, lampas sine oleo.—St. Aug.

work hard, and use sharp inflictions: but although this discipline be proper and particular, yet because the sorrow is of the whole man, no sense must rejoice, or be with any study or purpose feasted and entertained softly. This rule is intended to relate to the solemn days appointed for repentance publicly or privately: besides which, in the whole course of our life, even in the midst of our most festival and freer joys, we may sprinkle some single instances and acts of self-condemning, or punishing; as to refuse a pleasant morsel or a delicious draught with a tacit remembrance of the sin, that now returns to displease my spirit. And, though these actions be single, there is no indecency in them; because a man may abate of his ordinary liberty and bold freedom, with great prudence, so he does it without singularity in himself, or trouble to others; but he may not abate of his solemn sorrow: that may be caution; but this would be softness, effeminacy, and indecency.

7. When fasting is an act of mortification, that is, is intended to subdue a bodily lust, as the spirit of fornication, or the fondness of strong and impatient appetites, it must not be a sudden, sharp, and violent fast, but a state of fasting, a diet of fasting, a daily lessening our portion of meat and drink, and a choosing such a coarse diet,[c] which may make the least preparation for the lusts of the body. He that fasts three days without food, will weaken other parts more than the ministers of fornication: and when the meals return as usually, they also will be served, as soon as any. In the mean time, they will be supplied and made active by the accidental heat, that comes with such violent fastings: for this is a kind of aërial devil; the prince that rules in the air, is the devil of fornication; and he will be as tempting with the windiness of a violent fast, as with the flesh of an ordinary meal.[d] But a daily subtraction of the nourishment will introduce a less busy habit of body; and that will prove the more effectual remedy.

8. Fasting alone will not cure this devil, though it helps much towards it; but it must not, therefore, be neglected, but assisted by all the proper instruments of remedy against this unclean spirit: and what it is unable to do alone, in company with other instruments, and God's blessing upon them, it may effect.

9. All fasting, for whatsoever end it be undertaken, must be done without any opinion of the necessity of the thing itself, without censuring others, with all humility, in order to the proper end; and just as a man takes physic; of which no man hath reason to be proud, and no man thinks it necessary, but because he is in sickness, or in danger and disposition to it.

10. All fasts ordained by lawful authority, are to be observed in order to the same purposes to which they are enjoined; and to be accompanied with actions of the same nature, just as it is in private fasts: for there is no other difference, but that, in public, our superiors choose for us, what, in private, we do for ourselves.

11. Fasts, ordained by lawful authority, are not to be neglected; because alone they cannot do the thing, in order to which they were enjoined. It may be, one day of humiliation will not obtain the blessing, or alone kill the lust; yet it must not be despised, if it can do any thing towards it. An act of fasting is an act of self-denial; and though it do not produce the habit, yet it is a good act.

12. When the principal end, why a fast is publicly prescribed, is obtained by some other instrument, in a particular person; as if the spirit of fornication be cured by the rite of marriage, or by a gift of chastity; yet that person, so eased, is not freed from the fasts of the church by that alone, if those fasts can prudently serve any other end of religion, as that of prayer, or repentance, or mortification of some other appetite: for, when it is instrumental to any end of the Spirit, it is freed from superstition; and then we must have some other reason to quit us from the obligation, or that alone will not do it.

13. When the fast, publicly commanded by reason of some indisposition, in the particular person, cannot operate to the end of the commandment; yet the avoiding offence, and the complying with public order, is reason enough to make the obedience to be necessary. For he, that is otherwise disobliged, as when the reason of the law ceases as to his particular, yet remains still obliged, if he cannot do otherwise without scandal: but this is an obligation of charity, not of justice.

14. All fasting is to be used with prudence and charity; for there is no end to which fasting serves, but may be obtained by other instruments: and, therefore, it must, at no hand, be made an instrument of scruple; or become an enemy to our health; or be imposed upon persons that are sick or aged, or to whom it is, in any sense, uncharitable, such as are wearied travellers; or to whom, in the whole kind of it, it is useless, such as are women with child, poor people, and little children. But in these cases, the church hath made provision and inserted caution into her laws; and they are to be reduced to practice, according to custom, and the sentence of prudent persons, with great latitude, and without niceness and curiosity: having this in our first care, that we secure our virtue; and, next, that we secure our health, that we may the better exercise the labours of virtue; lest, out of too much austerity, we bring ourselves to that condition, that it be necessary to be indulgent to softness, ease, and extreme tenderness.[e]

15. Let not intemperance be the prologue or the epilogue to your fast; lest the fast be so far from taking off any thing of the sin, that it be an occasion to increase it: and, therefore, when the fast is done, be careful, that no supervening act of gluttony or excessive drinking unhallow the religion of the

[c] Digiuna assai chi mal mangia.

[d] Chi digiuna, et altro ben non fa,
Sparagna il pane, et al inferno va.—See ch. ii. sect. ii. 2.

[e] S. Basil. Monast. Constit. cap. 5. Cassian. col. 21. cap. 22. Ne per causam necessitatis eò impingamus, ut voluptatibus serviamus.

past day; but eat temperately, according to the proportion of other meals, lest gluttony keep either of the gates to abstinence.[f]

The Benefits of Fasting.

He that undertakes to enumerate the benefits of fasting, may, in the next page, also reckon all the benefits of physic: for fasting is not to be commended as a duty, but as an instrument; and, in that sense, no man can reprove it, or undervalue it, but he that knows neither spiritual arts, nor spiritual necessities. But by the doctors of the church, it is called the nourishment of prayer, the restraint of lust, the wings of the soul, the diet of angels, the instrument of humility and self-denial, the purification of the spirit: and the paleness and meagreness of visage, which is consequent to the daily fast of great mortifiers, is, by St. Basil, said to be the mark in the forehead, which the angel observed, when he signed the saints in the forehead, to escape the wrath of God. "The soul that is greatly vexed, which goeth stooping and feeble, and the eyes that fail, and the hungry soul, shall give thee praise and righteousness, O Lord."[g]

SECTION VI.

Of keeping Festivals, and Days holy to the Lord; particularly the Lord's Day.

True natural religion, that which was common to all nations and ages, did principally rely upon four great propositions: 1. That there is one God; 2. That God is nothing of those things which we see; 3. That God takes care of all things below, and governs all the world; 4. That he is the great Creator of all things, without himself: and, according to these, were framed the four first precepts of the decalogue. In the first, the unity of the Godhead is expressly affirmed; in the second, his invisibility and immateriality; in the third, is affirmed God's government and providence, by avenging them that swear falsely by his name; by which also his omniscience is declared: in the fourth commandment, he proclaims himself the Maker of heaven and earth; for, in memory of God's rest from the work of six days, the seventh was hallowed into a sabbath; and the keeping it was a confessing God to be the great Maker of heaven and earth; and consequently to this, it also was a confession of his goodness, his omnipotence, and his wisdom; all which were written with a sunbeam in the great book of the creature.

So long as the law of the sabbath was bound upon God's people, so long God would have that to be the solemn manner of confessing these attributes; but when, the priesthood being changed, there was a change also of the law, the great duty remained unalterable in changed circumstances. We are eternally bound to confess God Almighty to be the Maker of heaven and earth; but the manner of confessing it is changed from a rest, or a doing nothing, to a speaking something; from a day to a symbol; from a ceremony to a substance; from a Jewish rite to a christian duty; we profess it in our creed, we confess it in our lives; we describe it by every line of our life, by every action of duty, by faith, and trust, and obedience: and we do also, upon great reason, comply with the Jewish manner of confessing the creation, so far as it is instrumental to a real duty. We keep one day in seven, and so confess the manner and circumstance of the creation; and we rest also, that we may tend holy duties: so imitating God's rest better than the Jew in Synesius, who lay upon his face from evening to evening, and could not, by stripes or wounds, be raised up to steer the ship in a great storm. God's rest was not a natural cessation; he, who could not labour, could not be said to rest: but God's rest is to be understood to be a beholding and a rejoicing in his work finished: and therefore we truly represent God's rest, when we confess and rejoice in God's works and God's glory.

This the christian church does upon every day; but especially upon the Lord's day, which she hath set apart for this and all other offices of religion, being determined to this day by the resurrection of her dearest Lord, it being the first day of joy the church ever had. And now, upon the Lord's day, we are not tied to the rest of the sabbath, but to all the work of the sabbath; and we are to abstain from bodily labour, not because it is a direct duty to us, as it was to the Jews; but because it is necessary in order to our duty, that we attend to the offices of religion.

The observation of the Lord's day differs nothing from the observation of the sabbath, in the matter of religion, but in the manner. They differ in the ceremony and external rite: rest, with them, was the principal; with us, it is the accessory. They differ in the office or forms of worship: for they were then to worship God as a Creator and a gentle Father; we are to add to that, our Redeemer, and all his other excellencies and mercies. And, though we have more natural and proper reason to keep the Lord's day than the sabbath, yet the Jews had a Divine commandment for their day, which we have not for ours: but we have many commandments to do all that honour to God, which was intended in the fourth commandment; and the apostles appointed the first day of the week for doing it in solemn assemblies. And the manner of worshipping God, and doing him solemn honour and service upon this day, we may best observe in the following measures.

Rules for keeping the Lord's Day and other Christian Festivals.

1. When you go about to distinguish festival days from common, do it not by lessening the devotions of ordinary days, that the common devotion may seem bigger upon festivals; but, on every day, keep your ordinary devotions entire, and enlarge upon the holy-day.

2. Upon the Lord's day, we must abstain from

[f] Ἀμυνόμενοι τὴν ἡμέραν.—Naz.

[g] Baruch ii. v. 18.

all servile and laborious works, except such, which are matters of necessity, of common life, or of great charity; for these are permitted by that authority, which hath separated the day for holy uses. The sabbath of the Jews, though consisting principally in rest, and established by God, did yield to these. The labour of love and the labours of religion were not against the reason and the spirit of the commandment, for which the letter was decreed, and to which it ought to minister. And, therefore, much more is it so on the Lord's day, where the letter is wholly turned into spirit, and there is no commandment of God, but of spiritual and holy actions. The priests might kill their beasts, and dress them for sacrifice; and Christ, though born under the law, might heal a sick man; and the sick man might carry his bed to witness his recovery, and confess the mercy, and leap and dance to God for joy; and an ox might be led to water, and an ass be haled out of a ditch; and a man may take physic, and he may eat meat, and therefore there were of necessity some to prepare and minister it: and the performing these labours did not consist in minutes and just determining stages; but they had, even then, a reasonable latitude; so only as to exclude unnecessary labour, or such as did not minister to charity or religion. And, therefore, this is to be enlarged in the gospel, whose sabbath or rest is but a circumstance, and accessory to the principal and spiritual duties. Upon the christian sabbath necessity is to be served first; then, charity; and then, religion; for this is to give place to charity, in great instances, and the second to the first, in all; and, in all cases, God is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth.

3. The Lord's day, being the remembrance of a great blessing, must be a day of joy, festivity, spiritual rejoicing, and thanksgiving: and therefore it is a proper work of the day, to let your devotions spend themselves in singing or reading psalms; in recounting the great works of God; in remembering his mercies; in worshipping his excellencies; in celebrating his attributes; in admiring his person; in sending portions of pleasant meat to them, for whom nothing is provided; and in all the arts and instruments of advancing God's glory, and the reputation of religion: in which it were a great decency that a memorial of the resurrection should be inserted, that the particular religion of the day be not swallowed up in the general. And of this we may the more easily serve ourselves, by rising seasonably in the morning to private devotion, and by retiring at the leisures and spaces of the day not employed in public offices.

4. Fail not to be present at the public hours and places of prayer, entering early and cheerfully, attending reverently and devoutly, abiding patiently during the whole office, piously assisting at the prayers, and gladly also hearing the sermon; and, at no hand, omitting to receive the holy communion, when it is offered, (unless some great reason excuse it,) this being the great solemnity of thanksgiving, and a proper work of the day.

5. After the solemnities are past, and in the intervals between the morning and evening devotion, (as you shall find opportunity,) visit sick persons, reconcile differences, do offices of neighbourhood, inquire into the needs of the poor, especially housekeepers, relieve them, as they shall need, and as you are able: for then we truly rejoice in God, when we make our neighbours, the poor members of Christ, rejoice together with us.

6. Whatsoever you are to do yourself, as necessary, you are to take care that others also, who are under your charge, do in their station and manner. Let your servants be called to church, and all your family, that can be spared from necessary and great household ministries: those that cannot, let them go by turns, and be supplied otherwise, as well as they may: and provide, on these days especially, that they be instructed in the articles of faith and necessary parts of their duty.

7. Those who labour hard in the week, must be eased upon the Lord's day; such ease being a great charity and alms: but, at no hand, must they be permitted to use any unlawful games, any thing forbidden by the laws, any thing that is scandalous, or any thing that is dangerous and apt to mingle sin with it; no games prompting to wantonness, to drunkenness, to quarrelling, to ridiculous and superstitious customs; but let their refreshments be innocent, and charitable, and of good report, and not exclusive of the duties of religion.

8. Beyond these bounds, because neither God nor man hath passed any obligation upon us, we must preserve our christian liberty, and not suffer ourselves to be entangled with a yoke of bondage: for even a good action may become a snare to us, if we make it an occasion of scruple by a pretence of necessity, binding loads upon the conscience not with the bands of God, but of men, and of fancy, or of opinion, or of tyranny. Whatsoever is laid upon us by the hands of man, must be acted and accounted of by the measures of a man: but our best measure is this; he keeps the Lord's day best, that keeps it with most religion and with most charity.

9. What the church hath done in the article of the resurrection, she hath in some measure done in the other articles of the nativity, of the ascension, and of the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost: and so great blessings deserve an anniversary solemnity; since he is a very unthankful person, that does not often record them in the whole year, and esteem them the ground of his hopes, the object of his faith, the comfort of his troubles, and the great effluxes of the Divine mercy, greater than all the victories over our temporal enemies, for which all glad persons usually give thanks. And if, with great reason, the memory of the resurrection does return solemnly every week, it is but reason the other should return once a year. To which I add, that the commemoration of the articles of our Creed in solemn days and offices, is a very excellent instrument to convey and imprint the sense and memory of it, upon the spirits of the most ignorant person. For, as a picture may, with more fancy, convey a story to a man than a plain narrative either in word or writing; so a real representment, and an office of remembrance, and a day to declare it, is far more

impressive than a picture, or any other art of making and fixing imagery.

10. The memories of the saints are precious to God, and therefore they ought also to be so to us: and such persons, who serve God by holy living, industrious preaching, and religious dying, ought to have their names preserved in honour, and God be glorified in them, and their holy doctrines and lives published and imitated: and we, by so doing, give testimony to the article of the communion of saints. But, in these cases, as every church is to be sparing in the number of days, so also should she be temperate in her injunctions, not imposing them but upon voluntary and unbusied persons, without snare or burden. But the holy day is best kept, by giving God thanks for the excellent persons, apostles, or martyrs, we then remember, and by imitating their lives; this all may do: and they, that can also keep the solemnity, must do that too when it is publicly enjoined.

The mixed Actions of Religion are, 1. *Prayer,* 2. *Alms,* 3. *Repentance,* 4. *Receiving the blessed Sacrament.*

SECTION VII.

Of Prayer.

There is no greater argument in the world of our spiritual danger and unwillingness to religion, than the backwardness which most men have always, and all men have sometimes, to say their prayers; so weary of their length, so glad when they are done, so witty to excuse and frustrate an opportunity: and yet all is nothing but a desiring of God to give us the greatest and the best things we can need, and which can make us happy: it is a work so easy, so honourable, and to so great purpose, that in all the instances of the religion and providence, (except only the incarnation of his Son,) God hath not given us a greater argument of his willingness to have us saved, and of our unwillingness to accept it, his goodness and our gracelessness, his infinite condescension and our carelessness and folly, than by rewarding so easy a duty with so great blessings.

Motives to Prayer.

I cannot say any thing beyond this very consideration, and its appendages, to invite christian people to pray often. But we may consider that, 1. It is a duty commanded by God and his holy Son. 2. It is an act of grace and highest honour, that we, dust and ashes, are admitted to speak to the eternal God, to run to him as to a father, to lay open our wants, to complain of our burdens, to explicate our scruples, to beg remedy and ease, support and counsel, health and safety, deliverance and salvation. And, 3. God hath invited us to it by many gracious promises of hearing us. 4. He hath appointed his most glorious Son to be the precedent of prayer, and to make continual intercession for us to the throne of grace. 5. He hath appointed an angel to present the prayers of his servants. And, 6. Christ unites them to his own, and sanctifies them, and makes them effective and prevalent; and, 7. hath put it into the hands of men to rescind, or alter, all the decrees of God, which are of one kind, (that is, conditional, and concerning ourselves and our final estate, and many instances of our intermedial or temporal,) by the powers of prayers. 8. And the prayers of men have saved cities and kingdoms from ruin: prayer hath raised dead men to life, hath stopped the violence of fire, shut the mouths of wild beasts, hath altered the course of nature, caused rain in Egypt, and drought in the sea: it made the sun to go from west to east, and the moon to stand still, and rocks and mountains to walk; and it cures diseases without physic, and makes physic to do the work of nature, and nature to do the work of grace, and grace to do the work of God, and it does miracles of accident and event: and yet prayer, that does all this, is, of itself, nothing but an ascent of the mind to God, a desiring things fit to be desired, and an expression of this desire to God, as we can, and as becomes us. And our unwillingness to pray, is nothing else but a not desiring what we ought passionately to long for; or, if we do desire it, it is a choosing rather to miss our satisfaction and felicity, than to ask for it.

There is no more to be said in this affair, but that we reduce it to practice, according to the following rules.

Rules for the Practice of Prayer.

1. We must be careful, that we never ask any thing of God that is sinful, or that directly ministers to sin; for that is to ask God to dishonour himself, and to undo us. We had need consider what we pray; for before it returns in blessing, it must be joined with Christ's intercession, and presented to God. Let us principally ask of God power and assistances to do our duty, to glorify God, to do good works, to live a good life, to die in the fear and favour of God, and eternal life: these things God delights to give, and commands that we shall ask, and we may, with confidence, expect to be answered graciously; for these things are promised without any reservation of a secret condition: if we ask them, and do our duty towards the obtaining them, we are sure never to miss them.

2. We may lawfully pray to God for the gifts of the Spirit, that minister to holy ends; such as are the gift of preaching, the spirit of prayer, good expression, a ready and unloosed tongue, good understanding, learning, opportunities to publish them, &c. with these only restraints. 1. That we cannot be so confident of the event of those prayers as of the former. 2. That we must be curious to secure our intention in these desires, that we may not ask them to serve our own ends, but only for God's glory; and then we shall have them, or a blessing for desiring them. In order to such purposes our intentions in the first desires cannot be amiss; because they are able to sanctify other things, and therefore cannot be unhallowed themselves. 3. We must submit to God's will, desiring him to choose our

employment, and to furnish our persons, as he shall see expedient.

3. Whatsoever we may lawfully desire of temporal things, we may lawfully ask of God in prayer, and we may expect them, as they are promised. 1. Whatsoever is necessary to our life and being, is promised to us: and therefore we may, with certainty, expect food and raiment; food to keep us alive, clothing to keep us from nakedness and shame: so long as our life is permitted to us, so long all things necessary to our life shall be ministered. We may be secure of maintenance, but not secure of our life; for that is promised, not this; only concerning food and raiment we are not to make accounts by the measure of our desires, but by the measure of our needs. 2. Whatsoever is convenient for us, pleasant, and modestly delectable, we may pray for; so we do it, 1. With submission to God's will. 2. Without impatient desires. 3. That it be not a trifle and inconsiderable, but a matter so grave and concerning, as to be a fit matter to be treated on between God and our souls. 4. That we ask it not to spend upon our lusts, but for ends of justice, or charity, or religion, and that they be employed with sobriety.

4. He that would pray with effect, must live with care and piety.[h] For although God gives to sinners and evil persons the common blessings of life and chance; yet either they want the comfort and blessing of those blessings, or they become occasions of sadder accidents to them, or serve to upbraid them in their ingratitude or irreligion; and, in all cases, they are not the effects of prayer, or the fruits of promise, or instances of a father's love; for they cannot be expected with confidence, or received without danger, or used without a curse and mischief in their company. But as all sin is an impediment to prayer, so some have a special indisposition towards acceptation; such are uncharitableness and wrath, hypocrisy in the present action, pride, and lust; because these, by defiling the body or the spirit, or by contradicting some necessary ingredient in prayer, (such as are mercy, humility, purity, and sincerity,) do defile the prayer, and make it a direct sin, in the circumstances or formality of the action.

5. All prayer must be made with faith and hope; that is, we must certainly believe[i] we shall receive the grace which God hath commanded us to ask; and we must hope for such things, which he hath permitted us to ask; and our hope shall not be vain, though we miss what is not absolutely promised; because we shall at least have an equal blessing in the denial as in the grant. And, therefore, the former conditions must first be secured: that is, that we ask things necessary, or at least good and innocent and profitable, and that our persons be gracious in the eyes of God; or else, what God hath promised to our natural needs, he may, in many degrees, deny to our personal incapacity: but the thing being secured, and the person disposed, there can be no fault at all; for whatsoever else remains, is on God's part, and that cannot possibly fail. But because the things which are not commanded cannot possibly be secured, (for we are not sure they are good in all circumstances,) we can but hope for such things, even after we have secured our good intentions. We are sure of a blessing, but in what instance we are not yet assured.

6. Our prayers must be fervent, intense, earnest, and importunate, when we pray for things of high concernment and necessity. "Continuing instant in prayer; striving in prayer; labouring fervently in prayer; night and day praying exceedingly; praying always with all prayer:" so St. Paul calls it.[k] "Watching unto prayer:" so St. Peter.[l] "Praying earnestly:" so St. James.[m] And this is not at all to be abated in matters spiritual and of duty; for according as our desires are, so are our prayers; and as our prayers are, so shall be the grace; and as that is, so shall be the measure of glory. But this admits of degrees according to the perfection or imperfection of our state of life; but it hath no other measures, but ought to be as great as it can; the bigger the better; we must make no positive restraints upon ourselves. In other things, they are to use a bridle: and, as we must limit our desires with submission to God's will; so also we must limit the importunity of our prayers, by the moderation and term of our desires. Pray for it as earnestly as you may desire it.

7. Our desires must be lasting, and our prayers frequent, assiduous, and continual; not asking for a blessing once, and then leaving it; but daily renewing our suits, and exercising our hope, and faith, and patience, and long-suffering, and religion, and resignation, and self-denial, in all the degrees we shall be put to. This circumstance of duty our blessed Saviour taught, saying, that "men ought always to pray, and not to faint."[n] Always to pray, signifies the frequent doing of the duty in general: but, because we cannot always ask several things, and we also have frequent need of the same things, and those are such as concern our great interest, the precept comes home to this very circumstance; and St. Paul calls it "praying without ceasing,"[o] and himself in his own case gave a precedent, "For this cause I besought the Lord thrice." And so did our blessed Lord: he went thrice to God on the same errand, with the same words, in a short space, about half a night; for his time to solicit his suit was but short. And the Philippians were remembered by the apostle, their spiritual father, "always in every prayer of his."[p] And thus we must always pray for the pardon of our sins, for the assistance of God's grace, for charity, for life eternal, never giving over, till we die: and thus also we pray for supply of great temporal needs in their several proportions; in all cases being curious, we do not give over out of weariness or impatience.

[h] 1 John iii. 22. John ix. 31. Isa. i. 15. lviii. 5. Mal. iii. 10. 2 Tim. ii. 8. Psal. iv. 6. lxvi. 8.
[i] Mark xi. 24. Jam. i. 6, 7.

[k] Rom. xii. 12. xv. 30. Col. iv. 12. 1 Thess. iii. 10 Eph. vi. 18.
[l] 1 Pet. iv. 7. [m] Jam. v. 16. [n] Luke xviii. 1. xxi. 36
[o] 1 Thess. v. 17. [p] Phil. i. 4.

For God oftentimes defers to grant our suit, because he loves to hear us beg it, and hath a design to give us more than we ask, even a satisfaction of our desires, and a blessing for the very importunity.

8. Let the words of our prayers be pertinent, grave, material, not studiously many, but according to our need, sufficient to express our wants, and to signify our importunity. God hears us not the sooner for our many words, but much the sooner for an earnest desire: to which let apt and sufficient words minister, be they few or many, according as it happens. A long prayer and a short differ not in their capacities of being accepted; for both of them take their value according to the fervency of spirit, and the charity of the prayer. That prayer which is short by reason of an impatient spirit, or dulness, or despite of holy things, or indifferency of desires, is very often criminal, always imperfect; and that prayer which is long out of ostentation, or superstition, or a trifling spirit, is as criminal and imperfect as the other, in their several instances. This rule relates to private prayer. In public, our devotion is to be measured by the appointed office, and we are to support our spirit with spiritual arts, that our private spirit may be a part of the public spirit, and be adopted into the society and blessings of the communion of saints.

9. In all forms of prayer, mingle petition with thanksgiving, that you may endear the present prayer and the future blessing, by returning praise and thanks for what we have already received. This is St. Paul's advice, "Be careful for nothing; but, in every thing, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God."[q]

10. Whatever we beg of God, let us also work for it; if the thing be matter of duty, or a consequent to industry. For God loves to bless labour and to reward it, but not to support idleness.[r] And, therefore, our blessed Saviour, in his sermons, joins watchfulness with prayer: for God's graces are but assistances, not new creations of the whole habit, in every instant or period of our life. Read Scriptures; and then pray to God for understanding. Pray against temptation: but you must also resist the devil, and then he will flee from you. Ask of God competency of living: but you must also work with your hands the things that are honest, that ye may have to supply in time of need. We can but do our endeavour, and pray for blessing, and then leave the success with God: and beyond this, we cannot deliberate, we cannot take care; but so far, we must.

11. To this purpose let every man study his prayers, and read his duty in his petitions. For the body of our prayer is the sum of our duty; and as we must ask of God whatsoever we need, so we must labour for all that we ask. Because it is our duty, therefore we must pray for God's grace; but because God's grace is necessary, and without it we can do nothing, we are sufficiently taught, that in the proper matter of our religious prayers is the just matter of our duty; and if we shall turn our prayers into precepts, we shall the easier turn our hearty desires into effective practices.

12. In all our prayers we must be careful to attend our present work,[s] having a present mind, not wandering upon impertinent things, not distant from our words, much less contrary to them: and if our thoughts do at any time wander, and divert upon other objects, bring them back again with prudent and severe arts; by all means striving to obtain a diligent, a sober, an untroubled, and a composed spirit.

13. Let your posture and gesture of body in prayers be reverent, grave, and humble; according to public order, or the best examples, if it be in public: if it be in private, either stand, or kneel, or lie flat upon the ground on your face, in your ordinary and more solemn prayers; but in extraordinary, casual, and ejaculatory prayers, the reverence and devotion of the soul, and the lifting up the eyes and hands to God with any other posture not indecent, is usual and commendable; for we may pray in bed, on horseback, "every where,"[t] and at all times, and in all circumstances; and it is well if we do so: and some servants have not opportunity to pray so often as they would, unless they supply the appetites of religion by such accidental devotions.

14. "Let prayers and supplications and giving of thanks be made for all men; for kings, and all that are in authority. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour."[u] We, who must love our neighbours as ourselves, must also pray for them as for ourselves; with this only difference, that we may enlarge in our temporal desires for kings, and pray for secular prosperity to them with more importunity than for ourselves; because they need more to enable their duty and government, and for the interests of religion and justice. This part of prayer is by the apostle called *intercession;* in which, with special care, we are to remember our relatives, our family, our charge, our benefactors, our creditors; not forgetting to beg pardon and charity for our enemies, and protection against them.

15. Rely not on a single prayer in matters of great concernment; but make it as public as you can, by obtaining of others to pray for you: this being the great blessing of the communion of saints, that a prayer united is strong, like a well-ordered army; and God loves to be tied fast with such cords of love, and constrained by a holy violence.

16. Every time, that is not seized upon by some other duty, is seasonable enough for prayer: but let it be performed as a solemn duty morning and evening, that God may begin and end all our business, that "the outgoing of the morning and evening may praise him;" for so we bless God, and God blesses us. And yet fail not to find, or make, opportunities to worship God at some other times

[q] Phil. iv. 6.

[r] Εἶτα λέγομεν, Κύριε ὁ Θεὸς, πῶς μὴ ἀγωνιῶ; μωρὲ, χεῖρας οὐκ ἔχεις; οὐκ ἐποίησε σοι αὐτὰς ὁ Θεὸς; εὔχου νῦν καθήμενος, ὅπως αἱ μύξαι σου μὴ ῥέωσιν· ἀπόμυξαι μαλλον. —ARRIAN. l. ii. c. 16.

[s] Inter sacra et vota, verbis etiam profanis abstinere.—TAC.

[t] 1 Tim. ii. 8.

[u] 1 Tim. ii. 2.

of the day; at least by ejaculations and short addresses, more or less, longer or shorter, solemnly or without solemnity, privately or publicly, as you can, or are permitted: always remembering, that as every sin is a degree of danger and unsafety; so every pious prayer and well-employed opportunity is a degree of return to hope and pardon.

Cautions for making Vows.

17. A vow to God is an act of prayer, and a great degree and instance of opportunity, and an increase of duty by some new uncommanded instance, or some more eminent degree of duty, or frequency of action, or earnestness of spirit in the same. And because it hath pleased God, in all ages of the world, to admit of intercourse with his servants in the matters of vows, it is not ill advice, that we make vows to God in such cases, in which we have great need, or great danger. But let it be done according to these rules and by these cautions.

1. That the matter of the vow be lawful. 2. That it be useful, in order to religion or charity. 3. That it be grave, not trifling or impertinent; but great in our proportion of duty towards the blessing. 4. That it be an uncommanded instance; that is, that it be of something, or in some manner, or in some degree, to which formerly we were not obliged, or which we might have omitted, without sin. 5. That it be done with prudence; that is, that it be safe in all the circumstances of person, lest we beg a blessing, and fall into a snare. 6. That every vow of a new action be also accompanied with a new degree and enforcement of our essential and unalterable duty; such as was Jacob's vow, that (besides the payment of a tithe) God should be his God; that so he might strengthen his duty to him, first in essentials and precepts, and then in additionals and accidentals. For it is but an ill tree, that spends more in leaves and suckers and gums, than in fruit: and that thankfulness and religion is best, that first secures duty, and then enlarges in counsels. Therefore let every great prayer, and great need, and great danger, draw us nearer to God by the approach of a pious purpose to live more strictly; and let every mercy of God, answering that prayer, produce a real performance of it. 7. Let not young beginners in religion enlarge their hearts and straiten their liberty by vows of long continuance: nor indeed any one else, without a great experience of himself, and of all accidental dangers.[v] Vows of single actions are safest, and proportionable to those single blessings, ever begged in such cases of sudden and transient importunities. 8. Let no action, which is matter of question and dispute in religion, ever become the matter of a vow. He vows foolishly, that promises to God to live and die in such an opinion, in an article not necessary, nor certain; or that, upon confidence of his present guide, binds himself for ever to the profession of what he may, afterwards, more reasonably, contradict, or may find not to be useful, or not profitable, but of some danger, or of no necessity.

If we observe the former rules, we shall pray piously and effectually: but, because even this duty hath in it some special temptations, it is necessary, that we be armed by special remedies against them. The dangers are, 1. Wandering thoughts; 2. Tediousness of spirit. Against the first these advices are profitable.

Remedies against Wandering Thoughts in Prayer.

If we feel our spirits apt to wander in our prayers, and to retire into the world, or to things unprofitable, or vain and impertinent;

1. Use prayer to be assisted in prayer; pray for the spirit of supplication, for a sober, fixed, and recollected spirit; and when to this you add a moral industry to be steady in your thoughts, whatsoever wanderings after this do return irremediably, are a misery of nature and imperfection, but no sin, while it is not cherished and indulged to.

2. In private, it is not amiss to attempt the cure by reducing your prayers into collects and short forms of prayer, making voluntary interruptions, and beginning again, that the want of spirit and breath may be supplied by the short stages and periods.

3. When you have observed any considerable wanderings of your thoughts, bind yourself to repeat that prayer again with actual attention, or else revolve the full sense of it in your spirit, and repeat it in all the effect and desires of it: and, possibly, the tempter may be driven away with his own art, and may cease to interpose his trifles, when he perceives, they do but vex the person into carefulness and piety; and yet he loses nothing of his devotion, but doubles the earnestness of his care.

4. If this be not seasonable or opportune, or apt to any man's circumstances, yet be sure, with actual attention, to say a hearty Amen to the whole prayer with one united desire, earnestly begging the graces mentioned in the prayer: for that desire does the great work of the prayer, and secures the blessing, if the wandering thoughts were against our will, and disclaimed by contending against them.

5. Avoid multiplicity of businesses of the world; and in those that are unavoidable, labour for an evenness and tranquillity of spirit, that you may be untroubled and smooth in all tempests of fortune: for so we shall better tend religion, when we are not torn in pieces with the cares of the world, and seized upon with low affections, passions, and interest.

6. It helps much to attention and actual advertisement in our prayers, if we say our prayers silently, without the voice, only by the spirit. For, in mental prayer, if our thoughts wander, we only stand still; when our mind returns, we go on again: there is none of the prayer lost, as it is, if our mouths speak and our hearts wander.

7. To incite you to the use of these or any other

[v] Angustum annulum non gesta, dixit Pythag. id est, vitæ genus liberum sectare, nec vinculo temetipsum obstringe.—Plutarch. Sic Novatus novitios suos compulit ad jurandum, nè unquam ad Catholicos episcopos redirent.—Euseb l. ii. Eccl. Hist.

counsels you shall meet with, remember that it is a great indecency to desire of God to hear those prayers, a great part whereof we do not hear ourselves. If they be not worthy of our attention, they are far more unworthy of God's.

Signs of Tediousness of Spirit in our Prayers and all Actions of Religion.

The second temptation in our prayer, is a tediousness of spirit, or a weariness of the employment; like that of the Jews, who complained, that they were weary of the new moons, and their souls loathed the frequent return of their sabbaths: so do very many christians, who, first, pray without fervour and earnestness of spirit; and, secondly, meditate but seldom, and that without fruit, or sense, or affection; or, thirdly, who seldom examine their consciences, and when they do it, they do it but sleepily, slightly, without compunction, or hearty purpose, or fruits of amendment. 4. They enlarge themselves in the thoughts and fruition of temporal things, running for comfort to them only in any sadness and misfortune. 5. They love not to frequent the sacraments, nor any the instruments of religion, as sermons, confessions, prayers in public, fastings; but love ease, and a loose undisciplined life. 6. They obey not their superiors, but follow their own judgment, when their judgment follows their affections, and their affections follow sense and worldly pleasures. 7. They neglect, or dissemble, or defer, or do not attend to, the motions and inclinations to virtue, which the Spirit of God puts into their soul. 8. They repent them of their vows and holy purposes, not because they discover any indiscretion in them, or intolerable inconvenience, but because they have within them labour, (as the case now stands,) to them displeasure. 9. They content themselves with the first degrees and necessary parts of virtue; and, when they are arrived thither, they sit down, as if they were come to the mountain of the Lord, and care not to proceed on toward perfection. 10. They inquire into all cases, in which it may be lawful to omit a duty; and, though they will not do less than they are bound to, yet they will do no more than needs must; for they do out of fear and self-love, not out of the love of God, or the spirit of holiness and zeal. The event of which will be this: he that will do no more than needs must, will soon be brought to omit something of his duty, and will be apt to believe less to be necessary than is.

Remedies against Tediousness of Spirit.

The remedies against this temptation are these.

1. Order your private devotions so, that they become not arguments and causes of tediousness by their indiscreet length; but reduce your words into a narrow compass, still keeping all the matter, and what is cut off in the length of your prayers, supply in the earnestness of your spirit: for so nothing is lost, while the words are changed into matter, and length of time into fervency of devotion. The forms are made not less perfect, and the spirit is more, and the scruple is removed.

2. It is not imprudent, if we provide variety of forms of prayer to the same purposes, that the change, by consulting with the appetites of fancy, may better entertain the spirit; and, possibly, we may be pleased to recite a hymn, when a collect seems flat to us and unpleasant; and we are willing to sing rather than to say, or to sing this rather than that: we are certain that variety is delightful; and whether that be natural to us, or an imperfection, yet if it be complied with, it may remove some part of the temptation.

3. Break your office and devotion into fragments, and make frequent returnings by ejaculations and abrupt intercourses with God; for so, no length can oppress your tenderness and sickliness of spirit; and, by often praying in such manner and in all circumstances, we shall habituate our souls to prayer, by making it the business of many lesser portions of our time: and, by thrusting in between all our other employments, it will make every thing relish of religion, and by degrees turn all into its nature.

4. Learn to abstract your thoughts and desires from pleasures and things of the world. For nothing is a direct cure to this evil, but cutting off all other loves and adherences. Order your affairs so, that religion may be propounded to you as a reward, and prayer as your defence, and holy actions as your security, and charity and good works as your treasure. Consider that all things else are satisfactions but to the brutish part of a man; and that these are the refreshments and relishes of that noble part of us, by which we are better than beasts; and whatsoever other instrument, exercise, or consideration, is of use to take our loves from the world, the same is apt to place them upon God.

5. Do not seek for deliciousness and sensible consolations in the actions of religion; but only regard the duty and the conscience of it. For, although in the beginning of religion, most frequently, and, at some other times, irregularly, God complies with our infirmity, and encourages our duty with little overflowings of spiritual joy, and sensible pleasure, and delicacies in prayer, so as we seem to feel some little beam of heaven, and great refreshments from the Spirit of consolation; yet this is not always safe for us to have, neither safe for us to expect and look for: and when we do, it is apt to make us cool in our inquiries and waitings upon Christ, when we want them: it is a running after him, not for the miracles, but for the loaves; not for the wonderful things of God, and the desires of pleasing him, but for the pleasures of pleasing ourselves. And as we must not judge our devotion to be barren or unfruitful, when we want the overflowings of joy running over; so neither must we cease for want of them. If our spirits can serve God, choosingly and greedily, out of pure conscience of our duty, it is better in itself, and more safe to us.

6. Let him use to soften his spirit with frequent meditation upon sad and dolorous objects, as of death, the terrors of the day of judgment, fearful judgments upon sinners, strange horrid accidents, fear of God's wrath, the pains of hell, the unspeakable amaze-

ments of the damned, the intolerable load of a sad eternity. For whatsoever creates fear, or makes the spirit to dwell in a religious sadness, is apt to entender the spirit, and make it devout and pliant to any part of duty. For a great fear, when it is ill managed, is the parent of superstition; but a discreet and well-guided fear produces religion.

7. Pray often, and you shall pray oftener; and, when you are accustomed to a frequent devotion, it will so insensibly unite to your nature and affections, that it will become trouble to omit your usual or appointed prayers; and what you obtain, at first, by doing violence to your inclinations, at last, will not be left without as great unwillingness, as that by which at first it entered. This rule relies not only upon reason derived from the nature of habits, which turn into a second nature, and make their actions easy, frequent, and delightful: but it relies upon a reason, depending upon the nature and constitution of grace; whose productions are of the same nature with the parent, and increases itself, naturally growing from grains to huge trees, from minutes to vast proportions, and from moments to eternity. But be sure not to omit your usual prayers without great reason, though, without sin, it may be done; because after you have omitted something, in a little while you will be past the scruple of that, and begin to be tempted to leave out more. Keep yourself up to your usual forms: you may enlarge when you will; but do not contract or lessen them without a very probable reason.

8. Let a man frequently and seriously, by imagination, place himself upon his death-bed, and consider what great joys he shall have for the remembrance of every day well spent, and what then he would give, that he had so spent all his days. He may guess at it by proportions; for it is certain he shall have a joyful and prosperous night, who hath spent his day holily; and he resigns his soul with peace into the hands of God, who hath lived in the peace of God and the works of religion, in his life-time. This consideration is of a real event; it is of a thing that will certainly come to pass. "It is appointed for all men once to die;" and after death comes judgment; the apprehension of which is dreadful, and the presence of it is intolerable, unless, by religion and sanctity, we are disposed for so venerable an appearance.

9. To this may be useful, that we consider the easiness of Christ's yoke,[w] the excellencies and sweetnesses that are in religion, the peace of conscience, the joy of the Holy Ghost, the rejoicing in God, the simplicity and pleasure of virtue, the intricacy, trouble, and business of sin; the blessings, and health, and reward of that; the curses, the sicknesses, and sad consequences of this; and that, if we are weary of the labours of religion, we must eternally sit still, and do nothing; for whatsoever we do contrary to it, is infinitely more full of labour, care, difficulty, and vexation.

10. Consider this also, that tediousness of spirit is the beginning of the most dangerous condition and estate in the whole world. For it s a great disposition to the sin against the Holy Ghost; it is apt to bring a man to backsliding and the state of unregeneration; to make him return to his vomit and his sink; and either to make the man impatient, or his condition scrupulous, unsatisfied, irksome, and desperate: and it is better that he had never known the way of godliness, than, after the knowledge of it, that he should fall away. There is not in the world a greater sign, that the spirit of reprobation is beginning upon a man, than when he is habitually and constantly, or very frequently, weary, and slights, or loathes, holy offices.

11. The last remedy that preserves the hope of such a man, and can reduce him to the state of zeal and the love of God, is a pungent, sad, and a heavy affliction; not desperate, but recreated with some intervals of kindness, or little comforts, or entertained with hopes of deliverance; which condition if a man shall fall into, by the grace of God he is likely to recover; but, if this help him not, it is infinite odds but he will quench the Spirit.

SECTION VIII.

Of Alms.

Love is as communicative as fire, as busy and as active, and it hath four twin-daughters, extreme like each other; and but that the doctors of the school have done, as Thamar's midwife did, who bound a scarlet thread, something to distinguish them, it would be very hard to call them asunder. Their names are, 1. Mercy; 2. Benificence, or well-doing; 3. Liberality; and, 4. Alms; which, by a special privilege, hath obtained to be called after the mother's name, and is commonly called charity. The first or eldest is seated in the affection; and it is that which all the other must attend. For mercy, without alms, is acceptable, when the person is disabled to express outwardly what he heartily desires. But alms, without mercy, are like prayers without devotion, or religion without humility. 2. Beneficence, or well-doing, is a promptness and nobleness of mind, making us to do offices of courtesy and humanity to all sorts of persons in their need, or out of their need. 3. Liberality is a disposition of mind opposite to covetousness; and consists in the despite and neglect of money upon just occasions, and relates to our friends, children, kindred, servants, and other relatives. 4. But alms is a relieving the poor and needy. The first and the last only are duties of christianity. The second and third are circumstances and adjuncts of these duties; for liberality increases the degree of alms, making our gift greater; and beneficence extends it to more persons and orders of men, spreading it wider. The former makes us sometimes to give more than we are able; and the latter gives to more than need by the necessity of beggars, and serves the needs and conveniences of persons, and supplies circumstances: whereas, properly, alms are doles and largesses, to the necessitous and calamitous

[w] See the Great Exemplar, Part iii. Disc. xiv. of the Easiness of Christian Religion.

people, supplying the necessities of nature, and giving remedies to their miseries.

Mercy and alms are the body and soul of that charity, which we must pay to our neighbour's need: and it is a precept, which God therefore enjoined to the world, that the great inequality, which he was pleased to suffer in the possessions and accidents of men, might be reduced to some temper and evenness; and the most miserable person might be reconciled to some sense and participation of felicity.

Works of Mercy, or the several Kinds of corporal Alms.

The works of mercy are so many, as the affections of mercy have objects, or as the world hath kinds of misery. Men want meat, or drink, or clothes, or a house, or liberty, or attendance, or a grave. In proportion to these, seven works are usually assigned to mercy, and there are seven kinds of corporal alms reckoned. 1. To feed the hungry.[x] 2. To give drink to the thirsty. 3. Or clothes to the naked. 4. To redeem captives. 5. To visit the sick. 6. To entertain strangers. 7. To bury the dead.[y] But many more may be added. Such as are, 8. To give physic to sick persons. 9. To bring cold and starved people to warmth and to the fire; for sometimes clothing will not do it; or this may be done, when we cannot do the other. 10. To lead the blind in right ways. 11. To lend money. 12. To forgive debts. 13. To remit forfeitures. 14. To mend highways and bridges. 15. To reduce or guide wandering travellers. 16. To ease their labours, by accommodating their work with apt instruments; or their journey, with beasts of carriage. 17. To deliver the poor from their oppressors. 18. To die for my brother.[z] 19. To pay maidens' dowries, and to procure for them honest and chaste marriages.

Works of spiritual Alms and Mercy are,

1. To teach the ignorant. 2. To counsel doubting persons. 3. To admonish sinners diligently, prudently, seasonably, and charitably: to which also may be reduced, provoking and encouraging to good works.[a] 4. To comfort the afflicted. 5. To pardon offenders. 6. To suffer and support the weak.[b] 7. To pray for all estates of men, and for relief to all their necessities. To which may be added, 8. To punish or correct refractoriness. 9. To be gentle and charitable, in censuring the actions of others. 10. To establish the scrupulous, wavering, and inconstant spirits. 11. To confirm the strong. 12. Not to give scandal. 13. To quit a man of his fear. 14. To redeem maidens from prostitution and publication of their bodies.[c]

To both these kinds, a third also may be added of a mixed nature, partly corporal and partly spiritual: such are, 1. Reconciling enemies.[d] 2. Erecting public schools of learning. 3. Maintaining lectures of divinity. 4. Erecting colleges of religion and retirement from the noises and more frequent temptations of the world. 5. Finding employment for unbusied persons, and putting children to honest trades. For the particulars of mercy or alms cannot be narrower than men's needs are: and the old method of alms is too narrow to comprise them all; and yet the kinds are too many to be discoursed of particularly; only our blessed Saviour, in the precept of alms, uses the instances of relieving the poor, and forgiveness of injuries; and by proportion to these, the rest, whose duty is plain, simple, easy, and necessary, may be determined. But alms, in general, are to be disposed of according to the following rules.

Rules for giving Alms.

1. Let no man do alms of that which is none of his own;[e] for of that he is to make restitution; that is due to the owners, not to the poor; for every man hath need of his own, and that is first to be provided for; and then you must think of the needs of the poor. He that gives the poor what is not his own, makes himself a thief, and the poor to be the receivers. This is not to be understood, as if it were unlawful for a man, that is not able to pay his debts, to give smaller alms to the poor. He may not give such portions as can in any sense more disable him to do justice;[f] but such which, if they were saved, could not advance the other duty, may retire to this, and do here what they may, since, in the other duty, they cannot do what they should. But, generally, cheaters and robbers cannot give alms of what they have cheated and robbed; unless they cannot tell the persons, whom they have injured, or the proportions; and, in such cases, they are to give those unknown portions to the poor by way of restitution, for it is no alms: only God is the supreme Lord, to whom those escheats devolve, and the poor are his receivers.

2. Of money unjustly taken, and yet voluntarily parted with, we may, and are bound to, give alms: such as is money given and taken for false witness, bribes, simoniacal contracts; because the receiver hath no right to keep it, nor the giver any right to recall it; it is unjust money, and yet payable to none but the supreme Lord (who is the person injured) and to his delegates, that is, the poor. To which I insert these cautions. 1. If the person, injured by the unjust sentence of a bribed judge, or by false witness, be poor, he is the proper object and bosom, to whom the restitution is to be made. 2. In the case of simony,[g] the church, to whom the simony was injurious, is the lap, into which the restitution is to be poured; and if it be poor and out

[x] Matt. xxv. 35. [y] Matt. xxvi. 12. 2 Sam. ii. 5.

[z] Nobilis hæc esset pietatis rixa duobus;
Quòd pro fratre mori vellet uterque prior.—Mart.

[a] Heb. x. 24. [b] 1 Thess. v. 14.

[c] Puella prosternit se ad pedes: Miserere virginitatis meæ, nè prostituas hoc corpus sub tam turpi titulo.—Hist. Apol. Tya.

[d] Laudi ductum apud vet.
αἶψά τε καὶ μέγα νεῖκος ἐπισταμένως κατέπαυσε.

[e] S. Greg. vii. l. 110. Epist.

[f] Præbeant misericordiâ, ut conservetur justitia.—St. Aug. Prov. iii. 9.

[g] Decret. ep. tit. de Simonia.

of repair, the alms, or restitution, (shall I call it?) are to be paid to it.

3. There is some sort of gain, that hath in it no injustice, properly so called; but it is unlawful and filthy lucre: such as is money, taken for work done unlawfully upon the Lord's day; hire taken for disfiguring oneself, and for being professed jesters: the wages of such as make unjust bargains; and of harlots: of this money there is some preparation to be made, before it be given in alms. The money is infected with the plague, and must pass through the fire or the water, before it be fit for alms: the person must repent and leave the crime, and then minister to the poor.

4. He that gives alms, must do it in mercy; that is, out of a true sense of the calamity of his brother, first feeling it in himself in some proportion, and then endeavouring to ease himself and the other of their common calamity.[h] Against this rule they offend, who give alms out of custom; or to upbraid the poverty of the other; or to make him mercenary and obliged; or with any unhandsome circumstances.

5. He that gives alms, must do it with a single eye and heart; that is, without designs to get the praise of men: and, if he secures that, he may either give them publicly or privately: for Christ intended only to provide against pride and hypocrisy, when he bade alms to be given in secret; it being otherwise one of his commandments, "that our light should shine before men:" this is more excellent; that is more safe.

6. To this also appertains, that he, who hath done a good turn, should so forget it, as not to speak of it:[i] but he that boasts it, or upbraids it, hath paid himself, and lost the nobleness of the charity.

7. Give alms with a cheerful heart and countenance; "not grudgingly or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver;"[k] and therefore give quickly, when the power is in thy hand, and the need is in thy neighbour, and thy neighbour at the door. He gives twice that relieves speedily.

8. According to thy ability give to all men that need:[l] and, in equal needs, give first to good men, rather than to bad men; and if the needs be unequal, do so too; provided that the need of the poorest be not violent or extreme: but, if an evil man be in extreme necessity, he is to be relieved, rather than a good man, who can tarry longer, and may subsist without it. And, if he be a good man, he will desire it should be so: because himself is bound to save the life of his brother, with doing some inconvenience to himself: and no difference of virtue or vice can make the ease of one beggar equal with the life of another.

9. Give no alms to vicious persons, if such alms will support their sin: as if they will continue in idleness; "if they will not work, neither let them eat;"[m] or if they will spend it in drunkenness,[n] or wantonness: such persons, when they are reduced to very great want, must be relieved in such proportions, as may not relieve their dying lust, but may refresh their faint or dying bodies.

10. The best objects of charity are, poor housekeepers, that labour hard, and are burdened with many children; or gentlemen fallen into sad poverty, especially if by innocent misfortune; (and if their crimes brought them into it, yet they are to be relieved according to the former rule;) persecuted persons; widows and fatherless children, putting them to honest trades or schools of learning. And search into the needs of numerous and meaner families:[o] for there are many persons, that have nothing left them but misery and modesty: and towards such we must add two circumstances of charity, 1. To inquire them out; 2. To convey our relief unto them so, as we do not make them ashamed.

11. Give, looking for nothing again; that is, without consideration of future advantages: give to children, to old men, to the unthankful, and the dying, and to those you shall never see again; for else your alms or courtesy is not charity, but traffic and merchandise; and be sure, that you omit not to relieve the needs of your enemy and the injurious; for so, possibly, you may win him to yourself; but do you intend the winning him to God.

12. Trust not your alms to intermedial, uncertain, and under-dispensers: by which rule is not only intended the securing your alms in the right channel: but the humility of your person, and that, which the apostle calls "the labour of love." And if you converse in hospitals and alms-houses, and minister with your own hand what your heart hath first decreed, you will find your heart endeared and made familiar with the needs and with the persons of the poor, those excellent images of Christ.

13. Whatsoever is superfluous in thy estate, is to be dispensed in alms.[p] "He that hath two coats, must give to him that hath none;" that is, he that hath beyond his need, must give that which is beyond it. Only among needs, we are to reckon not only, what will support our life, but also what will maintain the decency of our estate and person; not only in present needs, but in all future necessities, and very probable contingencies, but no further: we are not obliged beyond this, unless we see very great, public, and calamitous necessities. But yet, if we do extend beyond our measures, and give more than we are able, we have the Philippians and many holy persons for our precedent; we have St. Paul for our encouragement; we have Christ for our counsellor; we have God for our rewarder, and a great treasure in heaven for our recompence and restitution. But I propound it to the considera-

[h] Donum nudum est, nisi consensu vestiatur, l. iii. C. de Pactis.

[i] Qui dedit beneficium, taceat; narret, qui accepit.—Senec.

[k] 2 Cor. ix. 7. [l] Luke vi. 30. Gal. vi. 10.

[m] 2 Thess. iii. 10. A cavallo, chi non porta sella, biada non si crivella.

[n] De mendico malè meretur, qui ei dat quod edat aut quod bibat:
Nam et illud quod dat perdit, et illi producit vitam ad miseriam.—Trin.

[o] Beatus qui intelligit super egenum et pauperem.—Psal. A donare è tenere ingegno bisogna avore.

[p] ——— Præmonstro tibi
Ut ita te aliorum miserescat, nè tui alios misereat.
Trinummus.

tion of all christian people, that they be not nice and curious, fond and indulgent to themselves in taking accounts of their personal conveniences: and that they make their proportions moderate and easy, according to the order and manner of christianity; and the consequent will be this, that the poor will more plentifully be relieved, themselves will be more able to do it, and the duty will be less chargeable, and the owners of estates charged with fewer accounts in the spending them. It cannot be denied, but, in the expenses of all liberal and great personages, many things might be spared: some superfluous servants, some idle meetings, some unnecessary and imprudent feasts, some garments too costly, some unnecessary lawsuits, some vain journeys: and, when we are tempted to such needless expenses, if we shall descend to moderation, and lay aside the surplusage, we shall find it with more profit to be laid out upon the poor members of Christ, than upon our own with vanity. But this is only intended to be an advice in the manner of doing alms: for I am not ignorant, that great variety of clothes always have been permitted to princes and nobility and others, in their proportion; and they usually give those clothes as rewards to servants, and other persons needful enough, and then they may serve their own fancy and their duty too: but it is but reason and religion to be careful, that they be given to such only, where duty, or prudent liberality, or alms, determine them; but, in no sense, let them do it so, as to minister to vanity, to luxury, to prodigality. The like also is to be observed in other instances; and if we once give our minds to the study and arts of alms, we shall find ways enough to make this duty easy, profitable, and useful.

1. He that plays at any game, must resolve beforehand to be indifferent to win or lose: but if he gives to the poor all that he wins, it is better than to keep it to himself: but it were better yet, that he lay by so much, as he is willing to lose, and let the game alone, and, by giving so much alms, traffic for eternity. That is one way.

2. Another is keeping the fasting-days of the church; which if our condition be such as to be able to cast our accounts, and make abatements for our wanting so many meals in the whole year, (which by the old appointment did amount to one hundred and fifty-three, and since most of them are fallen into desuetude, we may make up as many of them as we please by voluntary fasts,) we may, from hence, find a considerable relief for the poor. But if we be not willing sometimes to fast, that our brother may eat, we should ill die for him. St. Martin had given all that he had in the world, to the poor, save one coat; and that also he divided between two beggars. A father in the mount of Nitria was reduced at last to the inventory of one Testament; and that book also was tempted from him by the needs of one, whom he thought poorer than himself. Greater yet: St Paulinus sold himself to slavery to redeem a young man, for whose captivity his mother wept sadly: and it is said, that St. Katharine sucked the envenomed wounds of a villain, who had injured her most impudently. And I shall tell you of a greater charity than all these put together: Christ gave himself to shame and death to redeem his enemies from bondage, and death, and hell.

3. Learn of the frugal man, and only avoid sordid actions, and turn good husband, and change your arts of getting into providence for the poor, and we shall soon become rich in good works: and why should we not do as much for charity, as for covetousness; for heaven, as for the fading world; for God and the holy Jesus, as for the needless superfluities of back and belly.

14. In giving alms to beggars and persons of that low rank, it is better to give little to each, that we may give to the more; so extending our alms to many persons; but in charities of religion, as building hospitals, colleges, and houses for devotion, and supplying the accidental wants of decayed persons, fallen from great plenty to great necessity, it is better to unite our alms, than to disperse them; to make a noble relief or maintenance to one, and to restore him to comfort, than to support only his natural needs, and keep him alive only, unrescued from sad discomforts.

15. The precept of alms or charity binds not indefinitely to all the instances and kinds of charity; for he that delights to feed the poor, and spends all his portion that way, is not bound to enter into prisons and redeem captives; but we are obliged, by the presence of circumstances, and the special disposition of Providence, and the pitiableness of an object, to this or that particular act of charity. The eye is the sense of mercy; and the bowels are its organ; and that enkindles pity, and pity produces alms; when the eye sees what it never saw, the heart will think what it never thought; but when we have an object present to our eye, then we must pity; for there the providence of God hath fitted our charity with circumstances. He that is in thy sight or in thy neighbourhood, is fallen into the lot of thy charity.

16. If thou hast no money,[q] yet thou must have mercy; and art bound to pity the poor, and pray for them, and throw thy holy desires and devotions into the treasure of the church: and if thou dost what thou art able, be it little or great, corporal or spiritual, the charity of alms or the charity of prayers, a cup of wine or a cup of water, if it be but love to the brethren,[r] or a desire to help all or any of Christ's poor, it shall be accepted according to that a man hath, not according to that he hath not.[s] For love is all this, and all the other commandments: and it will express itself where it can; and where it cannot, yet it is love still; and it is also sorrow, that it cannot.

Motives to Charity.

The motives to this duty are such, as Holy Scripture hath propounded to us by way of consider-

[q] Luke xii. 2. Acts iii. 6. Chi ti da un ossa, non ti verrebbe morto.

[r] 1 Pet. i. 22.

[s] 2 Cor. viii. 12.

ation and proposition of its excellencies and consequent reward. 1. There is no one duty, which our blessed Saviour did recommend to his disciples with so repeated an injunction, as this of charity and alms.[t] To which add the words spoken by our Lord, "It is better to give than to receive." And when we consider, how great a blessing it is, that we beg not from door to door, it is a ready instance of our thankfulness to God, for his sake to relieve them that do. 2. This duty is that alone, whereby the future day of judgment shall be transacted. For nothing but charity and alms is that, whereby Christ shall declare the justice and mercy of the eternal sentence. Martyrdom itself is not there expressed, and no otherwise involved, but as it is the greatest charity. 3. Christ made himself the greatest and daily example of alms or charity. He went up and down doing good, preaching the gospel, and healing all diseases: and God the Father is imitable by use in nothing, but in purity and mercy. 4. Alms, given to the poor, redound to the emolument of the giver, both temporal and eternal.[u] 5. They are instrumental to the remission of sins. Our forgiveness and mercy to others being made the very rule and proportion of our confidence, and hope, and our prayer, to be forgiven ourselves.[v] 6. It is a treasure in heaven; it procures friends when we die. It is reckoned as done to Christ, whatsoever we do to our poor brother: and, therefore, when a poor man begs for Christ's sake, if he have reason to ask for Christ's sake, give it him, if thou canst. Now every man hath title to ask for Christ's sake, whose need is great, and himself unable to cure it, and if the man be a christian. Whatsoever charity Christ will reward, all that is given for Christ's sake, and therefore it may be asked in his name: but every man, that uses that sacred name for an endearment, hath not a title to it, neither he, nor his need. 7. It is one of the wings of prayer, by which it flies to the throne of grace. 8. It crowns all the works of piety.[w] 9. It causes thanksgiving to God on our behalf: 10. And the bowels of the poor bless us, and they pray for us. 11. And that portion of our estate, out of which a tenth, or a fifth, or a twentieth, or some offering to God for religion and the poor goes forth, certainly returns with a great blessing upon all the rest. It is like the effusion of oil by the Sidonian woman; as long as she pours into empty vessels, it could never cease running: or like the widow's barrel of meal; it consumed not, as long as she fed the prophet. 12. The sum of all is contained in the words of our blessed Saviour: "Give alms of such things as you have, and behold all things are clean unto you." 13. To which may be added, that charity, or mercy, is the peculiar character of God's elect, and a sign of predestination; which advantage we are taught by St. Paul: "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercy, kindness, &c. Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any."[x] The result of all which we may read in the words of St. Chrysostom: "To know the art of alms is greater than to be crowned with the diadem of kings. And yet to convert one soul is greater than to pour out ten thousand talents into the baskets of the poor."

But, because giving alms is an act of the virtue of mercifulness, our endeavour must be, by proper arts, to mortify the parents of unmercifulness, which are, 1. Envy; 2. Anger; 3. Covetousness: in which we may be helped by the following rules or instruments.

Remedies against Unmercifulness and Uncharitableness.

1. *Against Envy, by way of consideration.*

Against envy I shall use the same argument I would use to persuade a man from the fever or the dropsy. 1. Because it is a disease; it is so far from having pleasure in it, or a temptation to it, that it is full of pain, a great instrument of vexation: it eats the flesh, and dries up the marrow, and makes hollow eyes, and lean cheeks, and a pale face. 2. It is nothing but a direct resolution never to enter into heaven by the way of noble pleasure, taken in the good of others. 3. It is most contrary to God. 4. And a just contrary state to the felicities and actions of heaven, where every star increases the light of the other, and the multitude of guests, at the supper of the Lamb, makes the eternal meal more festival. 5. It is, perfectly, the state of hell, and the passion of devils: for they do nothing but despair in themselves,[y] and envy others' quiet or safety, and yet cannot rejoice either in their good or in their evil, although they endeavour to hinder that, and procure this, with all the devices and arts of malice and of a great understanding. 6. Envy can serve no end in the world; it cannot please any thing, nor do any thing, nor hinder any thing, but the content and felicity of him that hath. 7. Envy can never pretend to justice, as hatred and uncharitableness sometimes may: for there may be causes of hatred; and I may have wrong done me; and then hatred hath some pretence, though no just argument. But no man is unjust or injurious for being prosperous or wise. 8. And therefore many men profess to hate another, but no man owns envy, as being an enmity and displeasure for no cause, but goodness or felicity: envious men, being like cantharides and caterpillars, that delight most to devour ripe and most excellent fruits.[z] It is of all crimes the basest: for malice and anger are appeased with benefits, but envy is exasperated, as envying to fortunate persons both their power and their will to do good; and never leaves murmuring, till the envied person be levelled, and then only the

Matt. vi. 4. xiii. 12, 33. xxv. 15. Luke xi. 41.

[u] Phil. iv. 17. [v] Acts x. 4. Heb. xiii. 16. Dan. iv. 27.

[w] Nunquam memini me legisse malâ morte mortuum, qui libenter opera charitatis exercuit.—S. Hieron. ep. ad Nepot.

[x] Coloss. iii. 12.

[y] Nemo alienæ virtuti invidet, qui satis confidit suæ.—Cic. contra M. Anton.

[z] Homerus, Thersitis malos mores describens, malitiæ summam apposuit,
Pelidæ imprimis erat atque inimicus Ulyssi.

vulture leaves to eat the liver. For if his neighbour be made miserable, the envious man is apt to be troubled: like him, that is so long unbuilding the turrets, till all the roof is low or flat, or that the stones fall upon the lower buildings, and do a mischief that the man repents of.

2. *Remedies against Anger, by way of Exercise.*

The next enemy to mercifulness and the grace of alms, is anger; against which there are proper instruments both in prudence and religion.

1. Prayer is the great remedy against anger: for it must suppose it, in some degree, removed before we pray; and then it is the more likely it will be finished when the prayer is done. We must lay aside the act of anger, as a preparatory to prayer; and the curing the habit will be the effect and blessing of prayer: so that, if a man, to cure his anger, resolves to address himself to God by prayer, it is first necessary that, by his own observation and diligence, he lay the anger aside, before his prayer can be fit to be presented: and when we so pray, and so endeavour, we have all the blessings of prayer, which God hath promised to it, to be our security for success.

2. If anger arises in thy breast, instantly seal up thy lips, and let it not go forth;[a] for, like fire, when it wants vent, it will suppress itself. It is good, in a fever, to have a tender and a smooth tongue; but it is better, that it be so in anger; for, if it be rough and distempered, there it is an ill sign, but here it is an ill cause. Angry passion is a fire, and angry words are like breath to fan them together; they are like steel and flint, sending out fire by mutual collision. Some men will discourse themselves into passion; and, if their neighbour be enkindled too, together they flame with rage and violence.

3. Humility is the most excellent natural cure for anger in the world; for he, that by daily considering his own infirmities and failings, makes the error of his neighbour or servant to be his own case, and remembers, that he daily needs God's pardon and his brother's charity, will not be apt to rage at the levities, or misfortunes, or indiscretions of another; greater than which he considers, that he is very frequently and more inexcusably guilty of.

4. Consider the example of the ever-blessed Jesus, who suffered all the contradictions of sinners, and received all affronts and reproaches of malicious, rash, and foolish persons, and yet, in all of them, was as dispassionate and gentle as the morning sun in autumn; and in this also he propounded himself imitable by us. For, if innocence itself did suffer so great injuries and disgraces, it is no great matter for us quietly to receive all the calamities of fortune, and indiscretion of servants, and mistakes of friends, and unkindnesses of kindred, and rudenesses of enemies; since we have deserved these and worse, even hell itself.

5. If we be tempted to anger in the actions of government and discipline to our inferiors, (in which case, anger is permitted so far as it is prudently instrumental to government, and only is a sin when it is excessive and unreasonable, and apt to disturb our own discourse, or to express itself in imprudent words or violent actions,) let us propound to ourselves the example of God the Father; who at the same time, and with the same tranquillity, decreed heaven and hell, the joys of blessed angels and souls, and the torments of devils and accursed spirits: and, at the day of judgment, when all the world shall burn under his feet, God shall not be at all inflamed, or shaken in his essential seat and centre of tranquillity and joy. And if, at first, the cause seems reasonable, yet defer to execute thy anger till thou mayest better judge. For, as Phocion told the Athenians, who, upon the first news of the death of Alexander, were ready to revolt, "Stay a while; for if the king be not dead, your haste will ruin you; but, if he be dead, your stay cannot prejudice your affairs; for he will be dead to-morrow, as well as to day:" so if thy servant or inferior deserves punishment, staying till to-morrow will not make him innocent; but it may possibly preserve thee so, by preventing thy striking a guiltless person, or being furious for a trifle.

6. Remove from thyself all provocations and incentives to anger; especially, 1. Games of chance and great wager. Patroclus killed his friend,[b] the son of Amphidamas, in his rage and sudden fury, rising upon a cross game at tables. Such also are petty curiosities, and worldly business and carefulness about it: but manage thyself with indifferency, or contempt of those external things, and do not spend a passion upon them; for it is more than they are worth. But they that desire but few things, can be crossed but in a few.[c] In not heaping up, with an ambitious or curious prodigality, any very curious or choice utensils, seals, jewels, glasses, precious stones; because those very many accidents, which happen in the spoiling or loss of these rarities, are, in event, an irresistible cause of violent anger. 3. Do not entertain nor suffer talebearers; for they abuse our ears first, and then our credulity, and then steal our patience, and, it may be, for a lie; and, if it be true, the matter is not considerable; or if it be, yet it is pardonable. And we may always escape with patience, at one of these outlets; either, 1. By not hearing slanders; or, 2. By not believing them; or, 3. By not regarding the thing; or, 4. By forgiving the person. 4. To this purpose also it may serve well, if we choose (as much as we can) to live with peaceable persons, for that prevents the occasions of confusion; and if we live with prudent persons, they will not easily occasion our disturbance. But, because these things are not in many men's power, therefore I propound this rather as a felicity than a remedy or a duty, and an act of prevention than of cure.

7. Be not inquisitive into the affairs of other men,

[a] Ira cùm pectus rapida occupavit,
Futiles linguæ jubeo cavere
Vana latratus jaculantis.—SAPPHO.
Turbatus sum, et non sum locutus.—Psal. xxxix.

[b] Ἤματι τῷ, ὅτε, παῖδα κατέκτανον Ἀμφιδάμαντος,
Νήπιος, οὐκ ἐθέλων, ἀμφ' ἀστραγάλοισι χολωθείς.
ILIAD. ψ'. 87.

[c] Qui pauca requirunt, non multis excidunt.—PLUT.

nor the faults of thy servants, nor the mistakes of thy friends; but what is offered to you, use according to the former rules; but do not thou go out to gather sticks to kindle a fire to burn thine own house. And add this; "If my friend said, or did, well in that, for which I am angry, I am in the fault, not he; but if he did amiss, he is in the misery, not I: for either he was deceived, or he was malicious; and either of them both is all one with a miserable person; and that is an object of pity, not of anger."

8. Use all reasonable discourses to excuse the faults of others; considering that there are many circumstances of time, of person, of accident, of inadvertency, of infrequency, of aptness to amend, of sorrow for doing it; and it is well, that we take any good in exchange; for the evil is done or suffered.

9. Upon the arising of anger, instantly enter into a deep consideration of the joys of heaven, or the pains of hell: for "fear and joy are naturally apt to appease this violence." [d]

10. In contentions be always passive, never active; upon the defensive, not the assaulting part; and then also give a gentle answer, receiving the furies and indiscretions of the other, like a stone into a bed of moss and soft compliance; and you shall find it sit down quietly: whereas anger and violence make the contention loud and long, and injurious to both the parties.

11. In the actions of religion, be careful to temper all thy instances with meekness, and the proper instruments of it: and, if thou beest apt to be angry, neither fast violently, nor entertain the too-forward heats of zeal, but secure thy duty with constant and regular actions, and a good temper of body, with convenient refreshments and recreations.

12. If anger rises suddenly and violently, first restrain it with consideration, and then let it end in a hearty prayer for him that did the real or seeming injury. The former of the two stops its growth, and the latter quite kills it, and makes amends for its monstrous and involuntary birth.

Remedies against Anger, by way of consideration.

1. Consider, that anger is a professed enemy to counsel; it is a direct storm, in which no man can be heard to speak or call from without; for if you counsel gently, you are despised: if you urge it, and be vehement, you provoke it more. Be careful therefore to lay up beforehand a great stock of reason and prudent consideration, [e] that, like a besieged town, you may be provided for, and be defensible from within, since you are not likely to be relieved from without. Anger is not to be suppressed but by something that is inward as itself, and more habitual. To which purpose add, that, 2. Of all passions, it endeavours most to make reason useless. 3. That it is a universal poison, of an infinite object: for no man was ever so amorous, as to love a toad; none so envious, as to repine at the condition of the miserable; no man so timorous, as to fear a dead bee; but anger is troubled at every thing, and every man, and every accident: and therefore, unless it be suppressed, it will make a man's condition restless. 4. If it proceeds from a great cause, it turns to fury; if from a small cause, it is peevishness: and so is, always, either terrible or ridiculous. [f] 5. It makes a man's body monstrous, deformed, and contemptible; the voice horrid; the eyes cruel; the face pale or fiery; the gait fierce; the speech clamorous and loud. 6. It is neither manly nor ingenuous. 7. It proceeds from softness of spirit, and pusillanimity; which makes, that women are more angry than men, sick persons more than the healthful, old men more than young, unprosperous and calamitous people than the blessed and fortunate. 8. It is a passion fitter for flies and insects, than for persons professing nobleness and bounty. 9. It is troublesome not only to those that suffer it, but to them that behold it; there being no greater incivility of entertainment, than for the cook's fault [g] or the negligence of the servants, to be cruel, or outrageous, or unpleasant in the presence of the guests. 10. It makes marriage to be a necessary and unavoidable trouble; friendships, and societies, and familiarities, to be intolerable. 11. It multiplies the evils of drunkenness, and makes the levities of wine to run into madness. 12. It makes innocent jesting to be the beginning of tragedies. 13. It turns friendship into hatred; it makes a man lose himself, and his reason, and his argument, in disputation. It turns the desires of knowledge into an itch of wrangling. It adds insolency to power. It turns justice into cruelty, and judgment into oppression. It changes discipline into tediousness and hatred of liberal institution. It makes a prosperous man to be envied, and the unfortunate to be unpitied. It is a confluence of all the irregular passions: there is in it envy and sorrow, fear and scorn, pride and prejudice, rashness and inconsideration, rejoicing in evil and a desire to inflict it, self-love, impatience, and curiosity. And lastly, though it be very troublesome to others, yet it is most troublesome to him that hath it.

In the use of these arguments and the former exercises, be diligent to observe, lest, in your desires to suppress anger, you be passionate and angry at yourself for being angry; like physicians, [h] who give a bitter potion, when they intend to eject the bitterness of choler; for this will provoke the person, and increase the passion. But placidly and quietly set upon the mortification of it; and attempt it first for a day, resolving that day not at all to be angry, and to be watchful and observant; for a day is no great trouble: but then, after one day's watchfulness, it will be as easy to watch two days, as at first it was to watch one day; and so you may increase, till it becomes easy and habitual.

[d] Homer.

[e] Καὶ μανθάνειν μὲν, οἷα δρᾶν μέλλω κακά'
Θυμὸς δὲ κρείσσων τῶν ἐμῶν βουλευμάτων.
Medea, Porson. 1074.

[f] Ὁ θυμὸς φόνων αἴτιον, συμφορᾶς σύμμαχον, βλάβης σύνεργον καὶ ἀτιμίας, χρημάτων ἀπώλεια, ἔτι δὲ καὶ φθορᾶς ἀρχηγόν.—Aristot.

[g] Dicere quid cœnâ possis ingratius istâ?

[h] Amaram amaro bilem pharmaco qui eluunt.

Only observe, that such an anger alone is criminal, which is against charity to myself or my neighbour; but anger against sin is a holy zeal, and an effect of love to God and my brother, for whose interest I am passionate, like a concerned person: and if I take care, that my anger makes no reflection of scorn or cruelty upon the offender, or of pride and violence, or transportation to myself, anger becomes charity and duty. And when one commended Charilaus, the king of Sparta, for a gentle, a good, and a meek prince, his colleague said well, "How can he be good, who is not an enemy even to vicious persons?"[i]

3. *Remedies against Covetousness, the third Enemy of Mercy.*

Covetousness is also an enemy to alms, though not to all the effects of mercifulness: but this is to be cured by the proper motives to charity before mentioned, and by the proper rules of justice; which being secured, the arts of getting money are not easily made criminal. To which also we may add,

1. Covetousness makes a man miserable;[k] because riches are not means to make a man happy: and unless felicity were to be bought with money, he is a vain person, who admires heaps of gold and rich possessions. For what Hippomachus said to some persons, who commended a tall man as fit to be a champion in the Olympic games, "It is true, (said he,) if the crown hang so high that the longest arm could reach it;" the same we may say concerning riches; they were excellent things, if the richest man was certainly the wisest and the best: but as they are, they are nothing to be wondered at, because they contribute nothing towards felicity: which appears, because some men choose to be miserable that they may be rich, rather than be happy with the expense of money and doing noble things.

2. Riches are useless and unprofitable; for, beyond our needs and conveniences, nature knows no use of riches: and they say, that the princes of Italy, when they sup alone, eat out of a single dish, and drink in a plain glass, and the wife eats without purple; for nothing is more frugal than the back and belly, if they be used as they should: but when they would entertain the eyes of strangers, when they are vain, and would make a noise, then riches come forth to set forth the spectacle, and furnish out the comedy of wealth, of vanity.[l] No man can, with all the wealth in the world, buy so much skill, as to be a good lutenist; he must go the same way that poor people do, he must learn and take pains: much less can he buy constancy, or chastity, or courage; nay, not so much as the contempt of riches: and by possessing more than we need, we cannot obtain so much power over our souls, as not to require more. And certainly riches must deliver me from no evil, if the possession of them cannot take away the longing for them. If any man be thirsty, drink cools him; if he be hungry, eating meat satisfies him; and when a man is cold, and calls for a warm cloak, he is pleased if you give it him; but you trouble him if you load him with six or eight cloaks. Nature rests, and sits still, when she hath her portion; but that which exceeds it, is a trouble and a burden: and, therefore, in true philosophy, no man is rich, but he that is poor, according to the common account: for when God hath satisfied those needs which he made, that is, all that is natural, whatsoever is beyond it is thirst and a disease; and, unless it be sent back again in charity or religion, can serve no end but vice or vanity: it can increase the appetite to represent the man poorer, and full of a new and artificial, unnatural need; but it never satisfies the need it makes, or makes the man richer. No wealth can satisfy the covetous desire of wealth.

3. Riches are troublesome; but the satisfaction of those appetites, which God and nature hath made, are cheap and easy; for who ever paid usemoney for bread, and onions, and water, to keep him alive?[m] but when we covet after houses of the frame and design of Italy, or long for jewels, or for my next neighbour's field, or horses from Barbary, or the richest perfumes of Arabia, or Galatian mules, or fat eunuchs for our slaves from Tunis, or rich coaches from Naples, then we can never be satisfied, till we have the best thing that is fancied, and all that can be had, and all that can be desired, and that we can lust no more: but, before we come to the one half of our first wild desires, we are the bondmen of usurers, and of our worse tyrant appetites, and the tortures of envy and impatience. But I consider, that those who drink on still when their thirst is quenched, or eat after they have well dined, are forced to vomit not only their superfluity, but even that which at first was necessary; so those that covet more, than they can temperately use, are oftentimes forced to part even with that patrimony, which would have supported their persons in freedom and honour, and have satisfied all their reasonable desire.

4. Contentedness is therefore health, because covetousness is a direct sickness: and it was well said of Aristippus, (as Plutarch reports him,) if any man, after much eating and drinking, be still unsatisfied, he hath no need of more meat or more drink, but of a physician; he more needs to be purged than to be filled: and therefore, since covetousness cannot be satisfied, it must be cured by emptiness and evacuation. The man is without remedy, unless he be reduced to the scantling of nature, and the measures of his personal necessity. Give to a poor man a house, and a few cows, pay his little debt, and set him on work, and he is provided for, and quiet: but when a man enlarges

[i] Plutar. de Odio et Invidiâ.

[k] Quid refert igitur quantis jumenta fatiget
Porticibus, quantâ nemorum vectetur in umbrâ,
Jugera quot vicina foro, quas emerit ædes?
Nemo malus felix. Juv. Sat. 4.

[l] Plut.

[m] Ergo solicitæ tu causa, pecunia, vitæ es:
Per te immaturum mortis adimus iter.
Propert. 3. 7. 2.

beyond a fair possession, and desires another lordship, you spite him if you let him have it; for, by that, he is one degree the further off from the rest in his desires and satisfaction; and now he sees himself in a bigger capacity to a larger fortune; and he shall never find his period, till you begin to take away something of what he hath; for then he will begin to be glad to keep that which is left: but reduce him to nature's measures and there he shall be sure to find rest: for there no man can desire beyond his bellyful; and, when he wants that, any one friend or charitable man can cure his poverty; but all the world cannot satisfy his covetousness.

5. Covetousness is the most fantastical and contradictory disease in the whole world: it must therefore be incurable; because it strives against its own cure. No man therefore abstains from meat, because he is hungry; nor from wine, because he loves it, and needs it: but the covetous man does so, for he desires it passionately, because he says he needs it, and, when he hath it, he will need it still, because he dares not use it. He gets clothes, because he cannot be without them; but when he hath them, then he can: as if he needed corn for his granary, and clothes for his wardrobe, more than for his back and belly. For covetousness pretends to heap much together for fear of want; and yet, after all his pains and purchase, he suffers that really which at first he feared vainly; and by not using what he gets, he makes that suffering to be actual, present, and necessary, which in his lowest condition was but future, contingent, and possible. It stirs up the desire, and takes away the pleasure of being satisfied. It increases the appetite, and will not content it: it swells the principal to no purpose, and lessens the use to all purposes; disturbing the order of nature, and the designs of God; making money not to be the instrument of exchange or charity, nor corn to feed himself or the poor, nor wool to clothe himself or his brother, nor wine to refresh the sadness of the afflicted, nor his oil to make his own countenance cheerful; but all these to look upon, and to tell over, and to take accounts by, and make himself considerable, and wondered at by fools; that while he lives he may be called rich, and when he dies may be accounted miserable; and like the dish-makers of China, may leave a greater heap of dirt for his nephews, while he himself hath a new lot fallen to him in the portion of Dives. But thus the ass carried wood and sweet herbs to the baths, but was never washed or perfumed himself: he heaped up sweets for others, while himself was filthy with smoke and ashes. And yet it is considerable; if the man can be content to feed hardly, and labour extremely, and watch carefully, and suffer affronts and disgrace, that he may get money more than he uses in his temperate and just needs, with how much ease might this man be happy! and with how great uneasiness and trouble does he make himself miserable! For he takes pains to get content, and when he might have it, he lets it go. He might better be content with a virtuous and quiet poverty, than with an artificial, troublesome, and vicious. The same diet and a less labour would at first make him happy, and for ever after rewardable.

6. The sum of all is that, which the apostle says, "Covetousness is idolatry;" that is, it is an admiring money for itself, not for its use; it relies upon money, and loves it more than it loves God and religion; and it is "the root of all evil;" it teaches men to be cruel and crafty, industrious in evil, full of care and malice; it devours young heirs, and grinds the face of the poor, and undoes those who specially belong to God's protection, helpless, craftless, and innocent people; it inquires into our parent's age, and longs for the death of our friends; it makes friendship an art of rapine, and changes a partner into a vulture, and a companion into a thief; and after all this, it is for no good to itself; for it dares not spend those heaps of treasure which it snatched; and men hate serpents and basilisks worse than lions and bears; for these kill because they need the prey, but they sting to death and eat not.[u] And if they pretend all this care and heap for their heirs (like the mice of Africa, hiding the golden ore in their bowels, and refusing to give back the indigested gold till their guts be out) they may remember, that what was unnecessary for themselves, is as unnecessary for their sons; and why cannot they be without it, as well as their fathers, who did not use it? And it often happens, that to the sons it becomes an instrument to serve some lust or other; that, as the gold was useless to their fathers, so may the sons be to the public, fools or prodigals, loads to their country, and the curse and punishment of their father's avarice: and yet all that wealth is short of one blessing; but it is a load, coming with a curse, and descending from the family of a long-derived sin. However, the father transmits it to the son, and it may be the son to one more; till a tyrant, or an oppressor, or a war, or change of government, or the usurer, or folly, or an expensive vice, makes holes in the bottom of the bag, and the wealth runs out like water, and flies away like a bird from the hand of a child.

7. Add to these the consideration of the advantages of poverty;[o] that it is a state freer from temptation, secure in dangers, but of one trouble, safe under the Divine Providence, cared for in heaven by a daily ministration, and for whose support God makes every day a new decree; a state of which Christ was pleased to make open profession, and many wise men daily make vows; that a rich man is but like a pool, to whom the poor run, and first trouble it, and then draw it dry; that he enjoys no more of it, than according to the few and limited needs of a man; he cannot eat like a wolf or an

[n] Ἡ φιλοχρημοσύνη μήτηρ κακότητος ἁπάσης.
Χρυσὸς ἀεὶ δόλος ἐστὶ καὶ ἄργυρος ἀνθρώποισιν.
Χρυσὲ κακῶν ἀρχηγὲ, βιοφθόρε, πάντα χαλέπτων,
Εἴθέ σε μὴ θνητοῖσι γενέσθαι πῆμα ποθεινόν·
Σοῦ γὰρ ἕκητι μάχαι τε, λεηλασίαι τε, φόνοι τε,
Ἐχθρὰ δὲ τέκνα γονεῦσιν, ἀδελφειοί τε συναίμοις.
Phocylid. 38.

[o] Provocet ut segnes animos, rerumque remotas
Ingeniosa vias paulatim exploret egestas.
Claudian, 36. 31.

elephant: that variety of dainty fare ministers but to sin and sicknesses; that the poor man feasts oftener than the rich,[p] because every little enlargement is a feast to the poor, but he that feasts every day feasts no day, there being nothing left to which he may, beyond his ordinary, extend his appetite; that the rich man sleeps not so soundly as the poor labourer; that his fears are more and his needs are greater; (for who is poorer, he that needs 5*l.* or he that needs 5000*l.*?) the poor man hath enough to fill his belly, and the rich hath not enough to fill his eye; that the poor man's wants are easy to be relieved by a common charity, but the needs of rich men cannot be supplied but by princes; and they are left to the temptation of great vices to make reparation of their needs; and the ambitious labours of men to get great estates, is but like the selling of a fountain to buy a fever, a parting with content to buy necessity, a purchase of an unhandsome condition at the price of infelicity; that princes, and they that enjoy most of the world, have most of it but in title, and supreme rights, and reserved privileges, peppercorns, homages, trifling services and acknowledgments, the real use descending to others, to more substantial purposes. These considerations may be useful to the curing of covetousness; that, the grace of mercifulness enlarging the heart of a man, his hand may not be contracted; but reached out to the poor in alms.

SECTION IX.

Of Repentance.

Repentance, of all things in the world, makes the greatest change: it changes things in heaven and earth; for it changes the whole man from sin to grace, from vicious habits to holy customs, from unchaste bodies to angelical souls, from swine to philosophers, from drunkenness to sober counsels: and God himself, "with whom is no variableness or shadow of change," is pleased, by descending to our weak understandings, to say, that he changes also upon man's repentance, that he alters his decrees, revokes his sentence, cancels the bills of accusation, throws the records of shame and sorrow from the court of heaven, and lifts up the sinner from the grave to life, from his prison to a throne, from hell, and the guilt of eternal torture, to heaven and to a title, to never-ceasing felicities. If we be bound on earth, we shall be bound in heaven; if we be absolved here, we shall be loosed there; if we repent, God will repent, and not send the evil upon us which we had deserved.

But repentance is a conjugation and society of many duties; and it contains in it all the parts of a holy life, from the time of our return to the day of our death inclusively; and it hath in it some things specially relating to the sins of our former days, which are now to be abolished by special arts, and have obliged us to special labours, and brought in many new necessities, and put us into a very great deal of danger. And, because it is a duty consisting of so many parts and so much employment, it also requires much time, and leaves a man in the same degree of hope of pardon, as is his restitution to the state of righteousness and holy living, for which we covenanted in baptism. For we must know, that there is but one repentance in a man's whole life, if repentance be taken in the proper and strict evangelical covenant sense, and not after the ordinary understanding of the world; that is, we are but once to change our whole state of life, from the power of the devil and his entire possession, from the state of sin and death, from the body of corruption, to the life of grace, to the possession of Jesus, to the kingdom of the gospel; and this is done in the baptism of water, or in the baptism of the Spirit, when the first rite comes to be verified by God's grace coming upon us, and by our obedience to the heavenly calling, we working together with God. After this change, if ever we fall into the contrary state, and be wholly estranged from God and religion, and profess ourselves servants of unrighteousness, God hath made no more covenant of restitution to us; there is no place left for any more repentance, or entire change of condition, or new birth: a man can be regenerated but once; and such are voluntary malicious apostates, witches, obstinate impenitent persons, and the like. But if we be overtaken by infirmity, or enter into the marches or borders of this estate, and commit a grievous sin, or ten, or twenty, so we be not in the entire possession of the devil, we are, for the present, in a damnable condition, if we die; but if we live, we are in a recoverable condition; for so we may repent often. We repent or rise from death but once, but from sickness many times; and, by the grace of God, we shall be pardoned, if so we repent. But our hopes of pardon are, just as is the repentance; which, if it be timely, hearty, industrious, and effective, God accepts; not by weighing grains or scruples, but by estimating the great proportions of our life. A hearty endeavour, and an effectual general change, shall get the pardon; the unavoidable infirmities, and past evils, and present imperfections, and short interruptions, against which we watch, and pray, and strive, being put upon the accounts of the cross, and paid for by the holy Jesus. This is the state and condition of repentance: its parts and actions must be valued according to the following rules.

Acts and Parts of Repentance.

1. He that repents truly, is greatly sorrowful for his past sins; not with a superficial sigh or tear, but a pungent afflictive sorrow; such a sorrow as hates the sin so much, that the man would choose to die rather than act it any more. This sorrow is

[p] ————Sed olim
Prodigio par est in nobilitate senectus.
Hortulus hic, puteusque brevis, nec reste movendus,
In tenues plantas facili diffunditur haustu.
Vive bidentis amans, et culti villicus horti:
Unde epulum possis centum dare Pythagoreis.
Est aliquid, quocunque loco, quocunque recessu,
Unius dominum sese fecisse lacertæ.—Juven. Sat. iii. 226.

called in Scripture, "a weeping sorely; a weeping with bitterness of heart; a weeping day and night; a sorrow of heart; a breaking of the spirit; mourning like a dove, and chattering like a swallow:"[q] and we may read the degree and manner of it by the lamentations and sad accents of the prophet Jeremy, when he wept for the sins of the nation; by the heart-breaking of David, when he mourned for his murder and adultery; and the bitter weeping of St. Peter, after the shameful denying of his Master. The expression of this sorrow differs according to the temper of the body, the sex, the age, and circumstance of action, and the motive of sorrow, and by many accidental tendernesses, or masculine hardnesses; and the repentance is not to be estimated by the tears, but by the grief; and the grief is to be valued not by the sensitive trouble, but by the cordial hatred of the sin, and ready actual dereliction of it, and a resolution and real resisting its consequent temptations. Some people can shed tears for nothing, some for any thing; but the proper and true effects of a godly sorrow are, fear of the Divine judgments, apprehension of God's displeasure, watchings and strivings against sin, patiently enduring the cross of sorrow, (which God sends as their punishment,) in accusation of ourselves, in perpetually begging pardon, in mean and base opinion of ourselves, and in all the natural productions from these, according to our temper and constitution. For if we be apt to weep in other accidents, it is ill if we weep not also in the sorrows of repentance; not that weeping is of itself a duty, but that the sorrow, if it be as great, will be still expressed in as great a manner.

2. Our sorrow for sins must retain the proportion of our sins, though not the equality: we have no particular measures of sins; we know not which is greater, of sacrilege or superstition, idolatry or covetousness, rebellion or witchcraft: and therefore God ties us not to nice measures of sorrow, but only, that we may keep the general rules of proportion; that is, that a great sin have a great grief, a smaller crime being to be washed off with a lesser shower.

3. Our sorrow for sins is then best accounted of for its degree, when it, together with all the penal and afflictive duties of repentance, shall have equalled or exceeded the pleasure we had in commission of the sin.[r]

4. True repentance is a punishing duty, and acts its sorrow; and judges and condemns the sin by voluntary submitting to such sadnesses as God sends on us, or (to prevent the judgment of God) by judging ourselves, and punishing our bodies and our spirits by such instruments of piety, as are troublesome to the body: such as are fasting, watching, long prayers, troublesome postures in our prayers, expensive alms, and all outward acts of humiliation. For he, that must judge himself, must condemn himself, if he be guilty; and, if he be condemned, he must be punished; and, if he be so judged, it will help to prevent the judgment of the Lord, St. Paul instructing us in this particular.[s] But I before intimated, that the punishing actions of repentance are only actions of sorrow, and therefore are to make up the proportions of it. For our grief may be so full of trouble, as to outweigh all the burdens of fasts and bodily afflictions, and then the other are the less necessary; and, when they are used, the benefit of them is to obtain of God a remission or a lessening of such temporal judgments, which God hath decreed against the sins, as it was in the case of Ahab: but the sinner is not, by any thing of this, reconciled to the eternal favour of God; for, as yet, this is but the introduction to repentance.

5. Every true penitent is obliged to confess his sins, and to humble himself before God for ever. Confession of sin hath a special promise. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins:"[t] meaning, that God hath bound himself to forgive us, if we duly confess our sins, and do all that for which confession was appointed; that is, be ashamed of them, and own them no more. For confession of our sins to God can signify nothing of itself, in its direct nature: he sees us, when we act them, and keeps a record of them; and we forget them, unless he reminds us of them by his grace. So "that to confess them to God does not punish us, or make us ashamed; but confession to him, if it proceeds from shame and sorrow, and is an act of humility and self-condemnation," and is a laying open our wounds for cure, then it is a duty God delights in. In all which circumstances, because we may very much be helped, if we take in the assistance of a spiritual guide; therefore the church of God, in all ages, hath commended, and, in most ages, enjoined, that we confess our sins,[u] and discover the state and condition of our souls, to such a person, whom we or our superiors judge fit to help us in such needs. For so, "if we confess our sins one to another," as St. James advises, we shall obtain the prayers of the holy man, whom God and the church have appointed solemnly to pray for us; and when he knows our needs, he can best minister comfort or reproof, oil or caustics; he can more opportunely recommend your particular state to God; he can determine your cases of conscience, and judge better for you, than you do for yourself; and the shame of opening such ulcers may restrain your forwardness to contract them; and all these circumstances of advantage will do very much towards the forgiveness. And this course was taken by the new converts in the days of the apostles: "For many that believed, came and confessed and showed their deeds."[v] And it were well, if this duty were practised prudently and innocently in order to public discipline, or private comfort and instruction: but that it be done to God is a duty, not directly for itself, but for its adjuncts, and the duties that go with it, or before it, or after it: which duties, because they are all to be helped and

[q] Jer. xiii. 17. Joel ii. 13. Ezek. xxvii. 31. James iv. 9.
[r] Hugo de St. Victor.
[s] 1 Cor. xi. 31.
[t] 1 John i. 9.
[u] Ἀναγκαῖον τοῖς πεπιστευμένοις τὴν οἶκον μίαν τῶν μυστηρίων τοῦ θεοῦ ἐξομολογεῖσθαι τὰ ἁμαρτήματα.—St. Basil. reg. brev. 228. Concil. Laod. c. 2. Concil. Quin. sext. c. 102 Tertul. de Pœnit.
[v] Acts xix. 18.

guided by our pastors and curates of souls, he is careful of his eternal interest, that will not lose the advantage of using a private guide and judge. "He that hideth his sins, shall not prosper;" *Non dirigetur*, saith the vulgar Latin, "he shall want a guide," "but who confesseth and forsaketh them, shall have mercy."[w] And to this purpose Climacus reports, that divers holy persons in that age did use to carry table-books with them, and in them described an account of all their determinate thoughts, purposes, words, and actions, in which they had suffered infirmity; that, by communicating the estate of their souls, they might be instructed and guided, or corrected or encouraged.

6. True repentance must reduce to act all its holy purposes, and enter into and run through the state of holy living,[x] which is contrary to that state of darkness, in which in times past we walked.[y] For to resolve to do it, and yet not to do it, is to break our resolution and our faith, to mock God, to falsify and evacuate all the preceding acts of repentance, and to make our pardon hopeless, and our hope fruitless. He that resolves to live well, when a danger is upon him, or a violent fear, or when the appetites of lust are newly satisfied, or newly served, and yet when the temptation comes again, sins again, and then is sorrowful, and resolves once more against it, and yet falls when the temptation returns, is a vain man, but no true penitent, nor in the state of grace; and if he chance to die in one of these good moods, is very far from salvation: for if it be necessary, that we resolve to live well, it is necessary we should do so. For resolution is an imperfect act, a term of relation, and signifies nothing but in order to the actions: it is as a faculty is to the act, as spring is to the harvest, as eggs are to birds, as a relative to its correspondent, nothing without it. No man therefore can be in the state of grace and actual favour by resolutions and holy purposes; these are but the gate and portal towards pardon: a holy life is the only perfection of repentance, and the firm ground, upon which we can cast the anchor of hope in the mercies of God, through Jesus Christ.

7. No man is to reckon his pardon immediately upon his returns from sin to the beginnings of good life, but is to begin his hopes and degrees of confidence according as sin dies in him, and grace lives; as the habits of sin lessen, and righteousness grows; according as sin returns but seldom in smaller instances and without choice, and by surprise without deliberation, and is highly disrelished, and presently dashed against the rock Christ Jesus, by a holy sorrow and renewed care and more strict watchfulness. For a holy life being the condition of the covenant on our part, as we return to God, so God returns to us, and our state returns to the probabilities of pardon.

8. Every man is to work out his salvation with fear and trembling; and after the commission of sins his fears must multiply; because every new sin and every great declining from the ways of God is still a degree of new danger, and hath increased God's anger, and hath made him more uneasy to grant pardon: and when he does grant it, it is upon harder terms both for doing and suffering; that is, we must do more for pardon, and, it may be, suffer much more. For we must know, that God pardons our sins by parts; as our duty increases, and our care is more prudent and active, so God's anger decreases: and yet, it may be, the last sin you committed, made God unalterably resolve to send upon you some sad judgment. Of the particulars in all cases we are uncertain; and therefore we have reason always to mourn for our sins, that have so provoked God, and made our condition so full of danger, that, it may be, no prayers or tears or duty can alter his sentence concerning some sad judgment upon us. Thus God irrevocably decreed to punish the Israelites for idolatry, although Moses prayed for them, and God forgave them in some degree; that is, so that he would not cut them off from being a people; yet he would not forgive them so, but he would visit that their sin upon them; and he did so.

9. A true penitent must, all the days of his life,[z] pray for pardon, and never think the work completed, till he dies; not by any act of his own, by no act of the church, by no forgiveness by the party injured, by no restitution. These are all instruments of great use and efficacy, and the means by which it is to be done at length; but still the sin lies at the door, ready to return upon us in judgment and damnation, if we return to it in choice or action. And whether God hath forgiven us or no, we know not,[a] and how far we know not; and all that we have done, is not of sufficient worth to obtain pardon: therefore still pray, and still be sorrowful for ever having done it, and for ever watch against it; and then those beginnings of pardon, which are working all the way, will at last be perfected in the day of the Lord.

10. Defer not at all to repent; much less mayest thou put off to thy death-bed. It is not an easy thing to root out the habits of sin,[b] which a man's whole life hath gathered and confirmed. We find work enough to mortify one beloved lust, in our very best advantage of strength and time, and before it is so deeply rooted, as it must needs be supposed to be at the end of a wicked life: and therefore it will prove impossible, when the work is so great and the strength so little, when sin is so strong and grace so weak: for they always keep the same proportion of increase and decrease, and as sin grows, grace decays: so that the more need we have of grace, the less at that time we shall have; because the greatness of our sins, which makes the need, hath lessened the grace of God, which should help us, into nothing. To which add this consideration; that on

[w] Prov. xxviii. 13.

[x] Rom. vi. 3, 4, 7. viii. 10. xi. 22, 27. xiii. 13, 14. Gal. v. 6, 24. vi. 15. 1 Cor. vii. 19. 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Colos. i. 21—23. Heb. xii. 1, 14, 16. x. 16, 22. 1 Pet. i. 15. 2 Pet. i. 4, 9, 10. iii. 11. 1 John i. 6. iii. 8, 9. v. 16.

[y] Nequam illud verbum, Bene vult, qui bene facit.—Trinummus. Act ii. Scen. iii. 38.

[z] Dandum interstitium pœnitentiæ.—Tacit.

[a] I peccati et i debiti son sempre piu di quel che si crede.

[b] Τί οὖν πρὸς ἔθος ἐστὶν εὑρίσκειν βοήθημα; τὸ ἐναντίον ἔθος.—Arrian.

a man's death-bed the day of repentance is past: for repentance being the renewing of a holy life, a living the life of grace, it is a contradiction to say that a man can live a holy life upon his death-bed: especially if we consider, that for a sinner to live a holy life must first suppose him to have overcome all his evil habits, and then to have made a purchase of the contrary graces, by the labours of great prudence, watchfulness, self-denial, and severity.[c] "Nothing that is excellent, can be wrought suddenly."[d]

11. After the beginnings of thy recovery, be infinitely fearful of a relapse; and therefore, upon the stock of thy sad experience, observe where thy failings were, and by especial arts fortify that faculty, and arm against that temptation. For if all those arguments, which God uses to us to preserve our innocence, and thy late danger, and thy fears, and the goodness of God making thee once to escape, and the shame of thy fall, and the sense of thy own weaknesses, will not make thee watchful against a fall, especially knowing how much it costs a man to be restored, it will be infinitely more dangerous, if ever thou fallest again; not only for fear God should no more accept thee to pardon, but even thy own hopes will be made more desperate, and thy impatience greater, and thy shame turn to impudence, and thy own will be more estranged, violent, and refractory, and thy latter end will be worse than thy beginning. To which add this consideration: that thy sin, which was formerly in a good way of being pardoned, will not only return upon thee with all its own loads, but with the baseness of unthankfulness, and thou wilt be set as far back from heaven as ever; and all thy former labours, and fears, and watchings, and agonies will be reckoned for nothing, but as arguments to upbraid thy folly, who, when thou hadst set one foot in heaven, didst pull that back, and carry both to hell.

Motives to Repentance.

I shall use no other arguments to move a sinner to repentance, but to tell him, unless he does, he shall certainly perish; and if he does repent timely and entirely, that is, live a holy life, he shall be forgiven and be saved. But yet I desire, that this consideration be enlarged with some great circumstances; and let us remember,

1. That to admit mankind to repentance and pardon, was a favour greater than ever God gave to the angels and devils; for they were never admitted to the condition of second thoughts: Christ never groaned one groan for them; he never suffered one stripe, nor one affront, nor shed one drop of blood, to restore them to hopes of blessedness after their first failings. But this he did for us: he paid the score of our sins, only that we might be admitted to repent, and that this repentance might be effectual to the great purposes of felicity and salvation.

2. Consider that as it cost Christ many millions of prayers and groans and sighs, so he is now at this instant, and hath been for these sixteen hundred years, night and day incessantly praying for grace to us, that we may repent; and for pardon, when we do; and for degrees of pardon beyond the capacities of our infirmities, and the merit of our sorrows and amendment; and this prayer he will continue till his second coming: "for he ever liveth to make intercession for us."[e] And that we may know what it is, in behalf of which he intercedes, St. Paul tells us his design; "We are ambassadors for Christ, as though he did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God."[f] And what Christ prays us to do, he prays to God that we may do; that which he desires of us as his servants, he desires of God, who is the fountain of the grace and powers unto us, and without whose assistance we can do nothing.

3. That ever we should repent, was so costly a purchase, and so great a concernment, and so high a favour, and the event is esteemed by God himself so great an excellency, that our blessed Saviour tells us, "there shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth:"[g] meaning, that when Christ shall be glorified, and at the right hand of his Father make intercession for us, praying for our repentance, the conversion and repentance of every sinner is part of Christ's glorification, it is the answering of his prayers, it is a portion of his reward, in which he does essentially glory by the joys of his glorified humanity. This is the joy of our Lord himself directly, not of the angels, save only by reflection: the joy (said our blessed Saviour) shall be in the presence of the angels; they shall see the glory of the Lord, the answering of his prayers, the satisfaction of his desires, and the reward of his sufferings, in the repentance and consequent pardon of a sinner. For therefore he once suffered, and for that reason he rejoices for ever. And therefore, when a penitent sinner comes to receive the effect and full consummation of his pardon, it is called "an entering into the joy of our Lord;" that is, a partaking of that joy, which Christ received at our conversion and enjoyed ever since.

4. Add to this, that the rewards of heaven are so great and glorious, and Christ's burden is so light, his yoke is so easy, that it is a shameless impudence to expect so great glories at a less rate than so little a service, at a lower rate than a holy life. It cost the heart-blood of the Son of God to obtain heaven for us upon that condition; and who shall die again to get heaven for us upon easier terms? What would you do, if God should command you to kill your eldest son, or to work in the mines for a thousand years together, or to fast all thy life-time with bread and water? were not heaven a very great bargain even after all this? And when God requires nothing of us but to live soberly, justly, and godly, (which things themselves are to a man a very great felicity, and necessary to our present well-being,) shall we think this to be an intolerable burden, and that heaven is too little a purchase at that price; and that God, in mere justice, will take a death-bed sigh or groan, and a few unprofitable tears and promises, in exchange for all our duty?

[c] Mortem venientem nemo hilaris excipit, nisi qui ad eam se diu composuerat.

[d] Οὐδὲν τῶν μεγάλων ἄφνω γίνεται.—Arrian.

[e] Heb. vii. 15. [f] 2 Cor. v. 20. [g] Luke xv. 7.

If these motives joined together with our own interest, even as much as felicity, and the sight of God, and the avoiding the intolerable pains of hell, and many intermedial judgments come to, will not move us to leave, 1. the filthiness, and, 2. the trouble, and, 3. the uneasiness, and, 4. the unreasonableness of sin, and turn to God, there is no more to be said; we must perish in our folly.

SECTION X.

Of Preparation to, and the manner how to receive, the holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

THE celebration of the holy sacrament is the great mysteriousness of the christian religion, and succeeds to the most solemn rite of natural and Judaical religion, the law of sacrificing. For God spared mankind, and took the sacrifice of beasts together with our solemn prayers for an instrument of expiation. But these could not purify the soul from sin, but were typical of the sacrifice of something that could. But nothing could do this, but either the offering of all that sinned, that every man should be the *anathema* or *devoted thing;* or else by some one of the same capacity, who, by some superadded excellency, might in his own personal sufferings have a value great enough to satisfy for all the whole kind of sinning persons. This the Son of God, Jesus Christ, God and man, undertook, and finished by a sacrifice of himself upon the altar of the cross.

2. This sacrifice, because it was perfect, could be but one, and that once: but because the needs of the world should last as long as the world itself, it was necessary that there should be a perpetual ministry established, whereby this one sufficient sacrifice should be made eternally effectual to the several new arising needs of all the world, who should desire it, or in any sense be capable of it.

3. To this end Christ was made a priest for ever: he was initiated or consecrated on the cross, and there began his priesthood, which was to last till his coming to judgment. It began on earth, but was to last and be officiated in heaven, where he sits perpetually representing and exhibiting to the Father that great effective sacrifice, which he offered on the cross, to eternal and never-failing purposes.

4. As Christ is pleased to represent to his Father that great sacrifice as a means of atonement and expiation for all mankind, and with special purposes and intendment for all the elect, all that serve him in holiness: so he hath appointed, that the same ministry shall be done upon earth too, in our manner, and according to our proportion; and therefore hath constituted and separated an order of men, who, by "showing forth the Lord's death" by sacramental representation, may pray unto God after the same manner, that our Lord and High Priest does; that is, offer to God, and represent in this solemn prayer and sacrament, Christ as already offered; so sending up a gracious instrument, whereby our prayers may, for his sake and in the same manner of intercession, be offered up to God in our behalf, and for all them for whom we pray, to all those purposes for which Christ died.

5. As the ministers of the sacrament do, in a sacramental manner, present to God the sacrifice of the cross, by being imitators of Christ's intercession; so the people are sacrificers too in their manner: for besides that, by saying *Amen*, they join in the act of him that ministers, and make it also to be their own; so, when they eat and drink the consecrated and blessed elements worthily, they receive Christ within them, and therefore may also offer him to God, while, in their sacrifice of obedience and thanksgiving, they present themselves to God with Christ, whom they have spiritually received, that is, themselves with that which will make them gracious and acceptable. The offering their bodies and souls and services to God in him, and by him, and with him, who is his Father's well-beloved, and in whom he is well pleased, cannot but be accepted to all the purposes of blessing, grace, and glory.[h]

6. This is the sum of the greatest mystery of our religion: it is the copy of the passion, and the ministration of the great mystery of our redemption: and therefore, whatsoever entitles us to the general privileges of Christ's passion, all that is necessary by way of disposition to the celebration of the sacrament of his passion; because this celebration is our manner of applying or using it. The particulars of which preparation are represented in the following rules.

1. No man must dare to approach to the holy sacrament of the Lord's supper, if he be in a state of any one sin,[i] that is, unless he have entered into the state of repentance, that is, of sorrow and amendment; lest it be said concerning him, as it was concerning Judas, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table: and he that receiveth Christ into an impure soul or body, first turns his must excellent nourishment into poison, and then feeds upon it.

2. Every communicant must first have examined himself, that is, tried the condition and state of his soul, searched out the secret ulcers, inquired out its weaknesses and indiscretions, and all those aptnesses, where it is exposed to temptation; that, by finding out its diseases, he may find a cure, and by discovering its aptnesses he may secure his present purposes of future amendment, and may be armed against dangers and temptations.

3. This examination must be a man's own act and inquisition into his life: but then also it should lead a man on to run to those, whom the great Physician of our souls, Christ Jesus, hath appointed to minister physic to our diseases; that, in all dangers and great accidents, we may be as-

[h] Nôsti tempora tu Jovis sereni,
Cùm fulget placidus, suoque vultu,
Quo nil supplicibus solet negare.—MARTIAL. ep. 1. v. 6.

[i] Vasa pura ad rem Divinam.—PLAUT. in Cap. Act. iv. sc. 1.

sisted for comfort and remedy, for medicine and caution.

4. In this affair let no man deceive himself, and against such a time which public authority hath appointed for us to receive the sacrament, weep for his sins by way of solemnity and ceremony, and still retain the affection: but he that comes to this feast, must have on the wedding-garment, that is, he must have put on Jesus Christ, and he must have put off the old man with his affections and lusts; and he must be wholly conformed to Christ in the image of his mind. For then we have put on Christ, when our souls are clothed with his righteousness, when every faculty of our soul is proportioned and vested according to the pattern of Christ's life. And therefore a man must not leap from his last night's surfeit and bath, and then communicate: but when he hath begun the work of God effectually, and made some progress in repentance, and hath walked some stages and periods in the ways of godliness, then let him come to him that is to minister it, and having made known the state of his soul, he is to be admitted: but to receive it into an unhallowed soul and body, is to receive the dust of the tabernacle in the waters of jealousy; it will make the belly to swell, and the thigh to rot; it will not convey Christ to us, but the devil will enter and dwell there, till with it he returns to his dwelling of torment. Remember always, that after a great sin or after a habit of sins, a man is not soon made clean; and no unclean thing must come to this feast. It is not the preparation of two or three days, that can render a person capable of this banquet: for, in this feast, all Christ, and Christ's passion, and all his graces, the blessings and effects of his sufferings, are conveyed. Nothing can fit us for this, but what can unite us to Christ, and obtain of him to present our needs to his heavenly Father: this sacrament can no otherwise be celebrated, but upon the same terms on which we may hope for pardon and heaven itself.

5. When we have this general and indispensably necessary preparation, we are to make our souls more adorned and trimmed up with circumstances of pious actions and special devotions, setting apart some portion of our time immediately before the day of solemnity, according as our great occasions will permit: and this time is specially to be spent in actions of repentance, confession of our sins, renewing our purposes of holy living, praying for pardon of our failings, and for those graces which may prevent the like sadnesses for the time to come, meditation upon the passion, upon the infinite love of God expressed in so great mysterious manners of redemption; and, indefinitely, in all acts of virtue, which may build our souls up into a temple fit for the reception of Christ himself and the inhabitation of the Holy Spirit.

6. The celebration of the holy sacrament being the most solemn prayer, joined with the most effectual instrument of its acceptance, must suppose us in the love of God and in charity with all the world: and therefore we must, before every communion especially, remember what differences or jealousies are between us and any one else, and recompose all disunions, and cause right understandings between each other; offering to satisfy whom we have injured, and to forgive them who have injured us, without thoughts of resuming the quarrel when the solemnity is over; for that is but to rake the embers in light and fantastic ashes: it must be quenched, and a holy flame enkindled: no fires must be at all, but the fires of love and zeal: and the altar of incense will send up a sweet perfume, and make atonement for us.

7. When the day of the feast is come, lay aside all cares and impertinences of the world, and remember that this is thy soul's day, a day of traffic and intercourse with heaven. Arise early in the morning. 1. Give God thanks for the approach of so great a blessing. 2. Confess thine own unworthiness to admit so divine a guest. 3. Then remember and deplore thy sins, which have made thee so unworthy. 4. Then confess God's goodness, and take sanctuary there, and upon him place thy hopes; 5. And invite him to thee with renewed acts of love, of holy desire, of hatred of his enemy, sin. 6. Make oblation of thyself wholly to be disposed by him, to the obedience of him, to his providence and possession, and pray him to enter and dwell there for ever. And after this, with joy and holy fear, and the forwardness of love, address thyself to the receiving of him, to whom, and by whom, and for whom, all faith, and all hope, and all love, in the whole catholic church, both in heaven and earth, is designed; him, whom kings and queens and whole kingdoms are in love with, and count it the greatest honour in the world, that their crowns and sceptres are laid at his holy feet.

8. When the holy man stands at the table of blessing, and ministers the rite of consecration, then do as the angels do, who behold, and love, and wonder that the Son of God should become food to the souls of his servants: that he, who cannot suffer any change or lessening, should be broken into pieces, and enter into the body to support and nourish the spirit, and yet at the same time remain in heaven, while he descends to thee upon earth; that he who hath essential felicity, should become miserable and die for thee, and then give himself to thee for ever to redeem thee from sin and misery; that by his wounds he should procure health to thee, by his affronts he should entitle thee to glory, by his death he should bring thee to life, and by becoming a man he should make thee partaker of the Divine nature. These are such glories, that although they are made so obvious, that each eye may behold them, yet they are also so deep, that no thought can fathom them: but so it hath pleased him to make these mysteries to be sensible, because the excellency and depth of the mercy is not intelligible; that while we are ravished and comprehended within the infiniteness of so vast and mysterious a mercy, yet we may be as sure of it, as of that thing we see, and feel, and smell, and taste; but yet it is so great, that we cannot understand it.

9. These holy mysteries are offered to our senses, but not to be placed under our feet; they are sensible, but not common: and therefore as the weak-

ness of the elements adds wonder to the excellency of the sacrament: so let our reverence and venerable usages of them add honour to the elements, and acknowledge the glory of the mystery, and the divinity of the mercy. Let us receive the consecrated elements with all devotion and humility of body and spirit; and do this honour to it, that it be the first food we eat, and the first beverage we drink that day, unless it be in case of sickness, or other great necessity; and that your body and soul both be prepared to its reception with abstinence from secular pleasures, that you may better have attended fastings and preparatory prayers. For if ever it be seasonable to observe the counsel of St. Paul, that married persons by consent should abstain for a time, that they may attend to solemn religion, it is now.[k] It was not by St. Paul nor the after-ages of the church called a duty so to do, but it is most reasonable, that the more solemn actions of religion should be attended to without the mixture of any thing, that may discompose the mind, and make it more secular or less religious.

10. In the act of receiving, exercise acts of faith with much confidence and resignation, believing it not to be common bread and wine, but holy in their use, holy in their signification, holy in their change, and holy in their effect: and believe, if thou art a worthy communicant, thou dost as verily receive Christ's body and blood to all effects and purposes of the Spirit, as thou dost receive the blessed elements into thy mouth, that thou puttest thy finger to his hand, and thy hand into his side, and thy lips to his fontinel of blood, sucking life from his heart;[1] and yet if thou dost communicate unworthily, thou eatest and drinkest Christ to thy danger, and death, and destruction. Dispute not concerning the secret of the mystery, and the nicety of the manner of Christ's presence; it is sufficient to thee, that Christ shall be present to thy soul, as an instrument of grace, as a pledge of the resurrection, as the earnest of glory and immortality, and a means of many intermedial blessings, even all such as are necessary for thee, and are in order to thy salvation. And to make all this good to thee, there is nothing necessary on thy part but a holy life, and a true belief of all the sayings of Christ; amongst which, indefinitely assent to the words of institution, and believe that Christ, in the holy sacrament, gives thee his body and his blood. He that believes not this, is not a christian. He that believes so much, needs not to inquire further, nor to entangle his faith by disbelieving his sense.

11. Fail not this solemnity, according to the custom of pious and devout people, to make an offering to God for the uses of religion and the poor, according to thy ability. For when Christ feasts his body, let us also feast our fellow-members, who have right to the same promises, and are partakers of the same sacrament, and partners of the same hope, and cared for under the same Providence, and descended from the same common parents, and whose Father God is, and Christ is their elder brother. If thou chancest to communicate, where this holy custom is not observed publicly, supply that want by thy private charity; but offer it to God at his holy table, at least by thy private designing it there.

12. When you have received, pray and give thanks. Pray for all estates of men; for they also have an interest in the body of Christ, whereof they are members: and you, in conjunction with Christ, (whom then you have received,) are more fit to pray for them in that advantage, and in the celebration of that holy sacrifice, which then is sacramentally represented to God. Give thanks for the passion of our dearest Lord: remember all its parts, and all the instruments of your redemption; and beg of God, that by a holy perseverance in well-doing, you may from shadows pass on to substances, from eating his body to seeing his face, from the typical, sacramental, and transient, to the real and eternal supper of the Lamb.

13. After the solemnity is done, let Christ dwell in your hearts by faith, and love, and obedience, and conformity to his life and death: as you have taken Christ into you, so put Christ on you, and conform every faculty of your soul and body to his holy image and perfection. Remember, that now Christ is all one with you; and therefore, when you are to do an action, consider how Christ did, or would do, the like, and do you imitate his example, and transcribe his copy, and understand all his commandments, and choose all that he propounded, and desire his promises, and fear his threatenings, and marry his loves and hatreds, and contract his friendships; for then you do every day communicate; especially when Christ thus dwells in you, and you in Christ, growing up towards a perfect man in Christ Jesus.

14. Do not instantly, upon your return from church, return also to the world, and secular thoughts and employment; but let the remaining parts of that day be like a post-communion, or an after-office, entertaining your blessed Lord with all the caresses and sweetness of love and colloquies, and intercourses of duty and affection, acquainting him with all your needs, and revealing to him all your secrets, and opening all your infirmities; and as the affairs of your person or employment call you off, so retire again with often ejaculations and acts of entertainment to your beloved guest.

The effects and benefits of worthy communicating.

When I said, that the sacrifice of the cross, which Christ offered for all the sins and all the needs of the world, is represented to God by the minister in the sacrament, and offered up in prayer and sacramental memory, after the manner that Christ himself intercedes for us in heaven, (so far as his glorious priesthood is imitable by his ministers on earth,) I must of necessity also mean, that

[k] Discedite ab aris, Queis tulit hesternâ gaudia nocte Venus.—Tibul. ii. 1. 12.

[1] Cruci hæremus, sanguinem sugimus, et inter ipsa Redemptoris nostri vulnera, figimus linguam.—Cyprian. de Cœna Dom.

all the benefits of that sacrifice are then conveyed to all, that communicate worthily. But if we descend to particulars, then and there the church is nourished in her faith, strengthened in her hope, enlarged in her bowels with an increasing charity; there all the members of Christ are joined with each other, and all to Christ their Head; and we again renew the covenant with God in Jesus Christ, and God seals his part, and we promise for ours, and Christ unites both, and the Holy Ghost signs both in the collation of those graces, which we then pray for, and exercise, and receive all at once. There our bodies are nourished with the signs, and our souls with the mystery; our bodies receive into them the seed of an immortal nature, and our souls are joined with him who is the first-fruits of the resurrection, and never can die. And if we desire any thing else and need it, here it is to be prayed for, here to be hoped for, here to be received. Long life and health, and recovery from sickness, and competent support and maintenance, and peace and deliverance from our enemies, and content, and patience, and joy, and sanctified riches, or a cheerful poverty, and liberty, and whatsoever else is a blessing, was purchased for us by Christ in his death and resurrection, and in his intercession in heaven. And this sacrament being that to our particulars, which the great mysteries are in themselves and by design to all the world, if we receive worthily, we shall receive any of these blessings according as God shall choose for us; and he will not only choose with more wisdom, but also with more affection, than we can for ourselves.

After all this, it is advised by the guides of souls, wise men and pious, that all persons should communicate very often, even as often as they can without excuses or delays. Every thing that puts us from so holy an employment, when we are moved to it, being either a sin or an imperfection, an infirmity or indevotion, and an inactiveness of spirit. All christian people must come. They, indeed, that are in the state of sin, must not come so, but yet they must come. First they must quit their state of death, and then partake of the bread of life. They that are at enmity with their neighbours must come, that is no excuse for their not coming; only they must not bring their enmity along with them, but leave it and then come. They that have variety of secular employment must come;[m] only they must leave their secular thoughts and affections behind them, and then come and converse with God. If any man be well grown in grace, he must needs come, because he is excellently disposed to so holy a feast; but he that is but in the infancy of piety had need to come, that so he may grow in grace. The strong must come lest they become weak; and the weak that they may become strong. The sick must come to be cured, the healthful to be preserved. They that have leisure must come, because they have no excuse; they that have no leisure must come hither, that by so excellent religion they may sanctify their business. The penitent sinners must come, that they may be justified; and they that are justified, that they may be justified still. They that have fears and great reverence to these mysteries, and think no preparation to be sufficient, must receive, that they may learn how to receive the more worthily; and they that have a less degree of reverence, must come often to have it heightened: that, as those creatures that live amongst the snows of the mountains turn white with their food and conversation with such perpetual whitenesses; so our souls may be transformed into the similitude and union with Christ by our perpetual feeding on him, and conversation, not only in his courts, but in his very heart, and most secret affections, and incomparable purities.

[m] L'Evêque de Genève, Introd. à la Vie Devote.

Prayers for all sorts of Men and all Necessities; relating to the several parts of the Virtue of Religion.

A Prayer for the Graces of Faith, Hope, Charity.

O Lord God of infinite mercy, of infinite excellency, who hast sent thy holy Son into the world to redeem us from an intolerable misery, and to teach us a holy religion, and to forgive us an infinite debt; give me thy Holy Spirit, that my understanding and all my faculties may be so resigned to the discipline and doctrine of my Lord, that I may be prepared in mind and will to die for the testimony of Jesus, and to suffer any affliction or calamity, that shall offer to hinder my duty, or tempt me to shame, or sin, or apostasy: and let my faith be the parent of a good life, a strong shield to repel the fiery darts of the devil, and the author of a holy hope, of modest desires, of confidence in God, and of a never-failing charity to thee my God, and to all the world; that I may never have my portion with the unbelievers, or uncharitable and desperate persons; but may be supported by the strengths of faith in all temptations, and may be refreshed with the comforts of a holy hope in all my sorrows, and may bear the burden of the Lord, and the infirmities of my neighbour by the support of charity; that the yoke of Jesus may become easy to me, and my love may do all the miracles of grace, till from grace it swell to glory, from earth to heaven, from duty to reward, from the imperfections of a beginning and still growing love, it may arrive to the consummation of an eternal and never-ceasing charity, through Jesus Christ the Son of thy love, the anchor of our hope, and the author and finisher of our faith: to whom with thee, O Lord God, Father of heaven and earth, and with thy Holy Spirit, be all glory, and love, and obedience, and dominion, now and for ever. Amen.

Acts of Love by way of Prayer and Ejaculation; to be used in private.

O God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; to see thy power and thy glory so, as I have seen thee in the sanctuary. Because thy loving-kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. Psal. lxiii. 1, &c.

I am ready not only to be bound, but to die for the name of the Lord Jesus. Acts xxi. 13.

How amiable are thy tabernacles, thou Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God. Blessed are they that dwell in thy house; they will still be praising thee. Psal. lxxxiv. 1, 2, 4.

O blessed Jesu, thou art worthy of all adoration, and all honour, and all love: thou art the Wonderful, the Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace; of thy government and peace there shall be no end: thou art the brightness of thy Father's glory, the express image of his person, the appointed heir of all things. Thou upholdest all things by the word of thy power; thou didst by thyself purge our sins: thou art set on the right hand of the Majesty on high: thou art made better than the angels; thou hast by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. Thou, O dearest Jesus, art the head of the church, the beginning and the first-born from the dead: in all things thou hast the pre-eminence, and it pleased the Father, that in thee should all fulness dwell. Kingdoms are in love with thee; kings lay their crowns and sceptres at thy feet, and queens are thy handmaids, and wash the feet of thy servants.

A Prayer to be said in any affliction, as death of children, of husband or wife, in great poverty, in imprisonment, in a sad and disconsolate spirit, and in temptations to despair.

O eternal God, Father of mercies, and God of all comfort, with much mercy look upon the sadnesses and sorrows of thy servant. My sins lie heavy upon me, and press me sore, and there is no health in my bones by reason of thy displeasure and my sin. The waters are gone over me, and I stick fast in the deep mire, and my miseries are without comfort, because they are punishments of my sin: and I am so evil and unworthy a person, that though I have great desires, yet I have no dispositions or worthiness toward receiving comfort. My sins have caused my sorrow, and my sorrow does not cure my sins; and unless for thy own sake, and merely because thou art good, thou shalt pity me and relieve me, I am as much without remedy, as now I am without comfort. Lord, pity me; Lord, let thy grace refresh my spirit. Let thy comforts support me, thy mercy pardon me, and never let my portion be amongst hopeless and accursed spirits: for thou art good and gracious; and I throw myself upon thy mercy. Let me never let my hold go, and do thou with me what seems good in thy own eyes. I cannot suffer more than I have deserved: and yet I can need no relief so great as thy mercy is; for thou art infinitely more merciful than I can be miserable; and thy mercy, which is above all thy own works, must needs be far above all my sin and all my misery. Dearest Jesus, let me trust in thee for ever, and let me never be confounded. Amen.

Ejaculations and short Meditations to be used in time of Sickness and Sorrow: or danger of Death.

Hear my prayer, O Lord, and let my cry come unto thee.[n] Hide not thy face from me in the time of my trouble, incline thine ear unto me when I call: O hear me, and that right soon. For my days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burnt up, as it were with a firebrand. My heart is smitten down and withered like grass, so that I forget to eat my bread; and that because of thine indignation and wrath; for thou hast taken me up and cast me down; thine arrows stick fast in me, and thine hand presseth me sore.[o] There is no health in my flesh because of thy displeasure; neither is there any rest in my bones by reason of my sin. My wickednesses are gone over my head, and are a sore burden too heavy for me to bear. But I will confess my wickedness, and be sorry for my sin. O Lord, rebuke me not in thine indignation, neither chasten me in thy displeasure.[p] Lord, be merciful unto me, heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee.[q]

Have mercy upon me, O God, after thy great goodness, according to the multitude of thy mercies do away mine offences.[r] O remember not the sins and offences of my youth; but according to thy mercy think thou upon me, O Lord, for thy goodness.[s] Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness, and cleanse me from my sin. Make me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.[t] Cast me not away from thy presence, from thy all-hallowing and life-giving presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit, thy sanctifying, thy guiding, thy comforting, thy supporting, and confirming Spirit from me.

O God, thou art my God for ever and ever; thou shalt be my guide unto death.[u] Lord, comfort me, now that I lie sick upon my bed; make thou my bed in all my sickness.[v] O deliver my soul from the place of hell; and do thou receive me.[w] My heart is disquieted within me, and the fear of death is fallen upon me.[x] Behold, thou hast made my days as it were a span long, and my age is even as nothing in respect of thee; and verily every man living is altogether vanity.[y] When thou with rebukes dost chasten man for sin, thou makest his beauty to consume away, like a moth fretting a garment: every man therefore is but vanity. And now, Lord, what is my hope? truly my hope is even in thee. Hear my prayer, O Lord, and with thine ears consider my calling: hold not thy peace at my tears. Take this plague away from me: I am consumed by the means of thy heavy hand. I am a stranger with thee and a sojourner, as all my fathers were. O spare me a little, that I may recover my strength, before I go hence and be no more seen. My soul cleaveth

[n] Psal. cii. 2—4, 10.
[o] Psal. xxxviii. 2—4, 18.
[p] Psal. vi. 1.
[q] Psal. xli. 4.
[r] Psal. li. 1.
[s] Psal. xxv. 6.
[t] Psal. li. 2, 10, 11.
[u] Psal. xlviii. 13.
[v] Psal. xli. 3.
[w] Psal. xlix. 15.
[x] Psal. lv. 4.
[y] Psal. xxxix. 6.

unto the dust: O quicken me according to thy word.[z] And when the snares of death compass me round about, let not the pains of hell take hold upon me.[a]

An Act of Faith concerning the Resurrection and the Day of Judgment, to be said by Sick Persons, or meditated.

I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, though my reins be consumed within me. Job xix. 25, &c.

God shall come, and shall not keep silence: there shall go before him a consuming fire, and a mighty tempest shall be stirred up round about him; he shall call the heaven from above, and the earth, that he may judge his people.[b] O blessed Jesu, thou art my judge and thou art my advocate: have mercy upon me in the hour of my death, and in the day of judgment. See John v. 28. and 1 Thess. iv. 15.

Short Prayers to be said by Sick Persons.

O holy Jesus, thou art a merciful high priest, and touched with the sense of our infirmities; thou knowest the sharpness of my sickness and the weakness of my person. The clouds are gathered about me, and thou hast covered me with thy storm: my understanding hath not such apprehensions of things as formerly. Lord, let thy mercy support me, thy Spirit guide me, and lead me through the valley of this death safely; that I may pass it patiently, holily, with perfect resignation; and let me rejoice in the Lord, in the hopes of pardon, in the expectation of glory, in the sense of thy mercies, in the refreshments of thy spirit, in a victory over all temptations.

Thou hast promised to be with us in tribulation. Lord, my soul is troubled, and my body is weak, and my hope is in thee, and my enemies are busy and mighty; now make good thy holy promise. Now, O holy Jesus, now let thy hand of grace be upon me: restrain my ghostly enemies, and give me all sorts of spiritual assistances. Lord, remember thy servant in the day when thou bindest up thy jewels.

O take from me all tediousness of spirit, all impatiency and unquietness: let me possess my soul in patience, and resign my soul and body into thy hands, as into the hands of a faithful Creator, and a blessed Redeemer.

O holy Jesu, thou didst die for us; by thy sad, pungent, and intolerable pains, which thou enduredst for me, have pity on me, and ease my pain, or increase my patience. Lay on me no more than thou shalt enable me to bear. I have deserved it all, and more, and infinitely more. Lord, I am weak and ignorant, timorous and inconstant, and I fear lest something should happen that may discompose the state of my soul, that may displease thee: do what thou wilt with me, so thou dost but preserve me in thy fear and favour. Thou knowest that it is my great fear, but let thy Spirit secure, that nothing may be able to separate me from the love of God in Jesus Christ: then smite me here, that thou mayest spare me for ever: and yet, O Lord, smite me friendly; for thou knowest my infirmities. Into thy hands I commend my spirit; for thou hast redeemed me, O Lord, thou God of truth. Come, Holy Spirit, help me in this conflict. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.

[Let the sick man often meditate upon these following promises and gracious words of God.]

My help cometh of the Lord, who preserveth them that are true of heart. Psal. vii. 11.

And all they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, Lord, hast never failed them that seek thee. Psal. ix. 10.

O how plentiful is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee, and that thou hast prepared for them that put their trust in thee, even before the sons of men! Psal. xxxi. 21.

Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, and upon them that put their trust in his mercy, to deliver their souls from death. Psal. xxxiii. 17.

The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a contrite heart; and will save such as are of an humble spirit. Psal. xxxiv. 18.

Thou, Lord, shalt save both man and beast: how excellent is thy mercy, O God! and the children of men shall put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. Psal. xxxvi. 7.

They shall be satisfied with the plenteousness of thy house; and thou shalt give them to drink of thy pleasures, as out of the rivers. Ver. 8.

For with thee is the well of life; and in thy light we shall see light. Ver. 9.

Commit thy way unto the Lord, and put thy trust in him, and he shall bring it to pass. Psal. xxxvii. 5.

But the salvation of the righteous cometh of the Lord; who is also their strength in the time of trouble. Ver. 40.

So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous: doubtless there is a God that judgeth the earth. Psal. lviii. 10.

Blessed is the man whom thou choosest and receivest unto thee: he shall dwell in thy court, and shall be satisfied with the pleasures of thy house, even of thy holy temple. Psal. lxv. 4.

They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. Psal. cxxvi. 6.

It is written, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. Heb. xiii. 5.

The prayer of faith shall save the sick; and the Lord shall raise him up: and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Jam. v. 15.

Come and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. Hos. vi. 1.

If we sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins. 1 John ii. 1, 2.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous

[z] Psal. cxix. 25.

[a] Psal. cxvi. 3. [b] Psal. l. 3, 4.

to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John i. 9.

He that forgives shall be forgiven, Luke vi. 37.

And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us. 1 John v. 14.

And ye know, that he was manifested to take away our sins. 1 John iii. 5.

If ye, being evil, know how to give good things to your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him? Matt. vii. 11.

This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. 1 Tim. i. 15.

He that hath given us his Son, how should he not, with him, give us all things else? Rom. viii. 32.

Acts of Hope, to be used by Sick Persons after a pious Life.

I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Rom. viii. 38, 39.

I have fought a good fight: I have finished my course: I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.

Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comforts, who comforts us in all our tribulation. 2 Cor. i. 3, 4.

A Prayer to be said in behalf of a Sick or Dying Person.

O Lord God, there is no number of thy days nor of thy mercies, and the sins and sorrows of thy servant also are multiplied. Lord, look upon him with much mercy and pity, forgive him all his sins, comfort his sorrows, ease his pain, satisfy his doubts, relieve his fears, instruct his ignorances, strengthen his understanding, take from him all disorders of spirit, weakness, and abuse of fancy. Restrain the malice and power of the spirits of darkness: and suffer him to be injured neither by his ghostly enemies, nor his own infirmities; and let a holy and a just peace, the peace of God, be within his conscience.

Lord, preserve his senses till the last of his time, strengthen his faith, confirm his hope, and give him a never-ceasing charity to thee our God, and to all the world: stir up in him a great and proportionable contrition for all the evils he hath done, and give him a just measure of patience for all he suffers: give him prudence, memory, and consideration, rightly to state the accounts of his soul; and do thou remind him of all his duty; that when it shall please thee, that his soul goes out from the prison of his body, it may be received by angels, and preserved from the surprise of evil spirits, and from the horrors and amazements of new and strange regions, and be laid up in the bosom of our Lord, till, at the day of thy second coming, it shall be reunited to the body, which is now to be laid down in weakness and dishonour, but we humbly beg, may then be raised up with glory and power, for ever to live, and to behold the face of God in the glories of the Lord Jesus, who is our hope, our resurrection, and our life, the light of our eyes and the joy of our souls, our blessed and ever-glorious Redeemer. Amen.

[Hither the sick persons may draw in and use the acts of several virtues respersed in the several parts of this book, the several litanies, viz. of repentance, of the passion, and the single prayers, according to his present needs.]

A Prayer to be said in a Storm at Sea.

O my God, thou didst create the earth and the sea for thy glory and the use of man, and dost daily show wonders in the deep: look upon the danger and fear of thy servant. My sins have taken hold upon me, and without the supporting arm of thy mercy, I cannot look up; but my trust is in thee. Do thou, O Lord, rebuke the sea, and make it calm; for to thee the winds and the sea obey: let not the waters swallow me up, but let thy Spirit, the spirit of gentleness and mercy, move upon the waters. Be thou reconciled unto thy servants, and then the face of the waters will be smooth. I fear that my sins make me, like Jonas, the cause of the tempest. Cast out all my sins, and throw not thy servants away from thy presence, and from the land of the living, into the depths, where all things are forgotten. But if it be thy will, that we shall go down into the waters, Lord, receive my soul into thy holy hands, and preserve it in mercy and safety till the day of restitution of all things: and be pleased to unite my death to the death of thy Son, and to accept of it so united as a punishment for all my sins, that thou mayest forget all thine anger, and blot my sins out of thy book, and write my soul there, for Jesus Christ's sake, our dearest Lord and most mighty Redeemer. Amen.

Then make an Act of Resignation thus:

To God pertain the issues of life and death. It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth good in his own eyes. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

Recite Psalm cvii. and cxxx.

A form of a Vow to be made in this or the like Danger.

If the Lord will be gracious and hear the prayer of his servant, and bring me safe to shore, then I will praise him secretly and publicly, and pay unto the uses of charity [or religion] [*then name the sum you design for holy uses*]. O my God, my goods are nothing unto thee: I will also be thy servant all the days of my life, and remember this mercy and my present purposes, and live more to God's glory, and with a stricter duty. And do thou please

to accept this vow as an instance of my importunity, and the greatness of my needs: and be thou graciously moved to pity and deliver me. Amen.

[*This form also may be used in praying for a blessing on an enterprise, and may be instanced in actions of devotion as well as of charity.*]

A Prayer before a Journey.

O Almighty God, who fillest all things with thy presence, and art a God afar off as well as near at hand; thou didst send thy angel to bless Jacob in his journey, and didst lead the children of Israel through the Red sea, making it a wall on the right hand and on the left: be pleased to let thy angel go out before me and guide me in my journey, preserving me from dangers of robbers, from violence of enemies, and sudden and sad accidents, from falls and errors. And prosper my journey to thy glory, and to all my innocent purposes: and preserve me from all sin, that I may return in peace and holiness, with thy favour and thy blessing, and may serve thee in thankfulness and obedience all the days of my pilgrimage: and at last bring me to thy country, to the celestial Jerusalem, there to dwell in thy house, and to sing praises to thee for ever. Amen.

Ad Sect. 4.] *A Prayer to be said before the hearing or reading the Word of God.*

O holy and eternal Jesus, who hast begotten us by thy word, renewed us by thy Spirit, fed us by thy sacraments, and by the daily ministry of thy word, still go on to build us up to life eternal. Let thy most Holy Spirit be present with me and rest upon me in the reading, or hearing, thy sacred word; that I may do it humbly, reverently, without prejudice, with a mind ready and desirous to learn and to obey; that I may be readily furnished and instructed to every good work, and may practise all thy holy laws and commandments, to the glory of thy holy name, O holy and eternal Jesus. Amen.

Ad Sect. 5, 9, 10.] *A Form of Confession of Sins and Repentance, to be used upon Fasting Days, or Days of Humiliation; especially in Lent, and before the Holy Sacrament.*

"Have mercy upon me, O God, after thy great goodness; according to the multitude of thy mercies do away mine offences. For I will confess my wickedness and be sorry for my sin." O my dearest Lord, I am not worthy to be accounted amongst the meanest of thy servants; not worthy to be sustained by the least fragments of thy mercy, but to be shut out of thy presence for ever and with dogs and unbelievers.—But for thy name's sake, O Lord, be merciful unto my sin, for it is great.

I am the vilest of sinners, and the worst of men: proud and vain-glorious, impatient of scorn or of just reproof; not enduring to be slighted, and yet extremely deserving it: I have been cozened by the colours of humility, and when I have truly called myself vicious, I could not endure any man else should say so or think so. I have been disobedient to my superiors, churlish and ungentle in my behaviour, unchristian and unmanly.—But for thy name's sake, &c.

O just and dear God, how can I expect pity or pardon, who am so angry and peevish, with and without cause, envious at good, rejoicing in the evil of my neighbours, negligent of my charge, idle and useless, timorous and base, jealous and impudent, ambitious and hard-hearted, soft, unmortified, and effeminate in my life, undevout in my prayers, without fancy or affection, without attendance to them or perseverance in them; but passionate and curious in pleasing my appetite of meat and drink and pleasures, making matter both for sin and sickness: and I have reaped the cursed fruits of such improvidence, entertaining indecent and impure thoughts; and I have brought them forth in indecent and impure actions, and the spirit of uncleanness hath entered in, and unhallowed the temple, which thou didst consecrate for the habitation of thy Spirit of love and holiness.—But for thy name's sake, O Lord, be merciful unto my sin, for it is great.

Thou hast given me a whole life to serve thee in, and to advance my hopes of heaven: and this precious time I have thrown away upon my sins and vanities, being improvident of my time and of my talent, and of thy grace and my own advantages, resisting thy Spirit and quenching him. I have been a great lover of myself, and yet used many ways to destroy myself. I have pursued my temporal ends with greediness and indirect means. I am revengeful and unthankful, forgetting benefits, but not so soon forgetting injuries, curious and murmuring, a great breaker of promises. I have not loved my neighbour's good, nor advanced it in all things where I could. I have been unlike thee in all things. I am unmerciful and unjust; a sottish admirer of things below, and careless of heaven and the ways that lead thither.

But for thy name's sake, O Lord, be merciful unto my sin, for it is great.

All my senses have been windows to let sin in, and death by sin. Mine eyes have been adulterous and covetous; mine ears open to slander and detraction; my tongue and palate loose and wanton, intemperate and of foul language, talkative and lying, rash and malicious, false and flattering, irreligious and irreverent, detracting and censorious; my hands have been injurious and unclean, my passions violent and rebellious, my desires impatient and unreasonable; all my members and all my faculties have been servants of sin: and my very best actions have more matter of pity than of confidence, being imperfect in my best, and intolerable in most.—But for thy name's sake, O Lord, &c.

Unto this and a far bigger heap of sin I have added also the faults of others to my own score, by neglecting to hinder them to sin in all, that I could, and ought; but I also have encouraged them in sin, have taken off their fears, and hardened their consciences, and tempted them directly, and prevailed in it to my own ruin and theirs, unless thy glorious and unspeakable mercy hath prevented so intolerable a calamity.

Lord, I have abused thy mercy, despised thy judgments, turned thy grace into wantonness. I have been unthankful for thy infinite loving-kindness. I have sinned and repented, and then sinned again, and resolved against it, and presently broke it; and then I tied myself up with vows, and then was tempted, and then I yielded by little and little, till I was willingly lost again, and my vows fell off like cords of vanity.

Miserable man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of sin?

And yet, O Lord, I have another heap of sins to be unloaded. My secret sins, O Lord, are innumerable; sins I noted not; sins that I willingly neglected; sins that I acted upon wilful ignorance and voluntary mispersuasion; sins that I have forgot; and sins which a diligent and a watchful spirit might have prevented, but I would not. Lord, I am confounded with the multitude of them, and the horror of their remembrance, though I consider them nakedly in their direct appearance, without the deformity of their unhandsome and aggravating circumstances; but so dressed they are a sight too ugly, an instance of amazement, infinite in degrees, and insufferable in their load.

And yet thou hast spared me all this while, and hast not thrown me into hell, where I have deserved to have been long since, and even now to have been shut up to an eternity of torments with insupportable amazement, fearing the revelation of thy day.

Miserable man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of sin?

Thou shalt answer for me, O Lord my God. Thou that prayest for me, shalt be my judge.

The Prayer.

Thou hast prepared for me a more healthful sorrow: O deny not thy servant, when he begs sorrow of thee. Give me a deep contrition for my sins, a hearty detestation and loathing of them, hating them worse than death with torments. Give me grace entirely, presently, and for ever to forsake them; to walk with care and prudence, with fear and watchfulness, all my days; to do all my duty with diligence and charity, with zeal and a never-fainting spirit; to redeem the time, to trust upon thy mercies, to make use of all the instruments of grace, to work out my salvation with fear and trembling: that thou mayest have the glory of pardoning all my sins, and I may reap the fruit of all thy mercies and all thy graces, of thy patience and long-suffering, even to live a holy life here, and to reign with thee for ever, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Ad Sect. 6.] Special devotions to be used upon the Lord's day, and the great festivals of christians.

In the morning, recite the following form of thanksgiving; upon the special festivals, adding the commemoration of the special blessings according to the following prayers: adding such prayers as you shall choose out of the foregoing devotions.

2. Besides the ordinary and public duties of the day, if you retire into your closet to read and meditate, after you have performed that duty, say the Song of St. Ambrose, (commonly called the *Te Deum,)* or, We praise thee, &c.; then add the prayers for particular graces, which are at the end of the former chapter, such and as many of them as shall fit your present needs and affections; ending with the Lord's Prayer. This form of devotion may, for variety, be indifferently used at other times.

A form of thanksgiving, with a recital of public and private blessings; to be used upon Easter-day, Whitsunday, Ascension-day, and all Sundays of the year; but the middle part of it may be reserved for the more solemn festivals, and the other used upon the ordinary; as every man's affections or leisure shall determine.

[1.] *Ex Liturgia S. Basilii magna ex parte.*

O eternal Essence, Lord God, Father Almighty, Maker of all things in heaven and earth; it is a good thing to give thanks to thee, O Lord, and to pay to thee all reverence, worship, and devotion, from a clean and prepared heart; and with an humble spirit to present a living and reasonable sacrifice to thy holiness and majesty: for thou hast given unto us the knowledge of thy truth; and who is able to declare thy greatness, and to recount all thy marvellous works, which thou hast done in all the generations of the world?

O great Lord and Governor of all things, Lord and Creator of all things visible and invisible, who sittest upon the throne of thy glory, and beholdest the secrets of the lowest abyss and darkness; thou art without beginning, uncircumscribed, incomprehensible, unalterable, and seated for ever unmovable in thy own essential happiness and tranquillity; thou art the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is

Our dearest and most gracious Saviour, our hope, the Wisdom of the Father, the image of thy goodness, the Word eternal, and the brightness of thy person, the power of God from eternal ages, the true light, that lighteneth every man that cometh into the world, the redemption of man, and the sanctification of our spirits.

By whom the Holy Ghost descended upon the church; the Holy Spirit of truth, the seal of adoption; the earnest of the inheritance of the saints; the first-fruits of everlasting felicity; the life-giving power; the fountain of sanctification; the comfort of the church, the ease of the afflicted, the support of the weak, the wealth of the poor, the teacher of the doubtful, scrupulous, and ignorant; the anchor of the fearful, the infinite reward of all faithful souls; by whom all reasonable and understanding creatures serve thee, and send up a never-ceasing and a never-rejected sacrifice of prayer, and praises, and adoration.

All angels and archangels, all thrones and dominions, all principalities and powers, the cherubim with many eyes, and the seraphim covered with wings from the terror and amazement of thy brightest glory: these, and all the powers of heaven, do perpetually sing praises, and never-ceasing hymns, and

eternal anthems to the glory of the eternal God, the almighty Father of men and angels.

Holy is our God: holy is the Almighty: holy is the Immortal: holy, holy, holy, Lord God of sabaoth, heaven and earth are full of the majesty of thy glory. Amen. With these holy and blessed spirits I also, thy servant, O thou great lover of souls, though I be unworthy to offer praise to such a majesty; yet, out of my bounden duty, humbly offer up my heart and voice to join in this blessed choir, and confess the glories of the Lord. For thou art holy, and of thy greatness there is no end; and in thy justice and goodness, thou hast measured out to us all thy works.

Thou madest man out of the earth, and didst form him after thine own image: thou didst place him in a garden of pleasure, and gavest him laws of righteousness to be to him a seed of immortality.

"O that men would therefore praise the Lord for his goodness, and declare the wonders that he hath done for the children of men."

For when man sinned, and listened to the whispers of a tempting spirit, and refused to hear the voice of God, thou didst throw him out from paradise, and sentest him to till the earth; but yet leftest not his condition without remedy, but didst provide for him the salvation of a new birth, and, by the blood of thy Son, didst redeem and pay the price to thine own justice for thine own creature, lest the work of thine own hands should perish.

"O that men would therefore praise the Lord," &c.

For thou, O Lord, in every age didst send testimonies from heaven, blessings, and prophets, and fruitful seasons, and preachers of righteousness, and miracles of power and mercy: thou spakest by thy prophets, and saidst, "I will help by one that is mighty;" and, in the fulness of time, spakest to us by thy Son, by whom thou didst make both the worlds, who, by the word of his power, sustains all things in heaven and earth; who thought it no robbery to be equal to the Father; who, being before all time, was pleased to be born in time, to converse with men, to be incarnate of a holy Virgin: he emptied himself of all his glories, took on him the form of a servant, in all things being made like unto us, in a soul of passions and discourse, in a body of humility and sorrow, but in all things innocent, and in all things afflicted; and suffered death for us, that we by him might live, and be partakers of his nature and his glories, of his body and of his Spirit, of the blessings of earth, and of immortal felicities in heaven.

"O that men would therefore praise the Lord," &c.

For thou, O holy and immortal God, O sweetest Saviour Jesus, wert made under the law to condemn sin in the flesh: thou, who knewest no sin, wert made sin for us; thou gavest to us righteous commandments, and madest known to us all thy Father's will: thou didst redeem us from our vain conversation, and from the vanity of idols, false principles, and foolish confidences, and broughtest us to the knowledge of the true and only God and our Father, and hast made us to thyself a peculiar people, of thy own purchase, a royal priesthood, a holy nation: thou hast washed our souls in the laver of regeneration, the sacrament of baptism: thou hast reconciled us by thy death, justified us by thy resurrection, sanctified us by thy Spirit, sending him upon thy church in visible forms, and giving him in powers and miracles and mighty signs, and continuing this incomparable favour in gifts and sanctifying graces, and promising that he shall abide with us for ever: thou hast fed us with thine own broken body, and given drink to our souls out of thine own heart, and hast ascended up on high, and hast overcome all the powers of death and hell, and redeemed us from the miseries of a sad eternity; and sittest at the right hand of God, making intercession for us with a never-ceasing charity.

"O that men would therefore praise the Lord," &c.

The grave could not hold thee long, O holy and eternal Jesus: thy body could not see corruption, neither could thy soul be left in hell: thou wert free from among the dead, and thou breakest the iron gates of death, and the bars and chains of the lower prisons. Thou broughtest comfort to the souls of the patriarchs, who waited for thy coming, who longed for the redemption of man, and the revelation of thy day. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob saw thy day, and rejoiced: and when thou didst arise from thy bed of darkness, and leftest the grave-clothes behind thee, and didst put on a robe of glory, (over which for forty days thou didst wear a veil,) and then enteredst into a cloud, and then into glory, then the powers of hell were confounded, then death lost its power and was swallowed up into victory: and though death is not quite destroyed, yet it is made harmless and without a sting, and the condition of human nature is made an entrance to eternal glory; and art become the Prince of life, the first-fruits of the resurrection, the first-born from the dead, having made the way plain before our faces, that we may also arise again in the resurrection of the last day, when thou shalt come again unto us, to render to every man according to his works.

"O that men would therefore praise the Lord," &c.

O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is gracious, and his mercy endureth for ever.

O all ye angels of the Lord, praise ye the Lord; praise him and magnify him for ever.

O ye spirits and souls of the righteous, praise ye the Lord; praise him and magnify him for ever.

And now, O Lord God, what shall I render to thy Divine Majesty for all the benefits thou hast done unto thy servant in my personal capacity?

Thou art my Creator and my Father, my Protector and my Guardian; thou hast brought me from my mother's womb; thou hast told all my joints, and in thy book were all my members written; thou hast given me a comely body, christian and careful parents, holy education; thou hast been my guide and my teacher all my days: thou hast given me ready faculties, an unloosed tongue, a cheerful

spirit, straight limbs, a good reputation, and liberty of person, a quiet life, and a tender conscience [a loving wife, or husband, and hopeful children]. Thou wert my hope from my youth, through thee have I been holden up ever since I was born. Thou hast clothed me and fed me, given me friends and blessed them; given me many days of comfort and health, free from those sad infirmities with which many of thy saints and dearest servants are afflicted. Thou hast sent thy angel to snatch me from the violence of fire and water, to prevent precipices, fracture of bones, to rescue me from thunder and lightning, plague and pestilential diseases, murder and robbery, violence of chance and enemies, and all the spirits of darkness; and in the days of sorrow thou hast refreshed me; in the destitution of provisions thou hast taken care of me, and thou hast said unto me, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

"I will give thanks unto the Lord with my whole heart, secretly among the faithful, and in the congregation."

Thou, O my dearest Lord and Father, hast taken care of my soul, hast pitied my miseries, sustained my infirmities, relieved and instructed my ignorances; and though I have broken thy righteous laws and commandments, run passionately after vanities, and was in love with death, and was dead in sin, and was exposed to thousands of temptations, and fell foully, and continued in it, and loved to have it so, and hated to be reformed; yet thou didst call me with the checks of conscience, with daily sermons and precepts of holiness, with fear and shame, with benefits and the admonitions of thy most Holy Spirit, by the counsel of my friends, by the example of good persons, with holy books and thousands of excellent arts, and would not suffer me to perish in my folly, but didst force me to attend to thy gracious calling, and hast put me into a state of repentance, and possibilities of pardon, being infinitely desirous I should live, and recover, and make use of thy grace, and partake of thy glories.

"I will give thanks unto the Lord with my whole heart, secretly among the faithful, and in the congregation. For salvation belongeth unto the Lord, and thy blessing is upon thy servant. But as for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercies, and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple. For of thee, and in thee, and through and for thee, are all things. Blessed be the name of God, from generation to generation." Amen.

A short form of Thanksgiving to be said upon any special deliverance, as from Childbirth, from Sickness, from Battle, or imminent Danger at Sea or Land, &c.

O most merciful and gracious God, thou fountain of all mercy and blessing, thou hast opened the hand of thy mercy to fill me with blessings, and the sweet effects of thy loving-kindness: thou feedest us like a shepherd, thou governest us as a king, thou bearest us in thy arms like a nurse, thou dost cover us under the shadow of thy wings and shelter us like a hen; thou (O dearest Lord!) wakest for us a watchman, thou providest for us like a husband, thou lovest us as a friend, and thinkest on us perpetually, as a careful mother on her helpless babe, and art exceeding merciful to all that fear thee. And now, O Lord, thou hast added this great blessing of deliverance from my late danger [*here name the blessing*]; it was thy hand and the help of thy mercy that relieved me; the waters of affliction had drowned me, and the stream had gone over my soul, if the Spirit of the Lord had not moved upon these waters. Thou, O Lord, didst revoke thy angry sentence, which I had deserved, and which was gone out against me. Unto thee, O Lord, I ascribe the praise and honour of my redemption. I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy, for thou hast considered my trouble, and hast known my soul in adversity. As thou hast spread thy hand upon me for a covering, so also enlarge my heart with thankfulness, and fill my mouth with praises, that my duty and returns to thee may be great as my needs of mercy are: and let thy gracious favours and loving-kindness endure for ever and ever upon thy servant; and grant that what thou hast sown in mercy may spring up in duty: and let thy grace so strengthen my purposes, that I may sin no more, lest thy threatening return upon me in anger, and thy anger break me into pieces: but let me walk in the light of thy favour, and in the paths of thy commandments: that I, living here to the glory of thy name, may at last enter into the glory of my Lord, to spend a whole eternity in giving praise to thy exalted and ever-glorious name. Amen.

"We praise thee, O God, we acknowledge thee to be the Lord. All the earth doth worship thee, the Father everlasting. To thee all angels cry aloud, the heavens and all the powers therein. To thee cherubim and seraphim continually do cry, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of sabaoth; heaven and earth are full of the majesty of thy glory. The glorious company of the apostles praise thee. The goodly fellowship of the prophets praise thee. The noble army of martyrs praise thee. The holy church throughout all the world doth acknowledge thee, the Father of an infinite majesty; thine honourable, true, and only Son; also the Holy Ghost the Comforter. Thou art the King of glory, O Christ: thou art the everlasting Son of the Father. When thou tookest upon thee to deliver man, thou didst not abhor the Virgin's womb. When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers. Thou sittest at the right hand of God in the glory of the Father. We believe, that thou shalt come to be our judge. We therefore pray thee, help thy servants, whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious blood. Make them to be numbered with thy saints in glory everlasting. O Lord, save thy people, and bless thine heritage. Govern them, and lift them up for ever. Day by day we magnify thee, and we worship thy name ever world without end. Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin. O Lord, have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us. O Lord, let thy mercy lighten upon us, as our trust is in

thee. O Lord, in thee have I trusted: let me never be confounded." Amen.

A Prayer of Thanksgiving after the receiving of some great Blessing, as the Birth of an Heir. the Success of an honest Design, a Victory, a good Harvest, &c.

O Lord God, Father of mercies, the fountain of comfort and blessing, of life and peace, of plenty and pardon, who fillest heaven with thy glory, and earth with thy goodness; I give thee the most earnest, most humble, and most enlarged returns of my glad and thankful heart, for thou hast refreshed me with thy comforts, and enlarged me with thy blessing: thou hast made my flesh and my bones to rejoice: for besides the blessings of all mankind, the blessings of nature and blessings of grace, the support of every minute, and the comforts of every day, thou hast opened thy bosom, and at this time hast poured out an excellent expression of thy loving-kindness [*here name the blessing*]. What am I, O Lord, and what is my father's house, what is the life and what are the capacities of thy servant, that thou shouldst do this unto me; that the great God of men and angels should make a special decree in heaven for me, and send out an angel of blessing, and instead of condemning and ruining me, as I miserably have deserved, to distinguish me from many my equals and my betters, by this and many other special acts of grace and favour?

Praised be the Lord daily, even the Lord that helpeth us, and poureth his benefits upon us. He is our God, even the God of whom cometh salvation: God is the Lord, by whom we escape death. Thou hast brought me to great honour, and comforted me on every side.

Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy works; I will rejoice in giving praise for the operation of thy hands.

O give thanks unto the Lord, and call upon his name: tell the people what things he hath done.

As for me, I will give great thanks unto the Lord, and praise him among the multitude.

Blessed be the Lord God, even the Lord God of Israel, which only doth wondrous and gracious things.

And blessed be the name of his Majesty for ever: and all the earth shall be filled with his majesty. Amen. Amen.

Glory be to the Father, &c.
As it was in the beginning, &c.

A Prayer to be said on the Feast of Christmas, or the Birth of our blessed Saviour Jesus: the same also may be said upon the Feast of the Annunciation and Purification of the B. Virgin Mary.

O holy and almighty God, Father of mercies, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of thy love and eternal mercies, I adore and praise and glorify thy infinite and unspeakable love and wisdom, who has sent thy Son from the bosom of felicities to take upon him our nature and our misery and our guilt, and hast made the Son of God to become the Son of man, that we might become the sons of God, and partakers of the Divine nature: since thou hast so exalted human nature, be pleased also to sanctify my person, that, by a conformity to the humility, and laws, and sufferings of my dearest Saviour, I may be united to his Spirit, and be made all one with the most holy Jesus. Amen.

O holy and eternal Jesus, who didst pity mankind lying in his blood, and sin, and misery, and didst choose our sadnesses and sorrows that thou mightest make us to partake of thy felicities; let thine eyes pity me, thy hands support me, thy holy feet tread down all the difficulties in my way to heaven: let me dwell in thy heart, be instructed with thy wisdom, moved by thy affections, choose with thy will, and be clothed with thy righteousness; that, in the day of judgment, I may be found having on thy garments, sealed with thy impression; and that, bearing upon every faculty and member the character of my elder Brother, I may not be cast out with strangers and unbelievers. Amen.

O holy and ever-blessed Spirit, who didst overshadow the holy virgin-mother of our Lord, and caused her to conceive by a miraculous and mysterious manner; be pleased to overshadow my soul, and enlighten my spirit, that I may conceive the holy Jesus in my heart, and may bear him in my mind, and may grow up to the fulness of the stature of Christ, to be a perfect man in Christ Jesus. Amen.

To God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the eternal Son that was incarnate and born of a virgin, to the Spirit of the Father and the Son, be all honour and glory, worship and adoration, now and for ever. Amen.

[The same form of prayer may be used upon our own birth-day, or day of our baptism: adding the following prayer.]

A Prayer to be said upon our Birth-day, or day of Baptism.

O blessed and eternal God, I give thee praise and glory for thy great mercy to me, in causing me to be born of christian parents, and didst not allot to me a portion with misbelievers and heathen that have not known thee. Thou didst not suffer me to be strangled at the gate of the womb, but thy hand sustained and brought me to the light of the world, and the illumination of baptism, with thy grace preventing my election, and by an artificial necessity and holy prevention engaging me to the profession and practices of christianity. Lord, since that, I have broken the promises made in my behalf, and which I confirmed by my after-act; I went back from them by an evil life: and yet thou hast still continued to me life and time of repentance; and didst not cut me off in the beginning of my days, and the progress of my sins. O dearest God, pardon the errors and ignorances, the vices and vanities of my youth, and the faults of my more forward years, and let me never more stain the whiteness of my baptismal robe: and now that by thy grace I still persist in the purposes of obedience, and do give up my name to Christ, and glory to be a disciple of

thy institution, and a servant to Jesus, let me never fail of thy grace: let no root of bitterness spring up, and disorder my purposes, and defile my spirit. O let my years be so many degrees of nearer approach to thee: and forsake me not, O God, in my old age, when I am grey-headed; and when my strength faileth me, be thou my strength and my guide unto death; that I may reckon my years, and apply my heart unto wisdom; and at last, after the spending a holy and blessed life, I may be brought unto a glorious eternity, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

[Then add the form of thanksgiving formerly described.]

A Prayer to be said upon the Days of the Memory of Apostles, Martyrs, &c.

O eternal God, to whom do live the spirits of them that depart hence in the Lord, and in whom the souls of them that be elected, after they be delivered from the burden of the flesh, be in peace and rest from their labours, and their works follow them, and their memory is blessed; I bless and magnify thy holy and ever-glorious name, for the great grace and blessing manifested to thy apostles and martyrs and other holy persons, who have glorified thy name in the days of their flesh, and have served the interest of religion and of thy service: and this day we have thy servant [*name the apostle, or martyr*, &c.] in remembrance, whom thou hast led through the troubles and temptations of this world, and now hast lodged in the bosom of a certain hope and great beatitude, until the day of restitution of all things. Blessed be the mercy and eternal goodness of God; and the memory of all thy saints is blessed. Teach me to practise their doctrine, to imitate their lives, following their example, and being united as a part of the same mystical body by the band of the same faith, and a holy hope, and a never-ceasing charity. And may it please thee, of thy gracious goodness, shortly to accomplish the number of thine elect, and to hasten thy kingdom, that we, with thy servant and all others departed in the true faith and fear of thy holy name, may have our perfect consummation and bliss, in body and soul, in thy eternal and everlasting kingdom. Amen.

A Form of Prayer recording all the parts and mysteries of Christ's Passion, being a short history of it: to be used especially in the Week of the Passion, and before the receiving the blessed Sacrament.

All praise, honour, and glory be to the holy and eternal Jesus. I adore thee, O blessed Redeemer, eternal God, the light of the gentiles, and the glory of Israel; for thou hast done and suffered for me more than I could wish, more than I could think of, even all that a lost and a miserable perishing sinner could possibly need.

Thou wert afflicted with thirst and hunger, with heat and cold, with labours and sorrows, with hard journeys and restless nights; and when thou wert contriving all the mysterious and admirable ways of paying our scores, thou didst suffer thyself to be designed to slaughter by those for whom in love thou wert ready to die.

"What is man, that thou art mindful of him; and the Son of man, that thou visitest him?"

Blessed be thy name, O holy Jesus; for thou wentest about doing good, working miracles of mercy, healing the sick, comforting the distressed, instructing the ignorant, raising the dead, enlightening the blind, strengthening the lame, straightening the crooked, relieving the poor, preaching the gospel, and reconciling sinners by the mightiness of thy power, by the wisdom of thy Spirit, by the word of God, and the merits of thy passion, thy healthful and bitter passion.

"Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him," &c.

Blessed be thy name, O holy Jesus, who wert content to be conspired against by the Jews, to be sold by thy servant for a vile price, and to wash the feet of him that took money for thy life, and to give to him and to all thy apostles thy most holy body and blood, to become a sacrifice for their sins, even for their betraying and denying thee; and for all my sins, even for my crucifying thee afresh, and for such sins, which I am ashamed to think, but that the greatness of my sins magnify the infiniteness of thy mercies, who didst so great things for so vile a person.

"Lord, what is man," &c.

Blessed be thy name, O holy Jesus, who, being to depart the world, didst comfort thy apostles, pouring out into their ears and hearts treasures of admirable discourses; who didst recommend them to thy Father with a mighty charity, and then didst enter into the garden set with nothing but briers and sorrows, where thou didst suffer a most unspeakable agony, until the sweat strained through thy pure skin like drops of blood, and there didst sigh and groan, and fall flat upon the earth, and pray, and submit to the intolerable burden of thy Father's wrath, which I had deserved, and thou sufferedst.

"Lord, what is man," &c.

Blessed be thy name, O holy Jesus, who hast sanctified to us all our natural infirmities and passions, by vouchsafing to be in fear and trembling and sore amazement, by being bound and imprisoned, by being harassed and dragged with cords of violence and rude hands, by being drenched in the brook in the way, by being sought after like a thief, and used like a sinner, who wert the most holy and the most innocent, cleaner than an angel, and brighter than the morning star.

"Lord, what is man," &c.

Blessed be thy name, O holy Jesus, and blessed be thy loving-kindness and pity, by which thou didst neglect thy own sorrows, and go to comfort the sadness of thy disciples, quickening their dulness, encouraging their duty, arming their weakness with excellent precepts against the day of trial. Blessed be that humility and sorrow of thine, who, being Lord of the angels, yet wouldst need and receive comfort from thy servant the angel; who didst

offer thyself to thy persecutors, and madest them able to seize thee: and didst receive the traitor's kiss, and sufferedst a veil to be thrown over thy holy face, that thy enemies might not presently be confounded by so bright a lustre; and wouldst do a miracle to cure a wound of one of thy spiteful enemies; and didst reprove a zealous servant in behalf of a malicious adversary: and then didst go like a lamb to the slaughter, without noise or violence or resistance, when thou couldst have commanded millions of angels for thy guard and rescue.

"Lord, what is man," &c.

Blessed be thy name, O holy Jesus, and blessed be that holy sorrow thou didst suffer, when thy disciples fled, and thou wert left alone in the hands of cruel men, who, like evening wolves, thirsted for a draught of thy best blood: and thou wert led to the house of Annas, and there asked insnaring questions, and smitten on the face by him whose ear thou hadst but lately healed; and from thence wert dragged to the house of Caiaphas; and there all night didst endure spittings, affronts, scorn, contumelies, blows, and intolerable insolences; and all this for man, who was thy enemy, and the cause of all thy sorrows.

"Lord, what is man," &c.

Blessed be thy name, O holy Jesus, and blessed be thy mercy, who, when thy servant Peter denied thee, and forsook thee, and forswore thee, didst look back upon him, and, by that gracious and chiding look, didst call him back to himself and thee; who wert accused before the high priest, and railed upon, and examined to evil purposes, and with designs of blood; who wert declared guilty of death for speaking a most necessary and most probable truth; who wert sent to Pilate and found innocent, and sent to Herod and still found innocent, and wert arrayed in white, both to declare thy innocence, and yet to deride thy person, and wert sent back to Pilate, and examined again, and yet nothing but innocence found in thee, and malice round about thee to devour thy life, which yet thou wert more desirous to lay down for them, than they were to take it from thee.

"Lord, what is man," &c.

Blessed be thy name, O holy Jesus, and blessed be that patience and charity, by which for our sakes thou wert content to be smitten with canes, and have that holy face, which angels with joy and wonder do behold, be spit upon, and be despised, when compared with Barabbas, and scourged most rudely with unhallowed hands, till the pavement was purpled with that holy blood, and condemned to a sad and shameful, a public and painful death, and arrayed in scarlet, and crowned with thorns, and stripped naked, and then clothed, and loaden with the cross, and tormented with a tablet stuck with nails at the fringes of thy garment, and bound hard with cords, and dragged most vilely and most piteously, till the load was too great, and did sink thy tender and virginal body to the earth; and yet didst comfort the weeping women, and didst more pity thy persecutors than thyself, and wert grieved for the miseries of Jerusalem to come forty years after, more than for thy present passion.

"Lord, what is man," &c.

Blessed be thy name, O holy Jesus, and blessed be that incomparable sweetness and holy sorrow, which thou sufferedst, when thy holy hands and feet were nailed upon the cross, and the cross, being set in a hollowness of the earth, did in the fall rend the wounds wider, and there, naked and bleeding, sick and faint, wounded and despised, didst hang upon the weight of thy wounds three long hours, praying for thy persecutors, satisfying thy Father's wrath, reconciling the penitent thief, providing for thy holy and afflicted mother, tasting vinegar and gall; and when the fulness of thy suffering was accomplished, didst give thy soul into the hands of God, and didst descend to the regions of longing souls, who waited for the revelation of this thy day in their prisons of hope: and then thy body was transfixed with a spear, and issued forth two sacraments, water and blood, and thy body was composed to burial, and dwelt in darkness three days and three nights.

"Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou thus visitest him?"

The Prayer.

Thus, O blessed Jesu, thou didst finish thy holy passion with pain and anguish so great, that nothing could be greater than it, except thyself and thy own infinite mercy: and all this for man, even for me, than whom nothing could be more miserable, thyself only excepted, who becamest so by undertaking our guilt and our punishment. And now, Lord, who hast done so much for me, be pleased only to make it effectual to me, that it may not be useless and lost as to my particular, lest I become eternally miserable, and lost to all hopes and possibilities of comfort. All this deserves more love than I have to give: but, Lord, do thou turn me all into love, and all my love into obedience, and let my obedience be without interruption, and then I hope thou wilt accept such a return as I can make. Make me to be something that thou delightest in, and thou shalt have all that I am or have from thee, even whatsoever thou makest fit for thyself. Teach me to live wholly for my Saviour Jesus, and to be ready to die for Jesus, and to be conformable to his life and sufferings, and to be united to him by inseparable unions, and to own no passions, but what may be servants to Jesus and disciples of his institution. O sweetest Saviour, clothe my soul with thy holy robe; hide my sins in thy wounds, and bury them in thy grave; and let me rise in the life of grace, and abide and grow in it, till I arrive at the kingdom of glory. Amen.

"Our Father," &c.

Ad Sect. 7, 8, 10.] *A Form of Prayer or Intercession for all estates of People in the Christian Church. The parts of which may be added to any other forms; and the whole office, entirely as it lies, is proper to be said in our preparation to the holy Sacrament, or on the day of celebration.*

1. *For ourselves.*

O thou gracious Father of mercy, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy upon thy servants, who bow our heads, and our knees, and our hearts to thee; pardon and forgive us all our sins; give us the grace of holy repentance, and a strict obedience to thy holy word; strengthen us in the inner man with the power of thy Holy Ghost for all the parts and duties of our calling and holy living; preserve us for ever in the unity of the holy catholic church, and in the integrity of the christian faith, and in the love of God and of our neighbours, and in hope of life eternal. Amen.

2. *For the whole Catholic Church.*

O holy Jesus, King of the saints, and Prince of the catholic church, preserve thy spouse, whom thou hast purchased with thy right hand, and redeemed and cleansed with thy blood; the whole catholic church from one end of the earth to the other; she is founded upon a rock, but planted in the sea. O preserve her safe from schism, heresy, and sacrilege. Unite all her members with the bands of faith, hope, and charity, and an external communion, when it shall seem good in thine eyes. Let the daily sacrifice of prayer and sacramental thanksgiving never cease, but be for ever presented to thee, and for ever united to the intercession of her dearest Lord, and for ever prevail for the obtaining for every of its members grace and blessing, pardon and salvation. Amen.

3. *For all Christian Kings, Princes, and Governors.*

O King of kings, and Prince of all the rulers of the earth, give thy grace and Spirit to all christian princes, the spirit of wisdom and counsel, the spirit of government and godly fear. Grant unto them to live in peace and honour, that their people may love and fear them, and they may love and fear God. Speak good unto their hearts concerning the church, that they may be nursing fathers to it, fathers to the fatherless, judges and avengers of the cause of widows; that they may be compassionate to the wants of the poor and the groans of the oppressed; that they may not vex or kill the Lord's people with unjust or ambitious wars, but may feed the flock of God, and may inquire after and do all things which may promote peace, public honesty, and holy religion; so administering things present, that they may not fail of the everlasting glories of the world to come, where all thy faithful people shall reign kings for ever. Amen.

4. *For all the Orders of them that minister about holy Things.*

O thou great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, holy and eternal Jesus, give unto thy servants the ministers of the mysteries of christian religion, the spirit of prudence and sanctity, faith and charity, confidence and zeal, diligence and watchfulness, that they may declare thy will unto the people faithfully, and dispense thy sacraments rightly, and intercede with thee graciously and acceptably for thy servants. Grant, O Lord, that by a holy life and a true belief, by well doing and patient suffering, (when thou shalt call them to it,) they may glorify thee the great lover of souls, and after a plentiful conversion of sinners from the error of their ways, they may shine like the stars in glory. Amen.

Give unto thy servants, the bishops, a discerning spirit, that they may lay hands suddenly on no man, but may depute such persons to the ministries of religion, who may adorn the gospel of God, and whose lips may preserve knowledge, and such, who by their good preaching and holy living may advance the service of the Lord Jesus. Amen.

5. *For our nearest Relatives, as Husband, Wife, Children, Family, &c.*

O God of infinite mercy, let thy loving mercy and compassion descend upon the head of thy servants [*my wife, or husband, children, and family*]: be pleased to give them health of body and of spirit, a competent portion of temporals, so as may with comfort support them in their journey to heaven: preserve them from all evil and sad accidents, defend them in all assaults of their enemies, direct their persons and their actions, sanctify their hearts and words and purposes; that we all may, by the bands of obedience and charity, be united to our Lord Jesus, and always feeling thee our merciful and gracious Father, may become a holy family, discharging our whole duty in all our relations; that we, in this life being thy children by adoption and grace, may be admitted into thy holy family hereafter, for ever to sing praises to thee in the church of the first-born, in the family of thy redeemed ones. Amen.

6. *For our Parents, our Kindred in the flesh, our Friends and Benefactors.*

O God, merciful and gracious, who hast made [*my parents*] my friends, and my benefactors, ministers of thy mercy, and instruments of Providence, to thy servant, I humbly beg a blessing to descend upon the heads of [*name the persons, or the relations*]. Depute thy holy angels to guard their persons, thy Holy Spirit to guide their souls, thy providence to minister to their necessities; and let thy grace and mercy preserve them from the bitter pains of eternal death, and bring them to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

7. *For all that lie under the Rod of War, Famine, Pestilence: to be said in the time of Plague, or War, &c.*

O Lord God Almighty, thou art our Father, we are thy children; thou art our Redeemer, we thy people purchased with the price of thy most precious blood: be pleased to moderate thy anger towards thy servants; let not thy whole displeasure arise, lest we be consumed and brought to nothing. Let health and peace be within our dwellings; let

righteousness and holiness dwell for ever in our hearts, and be expressed in all our actions, and the light of thy countenance be upon us in all our sufferings, that we may delight in the service and in the mercies of God for ever. Amen.

O gracious Father and merciful God, if it be thy will, say unto the destroying angel, "It is enough;" and though we are not better than our brethren, who are smitten with the rod of God, but much worse, yet may it please thee, even because thou art good, and because we are timorous and sinful, not yet fitted for our appearance, to set thy mark upon our foreheads, that thy angel, the minister of thy justice, may pass over us and hurt us not; let thy hand cover thy servants and hide us in the clefts of the rock, in the wounds of the holy Jesus, from the present anger, that is gone out against us; that though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, we may fear no evil, and suffer none; and those, whom thou hast smitten with thy rod, support with thy staff, and visit them with thy mercies, and salvation, through Jesus Christ.

8. *For all Women with Child, and for unborn Children.*

O Lord God, who art the Father of them that trust in thee, and showest mercy to a thousand generations of them that fear thee; have mercy upon all women great with child; be pleased to give them a joyful and a safe deliverance: and let thy grace preserve the fruit of their wombs, and conduct them to the holy sacrament of baptism: that they, being regenerated by thy Spirit, and adopted into thy family, and the portion and duty of sons, may live to the glory of God, to the comfort of their parents and friends, to the edification of the christian commonwealth, and the salvation of their own souls, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

9. *For all Estates of Men and Women, in the Christian Church.*

O holy God, King eternal, out of the infinite storehouses of thy grace and mercy, give unto all virgins chastity, and a religious spirit; to all persons dedicated to thee and to religion, continence, and meekness, and active zeal, and an unwearied spirit; to all married pairs, faith and holiness; to widows and fatherless, and all that are oppressed, thy patronage, comfort, and defence; to all christian women, simplicity and modesty, humility and chastity, patience and charity; give unto the poor, to all that are robbed and spoiled of their goods, a competent support, and a contented spirit, and a treasure in heaven hereafter; give unto prisoners and captives, to them that toil in the mines, and row in the galleys, strength of body and of spirit, liberty and redemption, comfort and restitution; to all that travel by land, thy angel for their guide, and a holy and prosperous return; to all that travel by sea, freedom from pirates and shipwreck, and bring them to the haven where they would be; to distressed and scrupulous consciences, to melancholy and disconsolate persons, to all that are afflicted with evil and unclean spirits, give a light from heaven, great grace and proportionable comforts, and timely deliverance; give them patience and resignation; let their sorrows be changed into grace and comfort, and let the storm waft them certainly to the regions of rest and glory.

Lord God of mercy, give to thy martyrs, confessors, and all thy persecuted, constancy and prudence, boldness and hope, a full faith, and a never-failing charity. To all who are condemned to death, do thou minister comfort, a strong, a quiet, and a resigned spirit; take from them the fear of death, and all remaining affections to sin, and all imperfections of duty, and cause them to die full of grace, full of hope. And give to all faithful, and particularly to them who have recommended themselves to the prayers of thy unworthy servant, a supply of all their needs temporal and spiritual, and according to their several states and necessities, rest and peace, pardon and refreshment; and show us all a mercy in the day of judgment. Amen.

Give, O Lord, to the magistrates equity, sincerity, courage, and prudence, that they may protect the good, defend religion, and punish the wrong doers. Give to the nobility wisdom, valour, and loyalty; to merchants, justice and faithfulness; to all artificers and labourers, truth and honesty; to our enemies, forgiveness and brotherly kindness.

Preserve to us the heavens and the air in healthful influence and disposition, the earth in plenty, the kingdom in peace and good government, our marriages in peace and sweetness and innocence of society, thy people from famine and pestilence, our houses from burning and robbery, our persons from being burnt alive, from banishment and prison, from widowhood and destitution, from violence of pains and passions, from tempests and earthquakes, from inundation of waters, from rebellion or invasion, from impatience and inordinate cares, from tediousness of spirit and despair, from murder, and all violent, accursed, and unusual deaths, from the surprise of sudden and violent accidents, from passionate and unreasonable fears, from all thy wrath, and from all our sins, good Lord, deliver and preserve thy servants for ever. Amen.

Repress the violence of all implacable, warring, and tyrant nations; bring home unto thy fold all that are gone astray; call into the church all strangers; increase the number and holiness of thine own people; bring infants to ripeness of age and reason; confirm all baptized people with thy grace and with thy Spirit; instruct the novices and new christians: let a great grace and merciful providence bring youthful persons safely and holily through the indiscretions, and passions, and temptations of their younger years; and to those whom thou hast or shall permit to live to the age of a man, give competent strength and wisdom; take from them covetousness and churlishness, pride and impatience; fill them full of devotion and charity, repentance and sobriety, holy thoughts and longing desires after heaven and heavenly things; give them a holy and a blessed death, and to us all a joyful resurrection through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Ad Sect. 10.] *The Manner of using these Devotions by way of Preparation to the receiving the blessed Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.*

The just preparation to this holy feast consisting principally in a holy life, and consequently in the repetition of the acts of all virtues, and especially of faith, repentance, charity, and thanksgiving: to the exercise of these four graces, let the person that intends to communicate, in the times set apart for his preparation and devotion, for the exercise of his faith recite the prayer or litany of the passion; for the exercise of repentance, the form of confession of sins with the prayer annexed; and for the graces of thanskgiving and charity, let him use the special forms of prayer above described. Or if a less time can be allotted for preparatory devotion, the two first will be the more proper, as containing in them all the personal duty of the communicant. To which upon the morning of that holy solemnity, let him add

A Prayer of Preparation or Address to the holy Sacrament.

An Act of Love.

O most gracious and eternal God, the helper of the helpless, the comforter of the comfortless, the hope of the afflicted, the bread of the hungry, the drink of the thirsty, and the Saviour of all them that wait upon thee; I bless and glorify thy name, and adore thy goodness, and delight in thy love, that thou hast once more given me the opportunity of receiving the greatest favour which I can receive in this world, even the body and blood of my dearest Saviour. O take from me all affection to sin or vanity; let not my affections dwell below, but soar upwards to the element of love, to the seat of God, to the regions of glory, and the inheritance of Jesus; that I may hunger and thirst for the bread of life, and the wine of elect souls, and may know no loves but the love of God, and the most merciful Jesus. Amen.

An Act of Desire.

O blessed Jesus, thou hast used many arts to save me, thou hast given thy life to redeem me, thy Holy Spirit to sanctify me, thyself for my example, thy word for my rule, thy grace for my guide, the fruit of thy body hanging on the tree of the cross for the sin of my soul; and, after all this, thou hast sent thy apostles and ministers of salvation to call me, to importune me, to constrain me, to holiness, and peace, and felicity. O now come, Lord Jesus, come quickly; my heart is desirous of thy presence, and thirsty of thy grace, and would fain entertain thee, not as a guest, but as an inhabitant, as the Lord of all my faculties. Enter in and take possession, and dwell with me for ever; that I also may dwell in the heart of my dearest Lord, which was opened for me with a spear and love.

An Act of Contrition.

Lord, thou shalt find my heart full of cares and worldly desires, cheated with love of riches and neglect of holy things, proud and unmortified, false and crafty to deceive itself, intricated and entangled with difficult cases of conscience, with knots which my own wildness and inconsideration and impatience have tied and shuffled together. O my dearest Lord, if thou canst behold such an impure seat, behold the place, to which thou art invited, is full of passion and prejudice, evil principles and evil habits, peevish and disobedient, lustful and intemperate, and full of sad remembrances, that I have often provoked to jealousy and to anger thee my God, my dearest Saviour, him that died for me, him that suffered torments for me, that is infinitely good to me, and infinitely good and perfect in himself. This, O dearest Saviour, is a sad truth, and I am heartily ashamed, and truly sorrowful for it, and do deeply hate all my sins, and am full of indignation against myself for so unworthy, so careless, so continued, so great a folly: and humbly beg of thee to increase my sorrow, and my care, and my hatred, against sin; and make my love to thee swell up to a great grace, and then to glory and immensity.

An Act of Faith.

This indeed is my condition: but I know, O blessed Jesus, that thou didst take upon thee my nature, that thou mightest suffer for my sins, and thou didst suffer to deliver me from them and from thy Father's wrath: and I was delivered from this wrath, that I might serve thee in holiness and righteousness all my days. Lord, I am as sure thou didst the great work of redemption for me and all mankind, as that I am alive. This is my hope, the strength of my spirit, my joy and my confidence: and do thou never let the spirit of unbelief enter into me and take me from this rock. Here I will dwell, for I have a delight therein: here I will live, and here I desire to die.

The Petition.

Therefore, O blessed Jesu, who art my Saviour and my God, whose body is my food, and thy righteousness is my robe, thou art the priest and the sacrifice, the master of the feast and the feast itself, the physician of my soul, the light of my eyes, the purifier of my stains: enter into my heart, and cast out from thence all impurities, all the remains of the old man; and grant I may partake of this holy sacrament with much reverence, and holy relish, and great effect, receiving hence the communication of thy holy body and blood, for the establishment of an unreprovable faith, of an unfeigned love, for the fulness of wisdom, for the healing my soul, for the blessing and preservation of my body, for the taking out the sting of temporal death, and for the assurance of a holy resurrection, for the ejection of all evil from within me, and the fulfilling of thy righteous commandments, and to procure for me a mercy and a fair reception at the day of judgment, through thy mercies, O holy and ever-blessed Saviour Jesus.

[Here also may be added the prayer after receiving the cup.]

Ejaculations to be said before, or at, the receiving the holy Sacrament.

Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks; so longeth my soul after thee, O God. My soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the living God: when shall I come before the presence of God? Psal. xlii. 1, 2.

O Lord my God, great are thy wondrous works which thou hast done; like as be also thy thoughts, which are to us-ward: and yet there is no man that ordereth them unto thee. Psal. xl. 6.

O send out thy light and thy truth, that they may lead me, and bring me unto thy holy hill and to thy dwelling: and that I may go unto the altar of God, even unto the God of my joy and gladness: and with my heart will I give thanks to thee, O God my God. Psal. xliii. 3, 4.

I will wash my hands in innocence, O Lord; and so will I go to thine altar: that I may show the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works. Psal. xxvi. 6, 7.

Examine me, O Lord, and prove me, try thou my reins and my heart. For thy loving-kindness is now and ever before my eyes: and I will walk in thy truth. Ver. 2, 3.

Thou shalt prepare a table before me against them that trouble me: thou hast anointed my head with oil, and my cup shall be full. But thy loving-kindness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever. Psal. xxiii. 5, 6.

This is the bread that cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die. John vi. 50.

Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him, and hath eternal life abiding in him, and I will raise him up at the last day. Ver. 54, 56.

Lord, whither shall we go but to thee? thou hast the words of eternal life. John vi. 68.

If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. John vii. 37.

The bread which we break, is it not the communication of the body of Christ? and the cup which we drink, is it not the communication of the blood of Christ? 1 Cor. x. 16.

What are those wounds in thy hands? They are those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. Zech. xiii. 6.

Immediately before the receiving, say,

Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof. But do thou speak the word only, and thy servant shall be healed. Matt. viii. 8.

Lord, open thou my lips, and my mouth shall show thy praise. O God, make speed to save me: O Lord, make haste to help me.

Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.

After receiving the consecrated and blessed Bread, say,

O taste and see how gracious the Lord is: blessed is the man that trusteth in him. The beasts do lack and suffer hunger; but they which seek the Lord shall want no manner of thing that is good. Lord, what am I, that my Saviour should become my food; that the Son of God should be the meat of worms, of dust and ashes, of a sinner, of him that was his enemy? But this thou hast done to me, because thou art infinitely good and wonderfully gracious, and lovest to bless every one of us, in turning us from the evil of our ways. Enter into me, blessed Jesus: let no root of bitterness spring up in my heart; but be thou Lord of all my faculties. O let me feed on thee by faith, and grow up by the increase of God to a perfect man in Christ Jesus. Amen. Lord, I believe: help mine unbelief.

Glory be to God the Father, Son, &c.

After the receiving the Cup of Blessing.

It is finished. Blessed be the mercies of God revealed to us in Jesus Christ. O blessed and eternal High Priest, let the sacrifice of the cross, which thou didst once offer for the sins of the whole world, and which thou dost now and always represent in heaven to thy Father by thy never-ceasing intercession, and which this day hath been exhibited on thy holy table sacramentally, obtain mercy and peace, faith and charity, safety and establishment, to thy holy church, which thou hast founded upon a rock, the rock of a holy faith; and let not the gates of hell prevail against her, nor the enemy of mankind take any soul out of thy hand, whom thou hast purchased with thy blood, and sanctified by thy spirit. Preserve all thy people from heresy and division of spirit, from scandal and the spirit of delusion, from sacrilege and hurtful persecutions. Thou, O blessed Jesus, didst die for us: keep me for ever in holy living, from sin and sinful shame, in the communion of thy church, and thy church in safety and grace, in truth and peace, unto thy second coming. Amen.

Dearest Jesu, since thou art pleased to enter into me, O be jealous of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth: suffer no unclean spirit or unholy thought to come near thy dwelling, lest it defile the ground where thy holy feet have trod. O teach me so to walk, that I may never disrepute the honour of my religion, nor stain the holy robe, which thou hast now put upon my soul, nor break my holy vows which I have made, and thou hast sealed, nor lose my right of inheritance, my privilege of being co-heir with Jesus, into the hope of which I have now further entered: but be thou pleased to love me with the love of a father, and of a brother, and a husband, and a lord; and make me to serve thee in the communion of saints, in receiving the sacrament, in the practice of all holy virtues, in the imitation of thy life, and conformity to thy sufferings; that I, having now put on the Lord Jesus, may marry his loves and his enmities, may desire his glory, and may obey his laws, and be united to his Spirit, and in the day of the Lord I may be found having on the wedding-garment, and bearing in my body and soul the marks of the Lord Jesus, that I may enter into the joy of my Lord, and partake of his glories for ever and ever. Amen.

Ejaculations to be used any Time that Day, after the Solemnity is ended.

Lord, if I had lived innocently, I could not have deserved to receive the crumbs that fall from thy table. How great is thy mercy, who hast feasted me with the bread of virgins, with the wine of angels, with manna from heaven!

O when I shall pass from this dark glass, from this veil of sacraments, to the vision of thy eternal clarity; from eating thy body, to beholding thy face in thy eternal kingdom?

Let not my sins crucify the Lord of life again: let it never be said concerning me, "The hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table."

O that I might love thee as well as ever any creature loved thee! Let me think nothing but thee, desire nothing but thee, enjoy nothing but thee.

O Jesus, be a Jesus unto me. Thou art all things unto me. Let nothing ever please me, but what savours of thee and thy miraculous sweetness.

Blessed be the mercies of our Lord, who of God is made unto me wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

"He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." Amen.

THE

RULE AND EXERCISES

OF

HOLY DYING.

IN WHICH ARE DESCRIBED

THE MEANS AND INSTRUMENTS OF PREPARING OURSELVES AND OTHERS RESPECTIVELY FOR A BLESSED DEATH

AND THE

REMEDIES AGAINST THE EVILS AND TEMPTATIONS PROPER TO THE STATE OF SICKNESS:

TOGETHER WITH

PRAYERS AND ACTS OF VIRTUE,
TO BE USED BY SICK AND DYING PERSONS, OR BY OTHERS STANDING IN THEIR ATTENDANCE

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

RULES FOR THE VISITATION OF THE SICK,

AND OFFICES PROPER FOR THAT MINISTRY.

Τὸ μὲν τελευτῆσαι πάντων ἡ πεπρωμένη κατέκρινε'
Τὸ δὲ καλῶς ἀποθανεῖν, ἴδιον τοῖς σπουδαίοις ἡ Φύσις ἀπένειμε.
Isoc. ad Demonic. p. 13. ed Lange.

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE AND NOBLEST LORD,

RICHARD, EARL OF CARBERY, &c. &c.

My Lord,

I am treating your Lordship, as a Roman gentleman did St. Augustine and his mother; I shall entertain you in a charnel-house, and carry your meditations awhile into the chambers of death, where you shall find the rooms dressed up with melancholic arts, and fit to converse with your most retired thoughts, which begin with a sigh, and proceed in deep consideration, and end in a holy resolution. The sight that St. Augustine most noted in that house of sorrow, was the body of Cæsar, clothed with all the dishonours of corruption, that you can suppose in a six months' burial. But I know, that, without pointing, your first thoughts will remember the change of a greater beauty, which is now dressing for the brightest immortality, and from her bed of darkness calls to you to dress your soul for that change, which shall mingle your bones with that beloved dust, and carry your soul to the same quire, where you may both sit and sing for ever. My Lord, it is your dear Lady's anniversary, and she deserved the biggest honour, and the longest memory, and the fairest monument, and the most solemn mourning: and in order to it, give me leave, my Lord, to cover her hearse with these following sheets. This book was intended first to minister to her piety; and she desired all good people should partake of the advantages which are here recorded: she knew how to live rarely well, and she desired to know how to die; and God taught her by an experiment. But since her work is done, and God supplied her with provisions of his own, before I could minister to her, and perfect what she desired, it is necessary to present to your Lordship those bundles of cypress, which were intended to dress her closet, but come now to dress her hearse. My Lord, both your Lordship and myself have lately seen and felt such sorrows of death, and such sad departure of dearest friends, that it is more than high time we should think ourselves nearly

concerned in the accidents. Death had come so near to you, as to fetch a portion from your very heart; and now you cannot choose but dig your own grave, and place your coffin in your eye, when the angel hath dressed your scene of sorrow and meditation with so particular and so near an object: and therefore, as it is my duty, I am come to minister to your pious thoughts, and to direct your sorrows, that they may turn into virtues and advantages.

And since I know your Lordship to be so constant and regular in your devotions, and so tender in the matter of justice, so ready in the expressions of charity, and so apprehensive of religion; and that you are a person, whose work of grace is apt, and must every day grow towards those degrees, where, when you arrive, you shall triumph over imperfection, and choose nothing but what may please God; I could not by any compendium conduct and assist your pious purposes so well, as by that, which is the great argument and the great instrument of Holy Living, the consideration and exercises of death.

My Lord, it is a great art to die well, and to be learnt by men in health, by them that can discourse and consider, by those whose understanding and acts of reason are not abated with fear or pains; and as the greatest part of death is past by the preceding years of our life, so also in those years are the greatest preparations to it; and he that prepares not for death before his last sickness, is like him, that begins to study philosophy when he is going to dispute publicly in the faculty. All that a sick and dying man can do, is but to exercise those virtues which he before acquired, and to perfect that repentance which was begun more early. And of this, my Lord, my book, I think, is a good testimony; not only because it represents the vanity of a late and sick-bed repentance, but because it contains in it so many precepts and meditations, so many propositions and various duties, such forms of exercise, and the degrees and difficulties of so many graces, which are necessary preparatives to a holy death, that the very learning the duties requires study and skill, time and understanding, in the ways of godliness; and it were very vain to say so much is necessary, and not to suppose more time to learn them, more skill to practise them, more opportunities to desire them, more abilities both of body and mind, than can be supposed in a sick, amazed, timorous, and weak person; whose natural acts are disabled, whose senses are weak, whose discerning faculties are lessened, whose principles are made intricate and entangled, upon whose eye sits a cloud, and the heart is broken with sickness, and the liver pierced through with sorrows, and the strokes of death. And therefore, my Lord, it is intended by the necessity of affairs, that the precepts of dying well be part of the studies of them that live in health, and the days of discourse and understanding, which, in this case, hath another degree of necessity superadded; because, in other notices, an imperfect study may be supplied by a frequent exercise and renewed experience; here, if we practise imperfectly once, we shall never recover the error, for we die but once; and therefore it will be necessary, that our skill be more exact, since it is not to be mended by trial, but the actions must be for ever left imperfect, unless the habit be contracted with study and contemplation beforehand.

And indeed I were vain, if I should intend this book to be read and studied by dying persons; and they were vainer, that should need to be instructed in those graces, which they are then to exercise and to finish. For a sick bed is only a school of severe exercise, in which the spirit of a man is tried, and his graces are rehearsed: and the assistances which I have, in the following pages, given to those virtues, which are proper to the state of sickness, are such, as suppose a man in the state of grace; or they confirm a good man, or they support the weak, or add degrees, or minister comfort, or prevent an evil, or cure the little mischiefs which are incident to tempted persons in their weakness. That is the sum of the present design, as it relates to dying persons. And therefore I have not inserted any advices proper to old age, but such as are common to it and the state of sickness: for I suppose very old age to be a longer sickness; it is labour and sorrow, when it goes beyond the common period of nature: but if it be on this side that period, and be healthful, in the same degree it is so, I reckon it in the accounts of life; and therefore it can have no distinct consideration. But I do not think it is a station of advantage to begin the change of an evil life in: it is a middle state between life and death-bed; and therefore, although it hath more of hopes than this, and less than that; yet as it partakes of either state, so it is to be regulated by the advices of that state, and judged by its sentences.

Only this: I desire, that all old persons would sadly consider, that their advantages in that state are very few, but their inconveniences are not few; their bodies are without strength, their prejudices long and mighty, their vices (if they have lived wicked) are habitual, the occasions of the virtues not many, the possibilities of some (in the matter of which they stand very guilty) are past, and shall never return again; (such are, chastity, and many parts of self-denial;) that they have some temptations proper to their age, as peevishness and pride, covetousness and talking, wilfulness and unwillingness to learn;[a] and they think they are protected by age from learning a new, or repenting the old; and do not leave, but change their vices:[b] and after all this, either the day of their repentance is past, as we see it true in very many; or it is expiring and towards the sunset, as it is in all: and therefore although in these to recover is very possible, yet we may also remember, that, in the matter of virtue and repentance, possibility is a great way off from performance; and how few do repent, of whom it is only possible, that they may!

[a] Vel quia nil rectum, nisi quod placuit sibi, ducunt;
Vel quia turpe putant parere minoribus, et, quæ
Imberbes didicere, senes perdenda fateri.—Hor. Ep. ii. 84.

[b] Tenellis adhuc infantiæ suæ persuasionibus in senectute puerascunt.—Mamertus.

and that many things more are required to reduce their possibility to act; a great grace, an assiduous ministry, an effective calling, mighty assistances, excellent counsel, great industry, a watchful diligence, a well-disposed mind, passionate desires, deep apprehensions of danger, quick perceptions of duty, and time, and God's good blessing, and effectual impression, and seconding all this, that to will and to do, may, by him, be wrought to great purposes, and with great speed.

And therefore, it will not be amiss, but it is hugely necessary, that these persons, who have lost their time and their blessed opportunities, should have the diligence of youth, and the zeal of new converts, and take account of every hour that is left them, and pray perpetually, and be advised prudently, and study the interest of their souls carefully, with diligence and with fear; and their old age, which, in effect, is nothing but a continual death-bed, dressed with some more order and advantages, may be a state of hope, and labour, and acceptance; through the infinite mercies of God, in Jesus Christ.

But concerning sinners really under the arrest of death, God hath made no death-bed covenant, the Scripture hath recorded no promises, given no instructions; and therefore I had none to give, but only the same which are to be given to all men that are alive, because they are so, and because it is uncertain when they shall be otherwise. But then this advice I also am to insert, that they are the smallest number of christian men, who can be divided by the characters of a certain holiness, or an open villany: and between these there are many degrees of latitude, and most are of a middle sort, concerning which we are tied to make the judgments of charity, and possibly God may do too. But, however, all they are such, to whom the Rules of Holy Dying are useful and applicable, and therefore no separation is to be made in this world. But where the case is not evident, men are to be permitted to the unerring judgment of God; where it is evident, we can rejoice or mourn for them that die.

In the church of Rome, they reckon otherwise concerning sick and dying christians, than I have done. For they make profession, that from death to life, from sin to grace, a man may very certainly be changed, though the operation begin not before his last hour; and half this they do upon his death-bed, and the other half when he is in his grave: and they take away the eternal punishment in an instant, by a school-distinction, or the hand of the priest; and the temporal punishment shall stick longer, even then, when the man is no more measured with time, having nothing to do with any thing of, or under the sun; but that they pretend to take away too, when the man is dead; and, God knows, the poor man, for all this, pays them both in hell. The distinction of temporal and eternal is a just measure of pain, when it refers to this life and another; but to dream of a punishment temporal when all his time is done, and to think of repentance when the time of grace is past, are great errors, the one in philosophy, and both in divinity, and are a huge folly in their pretence, and infinite danger if they are believed; being a certain destruction of the necessity of holy living, when men dare trust them, and live at the rate of such doctrines. The secret of these is soon discovered; for by such means, though a holy life be not necessary, yet a priest is; as if God did not appoint the priest to minister to holy living, but to excuse it; so making the holy calling not only to live upon the sins of the people, but upon the ruin, and the advantages of their function to spring from their eternal dangers. It is an evil craft to serve a temporal end upon the death of souls; that is an interest not to be handled but with nobleness and ingenuity, fear and caution, diligence and prudence, with great skill and great honesty, with reverence, and trembling, and severity; a soul is worth all that, and the need we have, requires all that: and therefore those doctrines, that go less than all this, are not friendly, because they are not safe.

I know no other difference in the visitation and treating of sick persons, than what depends upon the article of late repentance; for all churches agree in the same essential propositions, and assist the sick by the same internal ministries. As for external, I mean unction, used in the church of Rome, since it is used when the man is above half dead, when he can exercise no act of understanding, it must needs be nothing; for no rational man can think, that any ceremony can make a spiritual change without a spiritual act of him that is to be changed; nor work by way of nature, or by charm, but morally, and after the manner of reasonable creatures; and therefore I do not think that ministry at all fit to be reckoned among the advantages of sick persons. The fathers of the council of Trent first disputed, and after their manner at last agreed, that extreme unction was instituted by Christ. But afterwards, being admonished by one of their theologues, that the apostles ministered unction to infirm people before they were priests, (the priestly order, according to their doctrine, being collated in the institution of the last supper,) for fear that it should be thought, that this unction might be administered by him that was no priest, they blotted out the word *instituted*, and put in its stead *insinuated*, this sacrament, and that it was published by St. James. So it is in their doctrine; and yet, in their anathematisms, they curse all them that shall deny it to have been instituted by Christ. I shall lay no more prejudice against it, or the weak arts of them that maintain it, but add this only, that there being but two places of Scripture pretended for this ceremony, some chief men of their own side have proclaimed those two invalid as to the institution of it: for Saurez says, that the unction, used by the apostles in St. Mark vi. 13. is not the same with what is used in the church of Rome; and that it cannot be plainly gathered from the Epistle of St. James, Cajetan affirms, and that it did belong to the miraculous gift of healing, not to a sacrament. The sick man's exercise of grace formerly acquired, his perfecting repentance begun in the days of health, the prayers and counsels of the holy man that ministers, the giving the holy sacrament, the ministry and assistance of angels, and the mercies of God, the peace of conscience, and the peace of

the church, are all the assistances and preparatives that can help to dress his lamp. But if a man shall go to buy oil when the bridegroom comes, if his lamp be not first furnished and then trimmed, that in this life, this upon his death-bed, his station shall be without doors, his portion with unbelievers, and the unction of the dying man shall no more strengthen his soul than it cures his body; and the prayers for him after his death shall be of the same force, as if they should pray, that he should return to life again the next day, and live as long as Lazarus in his return. But I consider, that it is not well that men should pretend any thing will do a man good when he dies; and yet the same ministries and ten times more assistances are found for forty or fifty years together to be ineffectual. Can extreme unction at last cure, what the holy sacrament of the eucharist, all his life-time, could not do? Can prayers for a dead man do him more good, than when he was alive? If all his days the man belonged to death and the dominion of sin, and from thence could not be recovered by sermons, and counsels, and perpetual precepts, and frequent sacraments, by confessions and absolutions, by prayers and advocations, by external ministries and internal acts, it is but too certain, that his lamp cannot then be furnished: his extreme unction is only then of use, when it is made by the oil that burned in his lamp, in all the days of his expectation and waiting for the coming of the bridegroom.

Neither can any supply be made in this case by their practice of praying for the dead; though they pretend for this the fairest precedents of the church and of the whole world.[c] The heathens, they say, did it, and the Jews did it, and the christians did it: some were baptized for the dead in the days of the apostles, and very many were communicated for the dead for so many ages after. It is true, they were so, and did so: the heathens prayed for an easy grave,[d] and a perpetual spring, that saffron would rise from their beds of grass. The Jews prayed, that the souls of their dead might be in the garden of Eden, that they might have their part in paradise, and in the world to come; and that they might hear the peace of the fathers of their generation, sleeping in Hebron. And the christians prayed for a joyful resurrection, for mercy at the day of judgment, for hastening of the coming of Christ, and the kingdom of God; and they named all sorts of persons in their prayers, all, I mean, but wicked persons, all but them that lived evil lives: they named apostles, saints, and martyrs. And all this is so nothing to their purpose, or so much against it, that the prayers for the dead, used in the church of Rome, are most plainly condemned, because they are against the doctrine and practices of all the world, in other forms, to other purposes, relying upon distinct doctrines, until new opinions began to arise about St. Augustine's time, and changed the face of the proposition. Concerning prayers for the dead, the church hath received no commandment from the Lord; and therefore concerning it we can have no rules nor proportions, but from those imperfect revelations of the state of departed souls, and the measures of charity, which can relate only to the imperfection of their present condition, and the terrors of the day of judgment: but to think that any suppletory to an evil life can be taken from such devotions, after the sinners are dead, may encourage a bad man to sin, but cannot relieve him when he hath.

But, of all things in the world, methinks, men should be most careful not to abuse dying people; not only because their condition is pitiable, but because they shall soon be discovered, and in the secret regions of souls there shall be an evil report concerning those men who have deceived them; and if we believe we shall go to that place, where such reports are made, we may fear the shame and the amazement of being accounted impostors in the presence of angels, and all the wise holy men of the world. To be erring and innocent, is hugely pitiable, and incident to mortality; that we cannot help: but to deceive or to destroy so great an interest as is that of a soul, or to lessen its advantages by giving it trifling and false confidences, is injurious and intolerable. And therefore it were very well, if all the churches of the world would be extremely curious concerning their offices and ministries of the visitation of the sick: that their ministers they send be holy and prudent; that their instructions be severe and safe; that their sentences be merciful and reasonable; that their offices be sufficient and devout; that their attendances be frequent and long; that their deputations be special and peculiar; that the doctrines, upon which they ground their offices, be true, material, and holy; that their ceremonies be few, and their advices wary; that their separation be full of caution, their judgments not remiss, their remissions not loose and dissolute; and that all the whole ministration be made by persons of experience and charity. For it is a sad thing to see our dead go out of our hands: they live incuriously, and die without regard; and the last scene of their life, which should be dressed with all spiritual advantages, is abused by flattery and easy propositions, and let go with carelessness and folly.

My Lord, I have endeavoured to cure some part of the evil as well as I could, being willing to relieve the needs of indigent people in such ways as I can; and therefore have described the duties which every sick man may do alone, and such in which he can be assisted by the minister; and am the more confident, that these my endeavours will be the better entertained, because they are the first entire body of directions for sick and dying people that I remember to have been published in the church of England. In the church of Rome, there have been many; but they are dressed with such doctrines, which are sometimes useless, sometimes hurtful, and their whole design of assistance, which they commonly yield,

[c] Tertul. de Monog. S. Cyprian. lib. i. ep. 9. S. Athan. q. 33. S. Cyril. Myst. Cat. 5. Epiphan. Hæres. 75. Aug de Hæres. cap. 33. Concil. Carth. 3. cap. 29.

[d] Dî, majorum umbris tenuem et sine pondere terram,
Spirantesque crocos, et in urnâ perpetuum ver.—Juven. Sat. vii. 208.

is at the best imperfect, and the representment is too careless and loose for so severe an employment. So that, in this affair, I was almost forced to walk alone; only that I drew the rules and advices from the fountains of Scripture, and the purest channels of the primitive church, and was helped by some experience in the cure of souls. I shall measure the success of my labours, not by popular noises, or the sentences of curious persons, but by the advantage which good people may receive. My work here is not to please the speculative part of men, but to minister to practice, to preach to the weary, to comfort the sick, to assist the penitent, to reprove the confident, to strengthen weak hands and feeble knees, having scarce any other possibilities left me of doing alms, or exercising that charity, by which we shall be judged at doomsday. It is enough for me to be an under-builder in the house of God, and I glory in the employment; I labour in the foundations; and therefore the work need no apology for being plain, so it be strong and well laid. But, my Lord, as mean as it is, I must give God thanks for the desires and the strength; and, next to him, to you, for that opportunity and little portion of leisure which I had to do it in: for I must acknowledge it publicly, (and, besides my prayers, it is all the recompence I can make you,) my being quiet I owe to your interest, much of my support to your bounty, and many other collateral comforts I derive from your favour and nobleness. My Lord, because I much honour you, and because I would do honour to myself, I have written your name in the entrance of my book: I am sure you will entertain it, because the design related to your dear lady, and because it may minister to your spirit in the day of visitation, when God shall call for you to receive your reward for your charity and your noble piety, by which you have not only endeared very many persons, but in great degrees have obliged me to be,

My noblest Lord,

Your Lordship's most thankful

and most humble Servant,

JER. TAYLOR.

CHAPTER I.

A GENERAL PREPARATION TOWARDS A HOLY AND BLESSED DEATH, BY WAY OF CONSIDERATION.

SECTION I.

Consideration of the Vanity and Shortness of Man's Life.

A MAN is a bubble, (said the Greek proverb),[e] which Lucian represents with advantages and its proper circumstances, to this purpose; saying, that all the world is a storm, and men rise up in their several generations, like bubbles descending *à Jove pluvio*, from God and the dew of heaven, from a tear and drop of rain, from nature and Providence: and some of these instantly sink into the deluge of their first parent, and are hidden in a sheet of water, having had no other business in the world, but to be born, that they might be able to die: others float up and down two or three turns, and suddenly disappear, and give their place to others: and they that live longest upon the face of the waters, are in perpetual motion, restless and uneasy; and, being crushed with the great drop of a cloud, sink into flatness and a froth; the change not being great, it being hardly possible it should be more a nothing than it was before. So is every man: he is born in vanity and sin; he comes into the world like morning mushrooms, soon thrusting up their heads into the air, and conversing with their kindred of the same production, and as soon they turn into dust and forgetfulness: some of them without any other interest in the affairs of the world, but that they made their parents a little glad, and very sorrowful: others ride longer in the storm; it may be until seven years of vanity be expired, and then peradventure the sun shines hot upon their heads, and they fall into the shades below, into the cover of death and darkness of the grave to hide them. But if the bubble stands the shock of a bigger drop, and outlives the chances of a child, of a careless nurse, of drowning in a pail of water, of being overlaid by a sleepy servant, or such little accidents, then the young man dances like a bubble, empty and gay, and shines like a dove's neck, or the image of a rainbow, which hath no substance, and whose very imagery and colours are fantastical; and so he dances out the gaiety of his youth, and is all the while in a storm, and endures only because he is not knocked on the head by a drop of bigger rain, or crushed by the pressure of a load of indigested meat, or quenched by the disorder of an ill-placed humour: and to preserve a man alive in the midst of so many chances and hostilities, is as great a miracle as to create him; to preserve him from rushing into nothing, and at first to draw him up from nothing, were equally the issues of an almighty

[e] Πομφόλυξ ὁ ἄνθρωπος.

power. And therefore the wise men of the world have contended, who shall best fit man's condition with words signifying his vanity and short abode. Homer calls a man "a leaf," the smallest, the weakest piece of a short-lived, unsteady plant. Pindar calls him "the dream of the shadow:" another, "the dream of the shadow of smoke." But St. James spake by a more excellent Spirit, saying, "Our life is but a vapour,"[f] viz. drawn from the earth by a celestial influence; made of smoke, or the lighter parts of water, tossed with every wind, moved by the motion of a superior body, without virtue in itself, lifted up on high, or left below, according as it pleases the sun its foster-father. But it is lighter yet. It is but appearing;[g] a fantastic vapour, an apparition, nothing real: it is not so much as a mist, not the matter of a shower, nor substantial enough to make a cloud; but it is like Cassiopeia's chair, or Pelops' shoulder, or the circles of heaven, *φαινόμενα*, for which you cannot have a word that can signify a verier nothing. And yet the expression is one degree more made diminutive: a *vapour*, and *fantastical*, or *a mere appearance*, and this but for a little while neither;[h] the very dream, the phantasm disappears in a small time, "like the shadow that departeth; or like a tale that is told; or as a dream when one awaketh." A man is so vain, so unfixed, so perishing a creature, that he cannot long last in the scene of fancy: a man goes off, and is forgotten, like the dream of a distracted person. The sum of all is this: that thou art a man, than whom there is not in the world any greater instance of heights and declensions, of lights and shadows, of misery and folly, of laughter and tears, of groans and death.[i]

And because this consideration is of great usefulness and great necessity to many purposes of wisdom and the spirit; all the succession of time, all the changes in nature, all the varieties of light and darkness, the thousand thousands of accidents in the world, and every contingency to every man, and to every creature, doth preach our funeral sermon, and calls us to look and see, how the old sexton Time throws up the earth, and digs a grave, where we must lay our sins or our sorrows, and sow our bodies, till they rise again in a fair or an intolerable eternity. Every revolution which the sun makes about the world, divides between life and death; and death possesses both those portions by the next morrow; and we are dead to all those months which we have already lived, and we shall never live them over again: and still God makes little periods of our age.[k] First we change our world, when we come from the womb to feel the warmth of the sun. Then we sleep and enter into the image of death, in which state we are unconcerned in all the changes of the world: and if our mothers or our nurses die, or a wild boar destroy our vineyards, or our king be sick, we regard it not, but during that state are as disinterested, as if our eyes were closed with the clay that weeps in the bowels of the earth. At the end of seven years, our teeth fall and die before us, representing a formal prologue to the tragedy; and still, every seven years, it is odds, but we shall finish the last scene: and when nature, or chance, or vice, takes our body in pieces, weakening some parts and loosing others, we taste the grave and the solemnities of our own funerals, first, in those parts that ministered to vice; and next, in them that served for ornament; and in a short time, even they that served for necessity, become useless, and entangled like the wheels of a broken clock. Baldness is but a dressing to our funerals,[l] the proper ornament of mourning, and of a person entered very far into the regions and possession of death: and we have many more of the same signification; gray hairs, rotten teeth, dim eyes, trembling joints, short breath, stiff limbs, wrinkled skin, short memory, decayed appetite. Every day's necessity calls for a reparation of that portion which death fed on all night, when we lay in his lap and slept in his outer chambers. The very spirits of a man prey upon the daily portion of bread and flesh, and every meal is a rescue from one death, and lays up for another; and while we think a thought, we die; and the clock strikes, and reckons on our portion of eternity: we form our words with the breath of our nostrils, we have the less to live upon for every word we speak.

Thus nature calls us to meditate of death by those things which are the instruments of acting it: and God, by all the variety of his providence, makes us see death every where, in all variety of circumstances, and dressed up for all the fancies, and the expectation of every single person. Nature hath given us one harvest every year, but death hath two: and the spring and the autumn send throngs of men and women to charnel-houses; and all the summer long, men are recovering from their evils of the spring, till the dog-days come, and then the Sirian star makes the summer deadly; and the fruits of autumn are laid up for all the year's provision, and the man that gathers them, eats and surfeits, and dies and needs them not, and himself is laid up for eternity; and he that escapes till winter, only stays for another opportunity, which the distempers of that quarter minister to him with great variety. Thus death reigns in all the portions of our time. The autumn with its fruits provides disorders for us, and the winter's cold turns them into sharp diseases, and the spring brings flowers to strew our hearse, and the summer gives green turf and brambles to bind upon our graves. Calentures and surfeit, cold and agues, are the four quarters of the year, and all minister to death; and you can go no whither, but you tread upon a dead man's bones.

The wild fellow in Petronius, that escaped upon a broken table from the furies of a shipwreck, as he

[f] James iv. 14. *ατμὶς.* [g] *Φαινομένη.*
[h] *Πρὸς ὀλίγον.*
[i] *Τὸ δὲ κεφάλαιον τῶν λόγων· ἄνθρώπος εἶ,*
Οὗ μεταβολὴν ϑᾶττον πρὸς ὕψος καὶ πάλιν
Ταπεινότητα, &c.—MENAND.

[k] Nihil sibi quisquam de futuro debet promittere. Id quoque, quod tenetur, per manus exit, et ipsam, quam premimus, horam casus incidit. Volvitur tempus ratâ quidem lege, sed per obscurum.—SENECA.

[l] Ut mortem citiùs venire credas,
Scito jam capitis perisse partem.

was sunning himself upon the rocky shore, espied a man, rolled upon his floating bed of waves, ballasted with sand in the folds of his garment, and carried by his civil enemy, the sea, towards the shore to find a grave: and it cast him into some sad thoughts:[m] that peradventure this man's wife in some part of the continent, safe and warm, looks next month for the good man's return; or, it may be, his son knows nothing of the tempest; or his father thinks of that affectionate kiss, which still is warm upon the good old man's cheek, ever since he took a kind farewell; and he weeps with joy to think, how blessed he shall be, when his beloved boy returns into the circle of his father's arms. These are the thoughts of mortals, this is the end and sum of all their designs; a dark night and an ill guide, a boisterous sea and a broken cable, a hard rock and a rough wind, dashed in pieces the fortune of a whole family, and they that shall weep loudest for the accident, are not yet entered into the storm, and yet have suffered shipwreck. Then looking upon the carcass, he knew it, and found it to be the master of the ship, who the day before cast up the accounts of his patrimony and his trade, and named the day when he thought to be at home; see how the man swims, who was so angry two days since; his passions are becalmed with the storm, his accounts cast up, his cares at an end, his voyage done, and his gains are the strange events of death, which whether they be good or evil, the men that are alive seldom trouble themselves concerning the interest of the dead.

But seas alone do not break our vessel in pieces: every where we may be shipwrecked. A valiant general, when he is to reap the harvest of his crowns and triumphs, fights unprosperously, or falls into a fever with joy and wine, and changes his laurel into cypress, his triumphal chariot to a hearse; dying the night before he was appointed to perish, in the drunkenness of his festival joys. It was a sad arrest of the loosenesses and wilder feasts of the French court, when their king (Henry II.) was killed really by the sportive image of a fight. And many brides have died under the hands of paranymphs and maidens, dressing them for uneasy joy, the new and undiscerned chains of marriage, according to the saying of Bensirah, the wise Jew, "The bride went into her chamber, and knew not what should befall her there." Some have been paying their vows, and giving thanks for a prosperous return to their own house, and the roof hath descended upon their heads, and turned their loud religion into the deeper silence of a grave. And how many teeming mothers have rejoiced over their swelling wombs, and pleased themselves in becoming the channels of blessing to a family; and the midwife hath quickly bound their heads and feet, and carried them forth to burial! Or else the birthday of an heir hath seen the coffin of the father brought into the house, and the divided mother hath been forced to travail twice, with a painful birth, and a sadder death.[n]

There is no state, no accident, no circumstance of our life, but it hath been soured by some sad instance of a dying friend; a friendly meeting often ends in some sad mischance, and makes an eternal parting; and when the poet Æschylus was sitting under the walls of his house, an eagle hovering over his bald head, mistook it for a stone, and let fall his oyster, hoping there to break the shell, but pierced the poor man's skull.

Death meets us every where, and is procured by every instrument, and in all chances, and enters in at many doors; by violence and secret influence; by the aspect of a star and the stink of a mist; by the emissions of a cloud and the meeting of a vapour; by the fall of a chariot and the stumbling at a stone; by a full meal or an empty stomach; by watching at the wine or by watching at prayers; by the sun or the moon; by a heat or a cold; by sleepless nights or sleeping days; by water frozen into the hardness and sharpness of a dagger,[o] or water thawed into the floods of a river; by a hair or a raisin; by violent motion or sitting still; by severity or dissolution; by God's mercy or God's anger; by every thing in providence and every thing in manners; by every thing in nature and every thing in chance.[p] *Eripitur persona, manet res;* we take pains to heap up things useful to our life, and get our death in the purchase; and the person is snatched away, and the goods remain. And all this is the law and constitution of nature; it is a punishment to our sins, the unalterable event of Providence, and the decree of Heaven. The chains, that confine us to this condition, are strong as destiny, and immutable as the eternal laws of God.

I have conversed with some men, who rejoiced in the death or calamity of others, and accounted it as a judgment upon them for being on the other side, and against them in the contention; but within the revolution of a few months, the same man met with a more uneasy and unhandsome death: which when I saw, I wept, and was afraid; for I knew that it must be so with all men; for we also shall die;[q] and end our quarrels and contentions by passing to a final sentence.

[m] Navigationes longas, et, pererratis littoribus alienis, seros in patriam reditus proponimus, militiam, et castrensium laborum tarda manu pretia, procurationes, officiorumque per officia processus, cùm interim ad latus mors est; quæ quoniam nunquam cogitatur nisi aliena, subinde nobis ingerantur mortalitatis exempla, non diutiùs quàm miramur hæsura. —SENECA.

[n] Quia lex eadem manet omnes,
Gemitum dare sorte sub unâ,
Cognataque funera nobis
Aliena in morte dolere.
PRUD. Hymn. Exequiis Defunctor.

[o] Aut ubi mors non est, si jugulatis, aquæ?—MARTIAL.

[p] ——— Currit mortalibus ævum,
Nec nasci bis posse datur; fugit hora, rapítque
Tartareus torrens, ac secum ferre sub umbras,
Si qua animo placuere, negat.—SIL. Ital. l. xv. 64.

[q] Τέθναθι· κῆρα δ' ἐγὼ τότε δέξομαι, ὅππότέ κεν δὴ
Ζεὺς ἐθέλῃ τελέσαί.—Il. χ'. 365.

SECTION II.

The Consideration reduced to Practice.

IT will be very material to our best and noblest purposes, if we represent this scene of change and sorrow a little more dressed up in circumstances; for so we shall be more apt to practise those rules the doctrine of which is consequent to this consideration. It is a mighty change that is made by the death of every person, and it is visible to us who are alive. Reckon but from the sprightfulness of youth, and the fair cheeks and full eyes of childhood, from the vigorousness and strong flexure of the joints of five-and-twenty, to the hollowness and dead paleness, to the loathsomeness and horror, of a three days' burial, and we shall perceive the distance to be very great and very strange. But so have I seen a rose newly springing from the clefts of its hood, and, at first, it was fair as the morning, and full with the dew of heaven, as a lamb's fleece; but when a ruder breath had forced open its virgin modesty, and dismantled its too youthful and unripe retirements, it began to put on darkness, and to decline to softness and the symptoms of a sickly age; it bowed the head, and broke its stalk, and at night, having lost some of its leaves and all its beauty, it fell into the portion of weeds and outworn faces. The same is the portion of every man and every woman; the heritage of worms and serpents, rottenness and cold dishonour, and our beauty so changed, that our acquaintance quickly know us not; and that change mingled with so much horror, or else meets so with our fears and weak discoursings, that they, who six hours ago tended upon us, either with charitable or ambitious services, cannot without some regret stay in the room alone, where the body lies stripped of its life and honour. I have read of a fair young German gentleman, who, living, often refused to be pictured, but put off the importunity of his friends' desire, by giving way, that, after a few days' burial, they might send a painter to his vault, and, if they saw cause for it, draw the image of his death unto the life. They did so, and found his face half eaten, and his midriff and backbone full of serpents; and so he stands pictured among his armed ancestors. So does the fairest beauty change,[r] and it will be as bad with you and me; and then, what servants shall we have to wait upon us in the grave? what friends to visit us? what officious people to cleanse away the moist and unwholesome cloud reflected upon our faces from the sides of the weeping vaults, which are the longest weepers for our funeral?

This discourse will be useful, if we consider and practise by the following rules and considerations respectively.

1. All the rich and all the covetous men in the world will perceive, and all the world will perceive for them, that it is but an ill recompence for all their cares, that, by this time, all that shall be left will be this,[s] that the neighbours shall say, "He died a rich man;" and yet his wealth will not profit him in the grave, but hugely swell the sad accounts of doomsday. And he that kills the Lord's people with unjust or ambitious wars for an unrewarding interest, shall have this character,[t] that he threw away all the days of his life, that one year might be reckoned with his name, and computed by his reign or consulship; and many men, by great labours and affronts, many indignities and crimes, labour only for a pompous epitaph, and a loud title upon their marble; whilst those, into whose possessions their heirs or kindred are entered, are forgotten, and lie unregarded as their ashes, and without concernment or relation, as the turf upon the face of their grave.[u] A man may read a sermon, the best and most passionate that ever man preached, if he shall but enter into the sepulchres of kings. In the same Escurial, where the Spanish princes live in greatness and power, and decree war or peace, they have wisely placed a cemetery, where their ashes and their glory shall sleep till time shall be no more; and where our kings have been crowned, their ancestors lie interred, and they must walk over their grandsire's head to take his crown. There is an acre sown with royal seed, the copy of the greatest change, from rich to naked, from ceiled roofs to arched coffins, from living like gods to die like men. There is enough to cool the flames of lust, to abate the heights of pride, to appease the itch of covetous desires, to sully and dash out the dissembling colours of a lustful, artificial, and imaginary beauty. There the warlike and the peaceful, the fortunate and the miserable, the beloved and the despised princes mingle their dust, and pay down their symbol of mortality, and tell all the world, that, when we die, our ashes shall be equal to kings, and our accounts easier, and our pains or our crowns shall be less. To my apprehension it is a sad record, which is left by Athenæus concerning Ninus, the great Assyrian monarch, whose life and death are summed up in these words: "Ninus, the Assyrian, had an ocean of gold, and other riches more than the sand in the Caspian sea; he never saw the stars, and perhaps he never desired it; he never stirred up the holy fire among the Magi, nor touched his god with the sacred rod according to the laws; he never offered sacrifice, nor worshipped the deity, nor administered justice, nor spake to his people, nor numbered them; but he was most valiant to eat

[r] Anceps forma bonum mortalibus,
Exigui donum breve temporis:
Ut fulgor, teneris qui radiat genis,
Momento rapitur, nullaque non dies
Formosi spolium corporis abstulit.—SEN. Hipp. 770.

[s] Rape, congere, aufer, posside; relinquendum est.—MART.

[t] Annos omnes prodegit, ut ex eo annus unus numeretur, et per mille indignitates laboravit in titulum sepulchri.—SEN.

[u] Jam eorum præbendas alii possident, et nescio utrùm de iis cogitant.—GERSON.

———Me veterum frequens
Memphis Pyramidum docet,
Me pressæ tumulo lacryma gloriæ,
Me projecta jacentium
Passim per populos busta Quiritium,
Et vilis Zephyro jocus
Jactati cineres et procerum rogi,
Fumantúmque cadavera
Regnorum tacito, Rufe, silentio
Mæstum multa monent.—CAS. l. ii. Od. 27.

and drink, and, having mingled his wines, he threw the rest upon the stones. This man is dead: behold his sepulchre; and now hear where Ninus is. Sometimes I was Ninus, and drew the breath of a living man; but now am nothing but clay. I have nothing but what I did eat, and what I served to myself in lust, that was and is all my portion. The wealth with which I was esteemed blessed, my enemies, meeting together, shall bear away, as the mad Thyades carry a raw goat. I am gone to hell; and when I went thither, I neither carried gold, nor horse, nor silver chariot. I that wore a mitre, am now a little heap of dust." I know not any thing that can better represent the evil condition of a wicked man, or a changing greatness.[v] From the greatest secular dignity to dust and ashes his nature bears him, and from thence to hell his sins carry him, and there he shall be for ever under the dominion of chains and devils, wrath and an intolerable calamity. This is the reward of an unsanctified condition, and a greatness ill gotten or ill administered.

2. Let no man extend his thoughts, or let his hopes wander towards future and far-distant events and accidental contingencies. This day is mine and yours, but ye know not what shall be on the morrow;[w] and every morning creeps out of a dark cloud, leaving behind it an ignorance and silence deep as midnight, and undiscerned as are the phantasms that make a chrisom-child to smile: so that we cannot discern what comes hereafter,[x] unless we had a light from heaven brighter than the vision of an angel, even the spirit of prophecy. Without revelation, we cannot tell whether we shall eat to-morrow, or whether a squinancy shall choke us: and it is written in the unrevealed folds of Divine predestination, that many, who are this day alive, shall to-morrow be laid upon the cold earth, and the women shall weep over their shroud, and dress them for their funeral. St. James, in his epistle, notes the folly of some men, his contemporaries, who were so impatient of the event of to-morrow, or the accidents of next year, or the good or evils of old age, that they would consult astrologers and witches, oracles and devils, what should befall them the next calends; what should be the event of such a voyage; what God hath written in his book concerning the success of battles, the election of emperors, the heirs of families, the price of merchandise, the return of the Tyrian fleet, the rate of Sidonian carpets; and as they were taught by the crafty and lying demons, so they would expect the issue; and oftentimes by disposing their affairs in order towards such events, really did produce some little accidents according to their expectation; and that made them trust the oracles in greater things, and in all. Against this he opposes his counsel, that we should not search after forbidden records,[y] much less by uncertain significations; for whatsoever is disposed to happen by the order of natural causes or civil counsels, may be rescinded by a peculiar decree of Providence, or be prevented by the death of the interested persons; who, while their hopes are full, and their causes conjoined, and the work brought forward, and the sickle put into the harvest, and the first-fruits offered and ready to be eaten, even then, if they put forth their hand to an event, that stands but at the door, at that door their body may be carried forth to burial, before the expectation shall enter into fruition. When Richilda, the widow of Albert earl of Ebersberg, had feasted the emperor Henry III. and petitioned in behalf of her nephew Welpho for some lands formerly possessed by the earl her husband; just as the emperor held out his hand to signify his consent, the chamber-floor suddenly fell under them, and Richilda falling upon the edge of a bathing vessel was bruised to death, and stayed not to see her nephew sleep in those lands, which the emperor was reaching forth to her, and placed at the door of restitution.

3. As our hopes must be confined, so must our designs:[z] let us not project long designs, crafty plots, and diggings so deep, that the intrigues of a design shall never be unfolded till our grand-children have forgotten our virtues or our vices. The work of our soul is cut short, facile, sweet, and plain, and fitted to the small portions of our shorter life; and as we must not trouble our iniquity, so neither must we intricate our labour and purposes with what we shall never enjoy. This rule does not forbid us to plant orchards, which shall feed our nephews with their fruit; for by such provisions they do something towards an imaginary immortality, and do charity to their relatives: but such projects are reproved, which discompose our present duty by long and future designs;[a] such, which by casting our labours to events at a distance, make us less to remember our death standing at the door. It is fit for a man to work for his day's wages, or to contrive for the hire of a week, or to lay a train to make provisions for such a time, as is within our eye, and in our duty, and within the usual periods of man's life; for whatsoever is made necessary, is also made prudent; but while we plot and busy ourselves in the toils of an ambitious war, or the levies of a great estate, night enters in upon us, and tells all the world, how like fools we lived, and how deceived

[v] Ἀθανασίας δ' οὐκ ἔστιν, οὐδ' ἂν συναγάγῃς
Τὰ Ταντάλου τάλαντ' ἐκεῖνα λεγόμενα.
Ἀλλ' ἂν ἀποθανῇς, ταῦτα καταλείψεις τισίν.—MENAND.

[w] Τὸ σήμερον μέλει μοι,
Τὸ δ' αὔριόν τις οἶδε;—ANACR. Od. 15.

[x] Quid sit futurum cras, fuge quærere, et
Quem fors dierum cunque dabit, lucro
Appone.————HORAT. l. ix. 15.

[y] ————Nec Babylonios
Tentâris numeros, ut melius, quicquid erit, pati,
Seu pleures hyemes, seu tribuit Jupiter ultimam.
HORAT. l. ii. 2.
Incertam frustra, mortales, funeris horam
Quæritis, et quâ sit mors aditura viâ.
PROPERT. ii. 27. 1.
Pœna minor certam subitò perferre ruinam;
Quod timeas gravius sustinuisse diu.
CATUL. Eleg. i. 29.

[z] Certa amittimus, dum incerta petimus; atque hoc evenit, in labore atque in dolore, ut mors obrepat interim.—PLAUT Pseud. Act. 2. Scen. 3.

[a] Quid brevi fortes jaculamur ævo
Multa?————HORAT. ii. 16.
Jam te premet nox, fabulæque Manes,
Et domus exilis Plutonia.—HORAT. l. 4.

and miserably we died. Seneca tells of Senecio Cornelius, a man crafty in getting, and tenacious in holding a great estate, and one who was as diligent in the care of his body as of his money, curious of his health as of his possessions, that he all day long attended upon his sick and dying friend; but, when he went away, was quickly comforted, supped merrily, went to ed cheerfully, and on a sudden being surprised by a squinancy, scarce drew his breath until the morning, but by that time died, being snatched from the torrent of his fortune, and the swelling tide of wealth, and a likely hope bigger than the necessities of ten men. This accident was much noted then in Rome, because it happened in so great a fortune, and in the midst of wealthy designs: and presently it made wise men to consider, how imprudent a person he is, who disposes of ten years to come, when he is not lord of to-morrow.

4. Though we must not look so far off, and pry abroad, yet we must be busy near at hand; we must, with all arts of the spirit, seize upon the present,[b] because it passes from us while we speak, and because in it all our certainty does consist. We must take our waters as out of a torrent and sudden shower, which will quickly cease dropping from above, and quickly cease running in our channels here below; this instant will never return again, and yet, it may be, this instant will declare or secure the fortune of a whole eternity. The old Greeks and Romans taught us the prudence of this rule: but christianity teaches us the religion of it. They so seized upon the present, that they would lose nothing of the day's pleasure.[c] "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die;" that was their philosophy; and at their solemn feasts they would talk of death to heighten the present drinking, and that they might warm their veins with a fuller chalice, as knowing the drink, that was poured upon their graves, would be cold and without relish. "Break the beds, drink your wine, crown your heads with roses, and besmear your curled locks with nard; for God bids you to remember death:" so the epigrammatist speaks the sense of their drunken principles.[d] Something towards this signification is that of Solomon, "There is nothing better for a man, than that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour; for that is his portion; for who shall bring him to see that which shall be after him?"[e] But, although he concludes all this to be vanity, yet because it was the best thing that was then commonly known, that they should seize upon the present with a temperate use of permitted pleasures, I had reason to say,[f] that christianity taught us to turn this into religion. For he that by a present and constant holiness secures the present, and makes it useful to his noblest purposes, he turns his condition into his best advantage, by making his unavoidable fate become his necessary religion.

To the purpose of this rule is that collect of Tuscan Hieroglyphics, which we have from Gabriel Simeon. "Our life is very short, beauty is a cozenage, money is false and fugitive; empire is odious, and hated by them that have it not, and uneasy to them that have; victory is always uncertain, and peace, most commonly, is but a fraudulent bargain; old age is miserable, death is the period, and is a happy one, if it be not sorrowed by the sins of our life: but nothing continues but the effects of that wisdom, which employs the present time in the acts of a holy religion, and a peaceable conscience:" for they make us to live even beyond our funerals, embalmed in the spices and odours of a good name, and entombed in the grave of the holy Jesus, where we shall be dressed for a blessed resurrection to the state of angels and beatified spirits.

5 Since we stay not here, being people but of a day's abode, and our age is like that of a fly, and contemporary with a gourd, we must look somewhere else for an abiding city, a place in another country to fix our house in, whose walls and foundation is God, where we must find rest, or else be restless for ever. For whatsoever ease we can have or fancy here, is shortly to be changed into sadness, or tediousness:[g] it goes away too soon, like the periods of our life; or stays too long, like the sorrows of a sinner: its own weariness, or a contrary disturbance, is its load; or it is eased by its revolution into vanity and forgetfulness; and where either there is sorrow or end of joy, there can be no true felicity: which, because it must be had by some instrument, and in some period of our duration, we must carry up our affections to the mansions prepared for us above, where eternity is the measure, felicity is the state, angels are the company, the Lamb is the light, and God is the portion and inheritance.

SECTION III.

Rules and spiritual Arts of lengthening our Days, and to take off the Objection of a short Life.

IN the accounts of a man's life, we do not reckon that portion of days, in which we are shut up in the prison of the womb; we tell our years from the day of our birth; and the same reason that makes our reckoning to stay so long, says also, that then it begins too soon. For then we are beholden to others to make the account for us; for we know not of a long time, whether we be alive or no, having but some little approaches and symptoms of

[b] Ille enim ex futuro suspenditur, cui irritum est præsens. —SENECA.

[c] Ætate fruere; mobili cursu fugit.—SENECA.

[d] Martial, l. ii. epig. 59. [e] Eccles. ii. 24. iii. 22.

[f] Amici, dum vivimus, vivamus.
Πίνε, λέγει τὸ γλύμμα, καὶ ἔσθιε, καὶ περίκεισο
Ἄνθεα· τοιοῦτοι γιγνόμεθ' ἐξαπίνης.
Hoc etiam faciunt, ubi discubuere, tenéntque
Pocula sæpe homines, et inumbrant ora coronis;
Ex animo ut dicant, "brevis est hic fructus homullis;
Jam fuerit; neque post unquam revocare licebit!"
LUCRET. lib. iii. 925.

[g] Quis sapiens bono
Confidat fragili? dum licet utere:
Tempus te tacitum subruet, &c.
Semper præteritâ deterior subit.
SENEC. Hippol. 775.

a life. To feed, and sleep, and move a little, and imperfectly, is the state of an unborn child; and when he is born, he does no more for a good while; and what is it, that shall make him to be esteemed to live the life of a man? and when shall that account begin? For we should be loath to have the accounts of our age taken by the measures of a beast: and fools and distracted persons are reckoned as civilly dead; they are no parts of the commonwealth, not subject to laws, but secured by them in charity, and kept from violence as a man keeps his ox: and a third part of our life is spent before we enter into a higher order, into the state of a man.

2. Neither must we think, that the life of a man begins when he can feed himself, or walk alone, when he can fight, or beget his like; for so he is contemporary with a camel or a cow; but he is first a man, when he comes to a certain, steady use of reason, according to his proportion: and when that is, all the world of men cannot tell precisely. Some are called at age at fourteen; some, at one-and-twenty; some, never; but all men, late enough; for the life of a man comes upon him slowly and insensibly. But as when the sun approaches towards the gates of the morning, he first opens a little eye of heaven, and sends away the spirits of darkness, and gives light to a cock, and calls up the lark to matins, and by and by gilds the fringes of a cloud, and peeps over the eastern hills, thrusting out his golden horns, like those which decked the brows of Moses, when he was forced to wear a veil, because himself had seen the face of God; and still while a man tells the story, the sun gets up higher, till he shows a fair face and a full light, and then he shines one whole day, under a cloud often, and sometimes weeping great and little showers, and sets quickly: so is a man's reason and his life. He first begins to perceive himself to see or taste, making little reflections upon his actions of sense, and can discourse of flies and dogs, shells and play, horses and liberty: but when he is strong enough to enter into arts and little institutions, he is at first entertained with trifles and impertinent things, not because he needs them, but because his understanding is no bigger, and little images of things are laid before him, like a cock-boat to a whale, only to play withal: but before a man comes to be wise, he is half dead with gouts and consumptions, with catarrhs and aches, with sore eyes and a worn-out body. So that if we must not reckon the life of a man but by the accounts of his reason, he is long before his soul be dressed; and he is not to be called a man, without a wise and an adorned soul, a soul at least furnished with what is necessary towards his well-being: but by that time his soul is thus furnished, his body is decayed; and then you can hardly reckon him to be alive, when his body is possessed by so many degrees of death.

3. But there is yet another arrest. At first he wants strength of body, and then he wants the use of reason: and when this is come, it is ten to one, but he stops by the impediments of vice, and wants the strength of the spirit: and we know that body and soul and spirit are the constituent parts of every christian man. And now let us consider, what that thing is, which we call years of discretion. The young man is past his tutors, and arrived at the bondage of a caitiff spirit; he is run from discipline, and is let loose to passion; the man by this time hath wit enough to choose his vice, to act his lust, to court his mistress, to talk confidently, and ignorantly, and perpetually, to despise his betters, to deny nothing to his appetite, to do things that, when he is indeed a man, he must for ever be ashamed of: for this is all the discretion that most men show in the first stage of their manhood; they can discern good from evil; and they prove their skill by leaving all that is good, and wallowing in the evils of folly and an unbridled appetite. And, by this time, the young man hath contracted vicious habits, and is a beast in manners, and therefore it will not be fitting to reckon the beginning of his life; he is a fool in his understanding, and that is a sad death; and he is dead in trespasses and sins, and that is a sadder: so that he hath no life but a natural, the life of a beast or a tree; in all other capacities he is dead; he neither hath the intellectual or the spiritual life, neither the life of a man nor of a christian; and this sad truth lasts too long. For old age seizes upon most men, while they still retain the minds of boys and vicious youth, doing actions from principles of great folly, and a mighty ignorance, admiring things useless and hurtful, and filling up all the dimensions of their abode with businesses of empty affairs, being at leisure to attend no virtue: they cannot pray, because they are busy, and because they are passionate: they cannot communicate, because they have quarrels and intrigues of perplexed causes, complicated hostilities, and things of the world; and therefore they cannot attend to the things of God: little considering, that they must find a time to die in; when death comes, they must be at leisure for that. Such men are like sailors loosing from a port, and tossed immediately with a perpetual tempest lasting till their cordage crack, and either they sink, or return back again to the same place: they did not make a voyage, though they were long at sea. The business and impertinent affairs of most men steal all their time, and they are restless in a foolish motion: but this is not the progress of a man; he is no farther advanced in the course of a life, though he reckon many years;[h] for still his soul is childish, and trifling like an untaught boy.

If the parts of this sad complaint find their remedy, we have by the same instruments also cured the evils and the vanity of a short life. Therefore,

1. Be infinitely curious you do not set back your life in the accounts of God, by the intermingling of criminal actions, or the contracting vicious habits. There are some vices, which carry a sword in their hand, and cut a man off before his time. There is a sword of the Lord, and there is a sword of a man, and there is a sword of the devil. Every vice of our own managing in the matter of carnality, of

[h] ———Bis jam consul trigesimus instat,
Et numerat paucos vix tua vita dies.—MART. i. 16.

lust or rage, ambition or revenge, is a sword of Satan put into the hands of a man; these are the destroying angels; sin is the Apollyon, the destroyer that is gone out, not from the Lord, but from the tempter; and we hug the poison, and twist willingly with the vipers, till they bring us into the regions of an irrecoverable sorrow. We use to reckon persons as good as dead, if they have lost their limbs and their teeth, and are confined to a hospital, and converse with none but surgeons and physicians, mourners and divines, those *pollinctores*, the dressers of bodies and souls to funeral; but it is worse when the soul, the principle of life, is employed wholly in the offices of death; and that man was worse than dead, of whom Seneca tells, that being a rich fool, when he was lifted up from the baths and set into a soft couch, asked his slaves, *An ego jam sedeo?* Do I now sit? The beast was so drowned in sensuality and the death of his soul, that, whether he did sit or no, he was to believe another. Idleness and every vice are as much of death as a long disease is, or the expense of ten years; and "she that lives in pleasures, is dead while she liveth" (saith the apostle); and it is the style of the Spirit concerning wicked persons, "they are dead in trespasses and sins." For as every sensual pleasure and every day of idleness and useless living lops off a little branch from our short life; so every deadly sin and every habitual vice does quite destroy us: but innocence leaves us in our natural portions and perfect period; we lose nothing of our life, if we lose nothing of our soul's health; and therefore he that would live a full age, must avoid a sin, as he would decline the regions of death and the dishonours of the grave.

2. If we would have our life lengthened,[i] let us begin betimes to live in the accounts of reason and sober counsels, of religion and the spirit, and then we shall have no reason to complain that our abode on earth is so short: many men find it long enough, and indeed it is so to all senses. But when we spend in waste what God hath given us in plenty, when we sacrifice our youth to folly, our manhood to lust and rage, our old age to covetousness and irreligion, not beginning to live till we are to die, designing that time to virtue which indeed is infirm to every thing and profitable to nothing; then we make our lives short, and lust runs away with all the vigorous and healthful part of it, and pride and animosity steal the manly portion, and craftiness and interest possess old age; *velut ex pleno et abundanti perdimus*, we spend as if we had too much time, and knew not what to do with it: we fear every thing, like weak and silly mortals; and desire strangely and greedily, as if we were immortal: we complain our life is short, and yet we throw away much of it, and are weary of many of its parts; we complain the day is long, and the night is long, and we want company, and seek out arts to drive the time away, and then weep because it is gone too soon. But so the treasure of the capitol is but a small estate, when Cæsar comes to finger it, and to pay with it all his legions: and the revenue of all Egypt and the eastern provinces was but a little sum, when they were to support the luxury of Mark Antony, and feed the riot of Cleopatra; but a thousand crowns is a vast proportion to be spent in the cottage of a frugal person, or to feed a hermit. Just so is our life: it is too short to serve the ambition of a haughty prince, or a usurping rebel; too little time to purchase great wealth, to satisfy the pride of a vain-glorious fool, to trample upon all the enemies of our just or unjust interest: but for the obtaining virtue, for the purchase of sobriety and modesty, for the actions of religion, God gave us time sufficient, if we make the "outgoings of the morning and evening," that is, our infancy and old age, to be taken into the computations of a man. Which we may see in the following particulars.

1. If our childhood being first consecrated by a forward baptism, it be seconded by a holy education, and a complying obedience; if our youth be chaste and temperate, modest and industrious, proceeding through a prudent and sober manhood to a religious old age; then we have lived our whole duration,[k] and shall never die, but be changed, in a just time, to the preparations of a better and an immortal life.

2. If, besides the ordinary returns of our prayers and periodical and festival solemnities, and our seldom communions, we would allow to religion and the studies of wisdom those great shares, that are trifled away upon vain sorrow, foolish mirth, troublesome ambition, busy covetousness, watchful lust, and impertinent amours, and balls and revellings and banquets, all that which was spent viciously, and all that time that lay fallow and without employment, our life would quickly amount to a great sum. Tostatus Abulensis was a very painful person, and a great clerk, and in the days of his manhood he wrote so many books, and they not ill ones, that the world computed a sheet for every day of his life; I suppose they meant, after he came to the use of reason and the state of a man: and John Scotus died about the two-and-thirtieth year of his age; and yet, besides his public disputations, his daily lectures of divinity in public and private, the books that he wrote, being lately collected and printed at Lyons, do equal the number of volumes of any two the most voluminous fathers of the Latin church. Every man is not enabled to such employments, but every man is called and enabled to the works of a sober and a religious life; and there are many saints of God, that can reckon as many volumes of religion and mountains of piety, as those others did of good books. St. Ambrose (and I think, from his example, St. Augustine) divided every day into three *tertias* of employment: eight hours he spent in the neces-

[i] Ædepol, proinde ut bene vivitur, diu vivitur.—PLAUT. Trinum. Non accepimus brevem vitam, sed fecimus; nec inopes ejus, sed prodigi sumus.—SENECA.

[k] Sed potes, Publi, geminare magnâ
Secula famâ.
Quem sui raptum gemuere cives,
Hic diu vixit. Sibi quisque famam
Scribat hæredem: rapiunt avaræ
Cætera Lunæ.—CASIM. ii. 2.

sities of nature and recreation; eight hours in charity and doing assistance to others, despatching their businesses, reconciling their enmities, reproving their vices, correcting their errors, instructing their ignorances, transacting the affairs of his diocese; and the other eight hours he spent in study and prayer. If we were thus minute and curious in the spending our time, it is impossible but our life would seem very long. For so have I seen an amorous person tell the minutes of his absence from his fancied joy, and while he told the sands of his hour-glass, or the throbs and little beatings of his watch, by dividing an hour into so many members, he spun out its length by number, and so translated a day into the tediousness of a month. And if we tell our days by canonical hours of prayer, our weeks by a constant revolution of fasting-days or days of special devotion, and over all these draw a black cypress, a veil of penitential sorrow and severe mortification, we shall soon answer the calumny and objection of a short life. He that governs the day and divides the hours, hastens from the eyes and observation of a merry sinner; but loves to stand still, and behold, and tell the sighs, and number the groans and sadly-delicious accents of a grieved penitent. It is a vast work that any man may do, if he never be idle; and it is a huge way that a man may go in virtue, if he never goes out of his way by a vicious habit or a great crime: and he that perpetually reads good books, if his parts be answerable, will have a huge stock of knowledge. It is so in all things else. Strive not to forget your time, and suffer none of it to pass undiscerned; and then measure your life, and tell me, how you find the measure of its abode. However, the time we live is worth the money we pay for it; and therefore it is not to be thrown away.

3. When vicious men are dying, and scared with the affrighting truths of an evil conscience, they would give all the world for a year, for a month: nay, we read of some that called out with amazement, *inducias usque ad mane*, truce but till the morning:—and if that year or some few months were given, those men think they could do miracles in it. And let us awhile suppose what Dives would have done, if he had been loosed from the pains of hell, and permitted to live on earth one year. Would all the pleasures of the world have kept him one hour from the temple? would he not perpetually have been under the hands of priests, or at the feet of the doctors, or by Moses's chair, or attending as near the altar as he could get, or relieving poor Lazarus, or praying to God, and crucifying all his sin? I have read of a melancholy person, who saw hell but in a dream or vision, and the amazement was such, that he would have chosen ten times to die rather than feel again so much of that horror: and such a person cannot be fancied, but that he would spend a year in such holiness, that the religion of a few months would equal the devotion of many years, even of a good man. Let us but compute the proportions. If we should spend all our years of reason so, as such a person would spend that one, can it be thought, that life would be short and trifling, in which he had performed such a religion, served God with so much holiness, mortified sin with so great a labour, purchased virtue at such a rate and so rare an industry? It must needs be, that such a man must die when he ought to die, and be like ripe and pleasant fruit falling from a fair tree, and gathered into baskets for the planter's use. He that hath done all his business, and is begotten to a glorious hope by the seed of an immortal Spirit, can never die too soon, nor live too long.[l]

Xerxes wept sadly, when he saw his army of 2,300,000 men, because he considered, that, within a hundred years, all the youth of that army should be dust and ashes: and yet, as Seneca well observes of him, he was the man that should bring them to their graves; and he consumed all that army in two years, for whom he feared and wept the death after a hundred. Just so we do all. We complain, that within thirty or forty years, a little more, or a great deal less, we shall descend again into the bowels of our mother, and that our life is too short for any great employment; and yet we throw away five-and-thirty years of our forty, and the remaining five we divide between art and nature, civility and customs, necessity and convenience, prudent counsels and religion: but the portion of the last is little and contemptible, and yet that little is all that we can prudently account of our lives. We bring that fate and that death near us, of whose approach we are so sadly apprehensive.

4. In taking the accounts of your life, do not reckon by great distances, and by the periods of pleasure, or the satisfaction of your hopes, or the sating your desires: but let every intermedial day and hour pass with observation. He that reckons he hath lived but so many harvests, thinks they come not often enough, and that they go away too soon:[m] some lose the day with longing for the night, and the night in waiting for the day. Hope and fantastic expectations spend much of our lives: and while with passion we look for a coronation, or the death of an enemy, or a day of joy, passing from fancy to possession without any intermedial notices, we throw away a precious year, and use it but as the burden of our time, fit to be pared off and thrown away, that we may come at those little pleasures, which first steal our hearts, and then steal our life.

5. A strict course of piety is the way to prolong our lives in the natural sense, and to add good portions to the number of our years; and sin is sometimes by natural casualty, very often by the anger of God and the Divine judgment, a cause of sudden and untimely death. Concerning which I shall add nothing, (to what I have somewhere else said of this article,[n]) but only the observation of

[l] Huic neque defungi visum est, nec vivere pulchrum:
Cura fuit rectè vivere, sicque mori.

[m] In spe viventibus proximum quodque tempus elabitur, subitque aviditas temporis, et miserrimus, atque misserima omnia efficiens, metus mortis———Ex hac autem indigentiâ timor nascitur, et cupiditas futuri exedens animum.—SEN.

[n] Life of Christ, Part iii. Disc. 14.

Epiphanius;[o] that for three thousand three hundred and thirty-two years, even to the twentieth age, there was not one example of a son that died before his father; but the course of nature was kept, that he who was first born in the descending line, did first die, (I speak of natural death, and therefore Abel cannot be opposed to this observation,) till that Terah, the father of Abraham, taught the people a new religion, to make images of clay and worship them; and concerning him it was first remarked, that "Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his nativity:" God, by an unheard-of judgment and a rare accident, punishing his newly-invented crime by the untimely death of his son.

6. But if I shall describe a living man, a man that hath that life that distinguishes him from a fool or a bird, that which gives him a capacity next to angels, we shall find that even a good man lives not long, because it is long before he is born to this life, and longer yet before he hath a man's growth. "He that can look upon death, and see its face with the same countenance with which he hears its story;[p] that can endure all the labours of his life with his soul supporting his body; that can equally despise riches, when he hath them, and when he hath them not; that is not sadder if they lie in his neighbour's trunks, nor more brag if they shine round about his own walls: he that is neither moved with good fortune coming to him, nor going from him; that can look upon another man's lands evenly and pleasedly, as if they were his own, and yet look upon his own, and use them too, just as if they were another man's; that neither spends his goods prodigally and like a fool, nor yet keeps them avariciously and like a wretch; that weighs not benefits by weight and number, but by the mind and circumstances of him that gives them; that never thinks his charity expensive, if a worthy person be the receiver; he that does nothing for opinion sake, but every thing for conscience, being as curious of his thoughts as of his actings in markets and theatres, and is as much in awe of himself as of a whole assembly; he that knows God looks on, and contrives his secret affairs as in the presence of God and his holy angels; that eats and drinks because he needs it, not that he may serve a lust or load his belly; he that is bountiful and cheerful to his friends, and charitable and apt to forgive his enemies; that loves his country, and obeys his prince, and desires and endeavours nothing more than that he may do honour to God;" this person may reckon his life to be the life of a man, and compute his months, not by the course of the sun, but the zodiac and circle of his virtues; because these are such things, which fools and children and birds and beasts cannot have; these are therefore the actions of life, because they are the seeds of immortality. That day in which we have done some excellent thing, we may as truly reckon to be added to our life, as were the fifteen years to the days of Hezekiah.

SECTION IV.

Consideration of the Miseries of Man's Life.

As our life is very short, so it is very miserable; and therefore it is well it is short. God in pity to mankind, lest his burden should be insupportable, and his nature an intolerable load, hath reduced our state of misery to an abbreviature; and the greater our misery is, the less while it is like to last; the sorrows of a man's spirit being like ponderous weights, which, by the greatness of their burden, make a swifter motion, and descend into the grave to rest and ease our wearied limbs; for then only we shall sleep quietly, when those fetters are knocked off, which not only bound our souls in prison, but also ate the flesh, till the very bones opened the secret garments of their cartilages, discovering their nakedness and sorrow.

1. Here is no place to sit down in, but you must rise as soon as you are set, for we have gnats in our chambers, and worms in our gardens,[q] and spiders and flies in the palaces of the greatest kings. How few men in the world are prosperous! What an infinite number of slaves and beggars, of persecuted and oppressed people, fill all the corners of the earth with groans, and heaven itself with weeping, prayers, and sad remembrances! How many provinces and kingdoms are afflicted by a violent war, or made desolate by popular diseases! Some whole countries are remarked with fatal evils, or periodical sicknesses. Grand Cairo in Egypt feels the plague every three years returning like a quartan ague, and destroying many thousands of persons. All the inhabitants of Arabia the desert are in a continual fear of being buried in huge heaps of sand, and therefore dwell in tents and ambulatory houses, or retire to unfruitful mountains, to prolong an uneasy and wilder life. And all the countries round about the Adriatic sea feel such violent convulsions by tempests and intolerable earthquakes, that sometimes whole cities find a tomb, and every man sinks with his own house made ready to become his monument, and his bed is crushed into the disorders of a grave. Was not all the world drowned at one deluge, and breach of the Divine anger? And shall not all the world again be destroyed by fire?[r] Are there not many thousands, that die every night, and that groan and weep sadly every day? But what shall we think of that great evil, which for the sins of men God hath suffered to possess the greatest part of mankind? Most of the men that are now alive, or that have been living for many ages, are Jews, heathens, or Turks; and God was pleased to suffer a base epileptic person, a villain and a vicious, to set up a

[o] Lib. i. tom. i. Panar. sect. vi.

[p] Seneca de Vitâ Beatâ, cap. xx.

[q] Nulla requies in terris; surgite, postquam sederitis; Lic est locus pulicum et culicum.

[r] Ἔσται καὶ Σάμος ἄμμος, ἐσεῖται Δῆλος ἄδηλος,
Καὶ Ρώμη ῥύμη.—Sibyll. Orac.

religion which hath filled all the nearer parts of Asia, and much of Africa, and some part of Europe; so that the greatest number of men and women born in so many kingdoms and provinces are infallibly made Mahometan, strangers and enemies to Christ, by whom alone we can be saved. This consideration is extremely sad, when we remember how universal and how great an evil it is; that so many millions of sons and daughters are born to enter into the possession of devils to eternal ages. These evils are the miseries of great parts of mankind, and we cannot easily consider more particularly the evils which happen to us, being the inseparable affections or incidents to the whole nature of man.

2. We find that all the women in the world are either born for barrenness, or the pains of childbirth, and yet this is one of our greatest blessings; but such indeed are the blessings of this world, we cannot be well with nor without many things. Perfumes make our heads ache, roses prick our fingers, and in our very blood, where our life dwells, is the scene under which nature acts many sharp fevers and heavy sicknesses. It were too sad, if I should tell how many persons are afflicted with evil spirits, with spectres and illusions of the night; and that huge multitudes of men and women live upon man's flesh; nay, worse yet, upon the sins of men, upon the sins of their sons and of their daughters, and they pay their souls down for the bread they eat, buying this day's meal with the price of the last night's sin.

3. Or if you please in charity to visit an hospital, which is indeed a map of the whole world, there you shall see the effects of Adam's sin, and the ruins of human nature; bodies laid up in heaps like the bones of a destroyed town, *homines precarii spiritus et male hærentis*, men whose souls seem to be borrowed, and are kept there by art and the force of medicine, whose miseries are so great, that few people have charity or humanity enough to visit them, fewer have the heart to dress them, and we pity them in civility or with a transient prayer, but we do not feel their sorrows by the mercies of a religious pity; and therefore as we leave their sorrows in many degrees unrelieved and uneased, so we contract by our unmercifulness a guilt, by which ourselves become liable to the same calamities. Those many that need pity, and those infinities of people that refuse to pity, are miserable upon a several charge, but yet they almost make up all mankind.

4. All wicked men are in love with that, which entangles them in huge varieties of troubles; they are slaves to the worst of masters, to sin and to the devil, to a passion, and to an imperious woman. Good men are for ever persecuted, and God chastises every son whom he receives; and whatsoever is easy, is trifling and worth nothing, and whatsoever is excellent, is not to be obtained without labour and sorrow; and the conditions and states of men, that are free from great cares, are such, as have in them nothing rich and orderly, and those that have, are stuck full of thorns and trouble. Kings are full of care; and learned men in all ages have been observed to be very poor,[s] *honestas miserias accusant*, they complain of their honest miseries.

5. But these evils are notorious and confessed; even they also whose felicity men stare at and admire, besides their splendour and the sharpness of their light, will, with their appendant sorrows, wring a tear from the most resolved eye; for not only the winter quarter is full of storms and cold and darkness, but the beauteous spring hath blasts and sharp frosts, the fruitful teeming summer is melted with heat, and burnt with the kisses of the sun her friend, and choked with dust, and the rich autumn is full of sickness; and we are weary of that which we enjoy, because sorrow is its biggest portion: and when we remember, that upon the fairest face is placed one of the worst sinks of the body, the nose, we may use it not only as a mortification to the pride of beauty, but as an allay to the fairest outside of condition which any of the sons and daughters of Adam do possess. For look upon kings and conquerors: I will not tell, that many of them fall into the condition of servants,[t] and their subjects rule over them, and stand upon the ruins of their families, and that to such persons the sorrow is bigger than usually happens in smaller fortunes; but let us suppose them still conquerors, and see what a goodly purchase they get by all their pains, and amazing fears, and continual dangers. They carry their arms beyond Ister, and pass the Euphrates, and bind the Germans with the bounds of the river Rhine: I speak in the style of the Roman greatness; for now-a-days the biggest fortune swells not beyond the limits of a petty province or two, and a hill confines the progress of their prosperity, or a river checks it: but whatsoever tempts the pride and vanity of ambitious persons, is not so big as the smallest star, which we see scattered in disorder and unregarded upon the pavement and floor of heaven. And if we would suppose the pismires had but our understandings, they also would have the method of a man's greatness, and divide their little mole-hills into provinces and exarchates: and if they also grew as vicious and as miserable, one of their princes would lead an army out, and kill his neighbour ants, that he might reign over the next handful of a turf. But then, if we consider, at what price and with what felicity all this is purchased, the sting of the painted snake will quickly appear, and the fairest of their fortunes will properly enter into this account of human infelicities.

We may guess at it by the constitution of Augustus's fortune, who struggled for his power, first with the Roman citizens, then with Brutus and Cassius, and all the fortune of the republic; then

[s] Vilis adulator picto jacet ebrius ostro,
Et qui solicitat nuptas, ad præmia peccat.
Sola pruinosis horret facundia pannis,
Atque inopi linguâ desertas invocat artes.
PETRON. c. 83. p. 249. ed. Ant.

Hinc et jocus apud Aristophanem in Avibus: 934.
Σὺ μέντοι σπολάδα καὶ χιτῶν' ἔχεις·
Ἀπόδυθι, καὶ δὸς τῷ ποιητῇ τῷ σοφῷ.

[t] Vilis servus habet regni bona, cellaque capti
Deridet festam Romuleamque casam.—PETRON. frag. 21.
Omnia, crede mihi, etiam felicibus dubia sunt.—SENECA.

with his colleague Mark Antony; then with his kindred and nearest relatives; and, after he was wearied with slaughter of the Romans, before he could sit down and rest in his imperial chair, he was forced to carry armies into Macedonia, Galatia, beyond Euphrates, Rhine, and Danubius; and when he dwelt at home in greatness and within the circles of a mighty power, he hardly escaped the sword of the Egnatii, of Lepidus, Cæpio, and Muræna; and after he had entirely reduced the felicity and grandeur into his own family, his daughter, his only child, conspired with many of the young nobility, and being joined with adulterous complications, as with an impious sacrament,[u] they affrighted and destroyed the fortunes of the old man, and wrought him more sorrow than all the troubles that were hatched in the baths and beds of Egypt, between Antony and Cleopatra.[v] This was the greatest fortune that the world had then or ever since, and therefore we cannot expect it to be better in a less prosperity.

6. The prosperity of this world is so infinitely soured with the overflowing of evils, that he is counted the most happy who hath the fewest; all conditions being evil and miserable, they are only distinguished by the number of calamities. The collector of the Roman and foreign examples, when he had reckoned two-and-twenty instances of great fortunes, every one of which had been allayed with great variety of evils; in all his reading or experience, he could tell but of two, who had been famed for an entire prosperity, Quintus Metellus, and Gyges the king of Lydia: and yet concerning the one of them he tells, that his felicity was so inconsiderable (and yet it was the bigger of the two) that the oracle said, that Aglaus Sophidius the poor Arcadian shepherd, was more happy than he, that is, he had fewer troubles; for so indeed we are to reckon the pleasures of this life; the limit of our joy is the absence of some degree of sorrow,[w] and he that hath the least of this, is the most prosperous person. But then we must look for prosperity, not in palaces or courts of princes, not in the tents of conquerors, or in the gaieties of fortunate and prevailing sinners; but something rather in the cottages of honest, innocent, and contented persons, whose mind is no bigger than their fortune, nor their virtue less than their security. As for others, whose fortune looks bigger, and allures fools to follow it like the wandering fires of the night, till they run into rivers, or are broken upon rocks with staring and running after them, they are all in the condition of Marius, than whose condition nothing was more constant, and nothing more mutable; if we reckon them amongst the happy, they are the most happy men; if we reckon them amongst the miserable, they are the most miserable.[x] For just as is a man's condition, great or little, so is the state of his misery; all have their share; but kings and princes, great generals and consuls, rich men and mighty, as they have the biggest business and the biggest charge, and are answerable to God for the greatest accounts, so they have the biggest trouble; that the uneasiness of their appendage may divide the good and evil of the world, making the poor man's fortune as eligible as the greatest; and also restraining the vanity of man's spirit, which a great fortune is apt to swell from a vapour to a bubble; but God in mercy hath mingled wormwood with their wine, and so restrained the drunkenness and follies of prosperity.

7. Man never hath one day to himself of entire peace from the things of the world, but either something troubles him, or nothing satisfies him, or his very fulness swells him and makes him breathe short upon his bed. Men's joys are troublesome, and besides that the fear of losing them takes away the present pleasure, (and a man hath need of another felicity to preserve this,) they are also wavering and full of trepidation, not only from their inconstant nature, but from their weak foundation: they arise from vanity, and they dwell upon ice, and they converse with the wind, and they have the wings of a bird, and are serious but as the resolutions of a child, commenced by chance, and managed by folly, and proceed by inadvertency, and end in vanity and forgetfulness. So that as Livius Drusus said of himself, he never had any play-days or days of quiet when he was a boy;[y] for he was troublesome and busy, a restless and unquiet man: the same may every man observe to be true of himself; he is always restless and uneasy, he dwells upon the waters, and leans upon thorns, and lays his head upon a sharp stone.

SECTION V.

The Consideration reduced to Practice.

1. The effect of this consideration is this, that the sadnesses of this life help to sweeten the bitter cup of death. For let our life be never so long, if our strength were great as that of oxen and camels, if our sinews were strong as the cordage at the foot of an oak, if we were as fighting and prosperous people as Siccius Dentatus, who was on the prevailing side in a hundred and twenty battles, who had three hundred and twelve public rewards assigned him by his generals and princes for his valour and conduct in sieges and sharp encounters, and, besides all this, had his share in nine triumphs; yet still the period shall be, that all this shall end in death, and the people shall talk of us awhile, good or bad, according as we deserve, or as they please, and once it shall come to pass that, concerning every one of us, it shall be told in the neighbourhood, that we are dead. This we are apt to think a sad story; but therefore let us help it with a sadder: for we therefore need not be much troubled, that we shall

[u] Et adulterio velut sacramento adacti.—Tacit.

[v] Plusque et iterum timenda cum Antonio mulier.

[w] Ὅρος τοῦ μεγέθους τῶν ἡδονῶν, ἡ παντὸς τοῦ ἀλγεινοῦ ὑπεξαίρεσις.

[x] Quem si inter miseros posueris, miserrimus; inter felices, felicissimus reperiebatur.

[y] Uni sibi nec puero unquam ferias contigisse. Seditiosus et foro gravis.

die, because we are not here in ease, nor do we dwell in a fair condition; but our days are full of sorrow and anguish, dishonoured and made unhappy with many sins, with a frail and a foolish spirit, entangled with difficult cases of conscience, insnared with passions, amazed with fears, full of cares, divided with curiosities and contradictory interests, made airy and impertinent with vanities, abused with ignorance and prodigious errors, made ridiculous with a thousand weaknesses, worn away with labours, loaden with diseases, daily vexed with dangers and temptations, and in love with misery; we are weakened with delights, afflicted with want, with the evils of myself and of all my family, and with the sadnesses of all my friends, and of all good men, even of the whole church; and therefore methinks we need not be troubled, that God is pleased to put an end to all these troubles, and to let them sit down in a natural period, which, if we please, may be to us the beginning of a better life. When the prince of Persia wept because his army should all die in the revolution of an age, Artabanus told him, that they should all meet with evils so many and so great, that every man of them should wish himself dead long before that. Indeed it were a sad thing to be cut of the stone, and we that are in health tremble to think of it; but the man that is wearied with the disease, looks upon that sharpness as upon his cure and remedy: and as none need to have a tooth drawn, so none could well endure it, but he that felt the pain of it in his head: so is our life so full of evils, that therefore death is no evil to them, that have felt the smart of this, or hope for the joys of a better.

2. But as it helps to ease a certain sorrow, as a fire draws out fire, and a nail drives forth a nail, so it instructs us in a present duty, that is, that we should not be so fond of a perpetual storm, nor doat upon the transient gauds and gilded thorns of this world. They are not worth a passion, nor worth a sigh or a groan, not of the price of one night's watching; and therefore they are mistaken and miserable persons, who, since Adam planted thorns round about Paradise, are more in love with that hedge than all the fruits of the garden, sottish admirers of things that hurt them, of sweet poisons, gilded daggers, and silken halters. Tell them they have lost a bounteous friend, a rich purchase, a fair farm, a wealthy donative, and you dissolve their patience; it is an evil bigger than their spirit can bear: it brings sickness and death: they can neither eat nor sleep with such a sorrow. But if you represent to them the evils of a vicious habit, and the dangers of a state of sin; if you tell them they have displeased God, and interrupted their hopes of heaven, it may be they will be so civil as to hear it patiently, and to treat you kindly, and first to commend and then forget your story, because they prefer this world with all its sorrows before the pure unmingled felicities of heaven. But it is strange, that any man should be so passionately in love with the thorns, which grow on his own ground, that he should wear them for armlets, and knit them in his shirt, and prefer them before a kingdom and immortality. No man loves this world the better for his being poor; but men that love it because they have great possessions, love it because it is troublesome and chargeable, full of noise and temptation, because it is unsafe and ungoverned, flattered and abused; and he that considers the troubles of an over-long garment and of a crammed stomach, a trailing gown and a loaden table, may justly understand that all that, for which men are so passionate, is their hurt, and their objection, that which a temperate man would avoid, and a wise man cannot love.

He that is no fool, but can consider wisely, if he be in love with this world, we need not despair; but that a witty man might reconcile him with tortures, and make him think charitably of the rack, and be brought to dwell with vipers and dragons, and entertain his guests with the shrieks of mandrakes, cats, and screech-owls, with the filing of iron, and the harshness of rending of silk, or to admire the harmony that is made by a herd of ravening wolves, when they miss their draught of blood in their midnight revels. The groans of a man in a fit of the stone are worse than all these; and the distractions of a troubled conscience are worse than those groans; and yet a careless, merry sinner is worse than all that. But if we could from one of the battlements of heaven espy, how many men and women at this time lie fainting and dying for want of bread, how many young men are hewn down by the sword of war, how many poor orphans are now weeping over the graves of their father, by whose life they were enabled to eat: if we could but hear how many mariners and passengers are at this present in a storm, and shriek out because their keel dashes against a rock, or bulges under them; how many people there are that weep with want, and are mad with oppression, or are desperate by too quick a sense of a constant infelicity; in all reason we should be glad to be out of the noise and participation of so many evils. This is a place of sorrows and tears, of great evils and a constant calamity: let us remove from hence, at least in affections and preparation of mind.

CHAPTER II.

A GENERAL PREPARATION TOWARDS A HOLY AND BLESSED DEATH; BY WAY OF EXERCISE.

SECTION I.

Three Precepts preparatory to a holy Death, to be practised in our whole Life.

1. HE that would die well, must always look for death, every day knocking at the gates of the grave; and then the gates of the grave shall never prevail upon him to do him mischief.[z] This was the advice of all the wise and good men of the world, who, especially in the days and periods of their joy and festival egressions, chose to throw some ashes into their chalices, some sober remembrances of their fatal period.[a] Such was the black shirt of Saladine, the tombstone presented to the emperor of Constantinople on his coronation-day: the bishop of Rome's two reeds with flax and a wax-taper; the Egyptian skeleton served up at feasts: and Trimalcion's banquet in Petronius, in which was brought in the image of a dead man's bones of silver, with spondyles exactly returning to every of the guests,[b] and saying to every one, that you and you must die, and look not one upon another, for every one is equally concerned in the sad representment. These in fantastic semblances declare a severe counsel and useful meditation; and it is not easy for a man to be gay in his imagination, or to be drunk with joy or wine, pride or revenge, who considers sadly, that he must, ere long, dwell in a house of darkness and dishonour, and his body must be the inheritance of worms, and his soul must be what he pleases, even as a man makes it here by his living good or bad. I have read of a young hermit, who, being passionately in love with a young lady, could not, by all the arts of religion and mortification, suppress the trouble of that fancy, till at last being told that she was dead, and had been buried about fourteen days, he went secretly to her vault, and with the skirt of his mantle wiped the moisture from the carcass, and still at the return of his temptation laid it before him, saying, Behold this is the beauty of the woman thou didst so much desire: and so the man found his cure. And if we make death as present to us, our own death, dwelling and dressed in all its pomp of fancy and proper circumstances; if any thing will quench the heats of lust, or the desires of money, or the greedy passionate affections of this world, this must do it. But withal, the frequent use of this meditation, by curing our present inordinations, will make death safe and friendly, and by its very custom will make, that the king of terrors shall come to us without his affrighting dresses; and that we shall sit down in the grave as we compose ourselves to sleep, and do the duties of nature and choice. The old people that lived near the Riphæan mountains,[c] were taught to converse with death, and to handle it on all sides, and to discourse of it, as of a thing that will certainly come, and ought so to do. Thence their minds and resolutions became capable of death, and they thought it a dishonourable thing, with greediness to keep a life, that must go from us, to lay aside its thorns, and to return again circled with a glory and a diadem.

2. "He that would die well, must, all the days of his life, lay up against the day of death;"[d] not only by the general provisions of holiness and a pious life indefinitely, but provisions proper to the necessities of that great day of expense, in which a man is to throw his last cast for an eternity of joys or sorrows; ever remembering, that this alone, well performed, is not enough to pass us into paradise; but that alone, done foolishly, is enough to send us to hell: and the want of either a holy life or death makes a man to fall short of the mighty price of our high calling. In order to this rule we are to consider what special graces we shall then need to exercise, and by the proper arts of the spirit, by a heap of proportioned arguments, by prayers and a great treasure of devotion laid up in heaven, provide beforehand a reserve of strength and mercy.[e] Men in the course of their lives walk lazily and incuriously, as if they had both their feet in one shoe: and when they are passively revolved to the time of their dissolution, they have no mercies in store, no patience, no faith, no charity to God, or despite of the world, being without gust or appetite for the land of their inheritance which Christ with so much pain and blood had purchased for them. When we come to die indeed, we shall be very much put to it to stand firm upon the two feet of a christian, faith and patience. When we ourselves are to use the articles, to turn our former discourses into present practice, and to feel what we never felt before, we shall find it to be quite another thing, to be willing presently to quit this life, and all our present pos-

[z] Propera vivere, et singulos dies singulas vitas puta. Nihil interest inter diem et seculum.

[a] Si sapis, utaris totis,'Coline, diebus;
Extremumque tibi semper adesse putes.—MARTIAL.

[b] Heu, heu, nos miseros! quàm totus homuncio nil est!
Sic erimus cuncti, postquam nos auferet Orcus:
Ergo vivamus, dum licet esse, bene.

[c] ———Certè populi quos despicit Arctos
Felices errore suo, quos ille timorum
Maximus haud urget, lethi metus———
———Inde ruendi
In ferrum mens prona viris, animæque capaces
Mortis, et ignavum redituræ parcere vitæ.
LUCAN. i. 458.

[d] Qui quotidiè vitæ suæ manum imposuit, non indiget tempore.—SENECA.

[e] Insere nunc, Melibœe, pyros, pone ordine vites.

sessions, for the hopes of a thing which we were never suffered to see, and such a thing, of which we may fail so many ways, and of which if we fail any way we are miserable for ever. Then we shall find, how much we have need to have secured the Spirit of God and the grace of faith, by an habitual, perfect, unmovable resolution. The same also is the case of patience, which will be assaulted with sharp pains, disturbed fancies, great fears, want of a present mind, natural weaknesses, frauds of the devil, and a thousand accidents and imperfections. It concerns us therefore, highly, in the whole course of our lives, not only to accustom ourselves to a patient suffering of injuries and affronts, of persecutions and losses, of cross accidents and unnecessary circumstances; but also by representing death as present to us, to consider with what arguments then to fortify our patience, and by assiduous and fervent prayer to God all our life long to call upon him to give us patience and great assistances, a strong faith and a confirmed hope, the Spirit of God and his holy angels assistants at that time, to resist and to subdue the devil's temptations and assaults; and so to fortify our heart, that it break not into intolerable sorrows and impatience, and end in wretchedness and infidelity. But this is to be the work of our life, and not to be done at once; but, as God gives us time, by succession, by parts and little periods. For it is very remarkable, that God who giveth plenteously to all creatures; he hath scattered the firmament with stars, as a man sows corn in his fields, in a multitude bigger than the capacities of human order; he hath made so much variety of creatures, and gives us great choice of meats and drinks, although any one of both kinds would have served our needs; and so in all instances of nature; yet in the distribution of our time God seems to be strait-handed, and gives it to us, not as nature gives us rivers, enough to drown us, but drop by drop, minute after minute, so that we never can have two minutes together, but he takes away one when he gives us another. This should teach us to value our time, since God so values it, and by his so small distribution of it, tells us it is the most precious thing we have. Since therefore, in the day of our death, we can have still but the same little portion of this precious time, let us in every minute of our life, I mean, in every discernible portion, lay up such a stock of reason and good works, that they may convey a value to the imperfect and shorter actions of our death-bed; while God rewards the piety of our lives by his gracious acceptation and benediction upon the actions preparatory to our death-bed.

3. He that desires to die well and happily, above all things, must be careful that he do not live a soft, a delicate, and voluptuous life; but a life severe, holy, and under the discipline of the cross, under the conduct of prudence and observation, a life of warfare and sober counsels, labour and watchfulness. No man wants cause of tears and a daily sorrow. Let every man consider what he feels, and acknowledge his misery; let him confess his sin, and chastise it; let him bear his cross patiently, and his persecutions nobly, and his repentances willingly and constantly; let him pity the evils of all the world, and bear his share of the calamities of his brother; let him long and sigh for the joys of heaven; let him tremble and fear, because he hath deserved the pains of hell; let him commute his eternal fear with a temporal suffering, preventing God's judgment by passing one of his own; let him groan for the labours of his pilgrimage, and the dangers of his warfare; and by that time he hath summed up all these labours, and duties, and contingencies, all the proper causes, instruments, and acts of sorrow, he will find, that for a secular joy and wantonness of spirit there are not left many void spaces of his life. It was St. James's advice,[f] "Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy into weeping:" and Bonaventure, in the Life of Christ, reports that the holy Virgin-mother said to St. Elizabeth, that grace does not descend into the soul of a man but by prayer and affliction.[g] Certain it is, that a mourning spirit and an afflicted body are great instruments of reconciling God to a sinner, and they always dwell at the gates of atonement and restitution. But besides this, a delicate and prosperous life is hugely contrary to the hopes of a blessed eternity. "Woe be to them that are at ease in Sion;"[h] so it was said of old: and our blessed Lord said, "Woe be to you that laugh, for ye shall weep:[i] but, blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted."[k] Here or hereafter we must have our portion of sorrows. "He that now goeth on his way weeping, and beareth forth good seed with him, shall doubtless come again with joy, and bring his sheaves with him."[l] And certainly he that sadly considers the portion of Dives, and remembers that the account which Abraham gave him for the unavoidableness of his torment was, because he had his good things in this life, must, in all reason, with trembling run from a course of banquets, and faring deliciously every day, as being a dangerous estate, and a consignation to an evil greater than all danger, the pains and torments of unhappy souls. If either by patience or repentance, by compassion or persecution, by choice or by conformity, by severity or discipline, we allay the festival follies of a soft life, and profess under the cross of Christ, we shall more willingly and more safely enter into our grave; but the death-bed of a voluptuous man upbraids his little and cozening prosperities, and exacts pains made sharper by the passing from soft beds and a softer mind.[m] He that would die holily and happily, must in this world love tears, humility, solitude, and repentance.

[f] Chap. iv. 9.

[g] Neque enim Deus ullâ re perinde atque corporis ærumnâ conciliatur.—NAZ. Orat. 18.

[h] Amos vi. 1.

[i] Luke vi. 25.

[k] Matt. v. 4.

[l] Psal. cxxvi. 6.

[m] ——Sed longi pœnas fortuna favoris
Exigit à misero, quæ tanto pondere famæ
Res premit adversas, fatisque prioribus urget.
LUCAN. l. viii.

SECTION II.

Of daily Examination of our Actions in the whole Course of our Health, preparatory to our Death-bed.

HE that will die well and happily, must dress his soul by a diligent and frequent scrutiny; he must perfectly understand and watch the state of his soul; he must set his house in order, before he be fit to die. And for this there is great reason, and great necessity.

Reasons for a daily Examination.

1. For, if we consider the disorders of every day, the multitude of impertinent words, the great portions of time spent in vanity, the daily omissions of duty, the coldness of our prayers, the indifference of our spirit in holy things, the uncertainty of our secret purposes, our infinite deceptions and hypocrisies, sometimes not known, very often not observed by ourselves, our want of charity, our not knowing in how many degrees of action and purpose every virtue is to be exercised, the secret adherences of pride, and too-forward complacency in our best actions, our failings in all our relations, the niceties of difference between some virtues and some vices, the secret indiscernible passages from lawful to unlawful in the first instances of change, the perpetual mistakings of permissions for duty and licentious practices for permissions, our daily abusing the liberty that God gives us, our unsuspected sins in the managing a course of life certainly lawful, our little greediness in eating, our surprises in the proportions of our drinkings, our too-great freedoms and fondnesses in lawful loves, our aptness for things sensual, and our deadness and tediousness of spirit in spiritual employments; besides infinite variety of cases of conscience that do occur in the life of every man, and in all intercourses of every life, and that the productions of sin are numerous and increasing, like the families of the northern people, or the genealogies of the first patriarchs of the world; from all this we shall find, that the computations of a man's life are busy as the tables of sines and tangents, and intricate as the accounts of eastern merchants; and therefore it were but reason, we should sum up our accounts at the foot of every page, I mean, that we call ourselves to scrutiny every night, when we compose ourselves to the little images of death.

2. For, if we make but one general account, and never reckon till we die, either we shall only reckon by great sums, and remember nothing but clamorous and crying sins, and never consider concerning particulars, or forget very many; or if we could consider all that we ought, we must needs be confounded with the multitude and variety. But if we observe all the little passages of our life, and reduce them into the order of accounts and accusations, we shall find them multiply so fast, that it will not only appear to be an ease to the accounts of our death-bed, but by the instrument of shame will restrain the inundation of evils; it being a thing intolerable to human modesty, to see sins increase so fast, and virtues grow up so slow; to see every day stained with the spots of leprosy, or sprinkled with the marks of a lesser evil.

3. It is not intended we should take accounts of our lives only to be thought religious, but that we may see our evil and amend it, that we dash our sins against the stones, that we may go to God, and to a spiritual guide, and search for remedies, and apply them. And indeed no man can well observe his own growth in grace, but by accounting seldomer returns of sin, and a more frequent victory over temptations; concerning which every man makes his observations, according as he makes his inquiries and search after himself. In order to this it was that St. Paul wrote, before receiving the holy sacrament, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat." This precept was given in those days, when they communicated every day; and therefore a daily examination also was intended.

4. And it will appear highly fitting, if we remember, that, at the day of judgment, not only the greatest lines of life, but every branch and circumstance of every action, every word and thought, shall be called to scrutiny and severe judgment: insomuch that it was a great truth which one said, Woe be to the most innocent life, if God should search into it without mixtures of mercy. And therefore we are here to follow St. Paul's advice, "Judge yourselves, and you shall not be judged of the Lord." The way to prevent God's anger is to be angry with ourselves; and by examining our actions, and condemning the criminal, by being assessors in God's tribunal, at least we shall obtain the favour of the court. As therefore every night we must make our bed the memorial of our grave, so let our evening thoughts be an image of the day of judgment.

5. This advice was so reasonable and proper an instrument of virtue, that it was taught even to the scholars of Pythagoras by their master:[n] "Let not sleep seize upon the regions of your senses, before you have three times recalled the conversation and accidents of the day." Examine what you have committed against the Divine law, what you have omitted of your duty, and in what you have made use of the Divine grace to the purposes of virtue and religion; joining the judge, reason, to the legislative mind or conscience, that God may reign there as a lawgiver and a judge. Then Christ's kingdom is set up in our hearts: then we always live in the eye of our Judge, and live by the measures of reason, religion, and sober counsels.

The benefits we shall receive by practising this advice, in order to a blessed death, will also add to the account of reason and fair inducements.

The Benefits of this Exercise.

1. By a daily examination of our actions, we shall the easier cure a great sin, and prevent its arrival to become habitual. For to examine we sup-

[n] Hierocl.

pose to be a relative duty, and instrumental to something else. We examine ourselves, that we may find out our failings and cure them: and therefore if we use our remedy when the wound is fresh and bleeding, we shall find the cure more certain and less painful. For so a taper, when its crown of flame is newly blown off, retains a nature so symbolical to light, that it will with greediness rekindle and snatch a ray from the neighbour fire. So is the soul of man, when it is newly fallen into sin; although God be angry with it, and the state of God's favour and its own graciousness is interrupted, yet the habit is not naturally changed; and still God leaves some roots of virtue standing, and the man is modest, or apt to be made ashamed, and he is not grown a bold sinner; but if he sleeps on it, and returns again to the same sin, and by degrees grows in love with it, and gets the custom, and the strangeness of it is taken away, then it is his master, and is swelled into a heap, and is abetted by use, and corroborated by newly-entertained principles, and is insinuated into his nature, and hath possessed his affections, and tainted the will and the understanding: and by this time, a man is in the state of a decaying merchant, his accounts are so great, and so intricate, and so much in arrear, that to examine it will be but to represent the particulars of his calamity: therefore they think it better to pull the napkin before their eyes, than to stare upon the circumstances of their death.

2. A daily or frequent examination of the parts of our life will interrupt the proceeding and hinder the journey of little sins into a heap. For many days do not pass the best persons, in which they have not many idle words or vainer thoughts to sully the fair whiteness of their souls: some indiscreet passions of trifling purposes, some impertinent discontents or unhandsome usages of their own persons or their dearest relatives. And though God is not extreme to mark what is done amiss, and therefore puts these upon the accounts of his mercy, and the title of the cross; yet in two cases these little sins combine and cluster; and, we know, that grapes were once in so great a bunch, that one cluster was the load of two men; that is, 1. When either we are in love with small sins; or, 2. When they proceed from a careless and incurious spirit into frequency and continuance. For so the smallest atoms that dance in all the little cells of the world are so trifling and immaterial, that they cannot trouble an eye, nor vex the tenderest part of a wound where a barbed arrow dwelt; yet, when by their infinite numbers (as Melissa and Parmenides affirm) they danced first into order, then into little bodies, at last they made the matter of the world: so are the little indiscretions of our life: they are always inconsiderable, if they be considered, and contemptible if they be not despised, and God does not regard them if we do. We may easily keep them asunder by our daily or nightly thoughts, and prayers, and severe sentences; but even the least sand can check the tumultuous pride, and become a limit to the sea, when it is in a heap and in united multitudes; but if the wind scatter and divide them, the little drops and the vainer froth of the water begin to invade the strand. Our sighs can scatter such little offences; but then be sure to breathe such accents frequently, lest they knot, and combine, and grow big as the shore, and we perish in sand, in trifling instances. "He that despiseth little things, shall perish by little and little:" so said the son of Sirach.[o]

3. A frequent examination of our actions will intenerate and soften our consciences, so that they shall be impatient of any rudeness or heavier load: and he that is used to shrink, when he is pressed with a branch of twining osier,[p] will not willingly stand in the ruins of a house when the beam dashes upon the pavement. And provided that our nice and tender spirit be not vexed into scruple, nor the scruple turned into unreasonable fears, nor the fears into superstition; he that, by any arts, can make his spirit tender and apt for religious impressions, hath made the fairest seat for religion, and the unaptest and uneasiest entertainment for sin and eternal death in the whole world.

4. A frequent examination of the smallest parts of our lives, is the best instrument to make our repentance particular, and a fit remedy to all the members of the whole body of sin. For our examination, put off to our death-bed, of necessity brings us into this condition, that very many thousands of our sins must be (or not be at all) washed off with a general repentance, which the more general and indefinite it is, it is ever so much the worse. And if he that repents the longest and the oftenest, and upon the most instances, is still, during his whole life, but an imperfect penitent, and there are very many reserves left to be wiped off by God's mercies, and to be eased by collateral assistances, or to be groaned for at the terrible day of judgment; it will be but a sad story to consider, that the sins of a whole life, or of very great portions of it, shall be put upon the remedy of one examination, and the advices of one discourse, and the activities of a decayed body, and a weak and an amazed spirit. Let us do the best we can, we shall find that the mere sins of ignorance and unavoidable forgetfulness will be enough to be intrusted to such a bank; and if that a general repentance will serve towards their expiation, it will be an infinite mercy: but we have nothing to warrant our confidence, if we shall think it to be enough on our death-bed to confess the notorious actions of our lives, and to say, "the Lord be merciful unto me for the infinite transgressions of my life, which I have wilfully or carelessly forgot;" for very many, of which the repentance, the distinct, particular, circumstantiate repentance of a whole life would have been too little, if we could have done more.

5. After the enumeration of these advantages, I shall not need to add, that if we decline or refuse to call ourselves frequently to account, and to use daily advices concerning the state of our souls, it is a very ill sign that our souls are not right with God, or that they do not dwell in religion. But this I shall

[o] Ecclus. xix. 1.

[p] Qui levi comminatione pellitur, non opus est, ut fortitudine et armis invadatur.—SENECA.

say, that they, who do use this exercise frequently, will make their conscience much at ease, by casting out a daily load of humour and surfeit, the matter of diseases and the instruments of death. "He that does not frequently search his conscience, is a house without a window," and like a wild untutored son of a fond and undiscerning widow.

But if this exercise seem too great a trouble, and that by such advices religion will seem a burden; I have two things to oppose against it.

1. One is, that we had better bear the burden of the Lord, than the burden of a base and polluted conscience. Religion cannot be so great a trouble as a guilty soul; and whatsoever trouble can be fancied in this or any other action of religion, it is only to inexperienced persons. It may be a trouble at first, just as is every change and every new accident: but if you do it frequently and accustom your spirit to it, as the custom will make it easy,[q] so the advantages will make it delectable; that will make it facile as nature, these will make it as pleasant and eligible as reward.

2. The other thing I have to say is this; that to examine our lives will be no trouble, if we do not intricate it with businesses of the world and the labyrinths of care and impertinent affairs.[r] A man had need have a quiet and disentangled life, who comes to search into all his actions, and to make judgment concerning his errors and his needs, his remedies and his hopes. They that have great intrigues of the world, have a yoke upon their necks, and cannot look back: and he that covets many things greedily, and snatches at high things ambitiously, that despises his neighbour proudly, and bears his crosses peevishly, or his prosperity impotently and passionately; he that is prodigal of his precious time, and is tenacious and retentive of evil purposes, is not a man disposed to this exercise; he hath reason to be afraid of his own memory, and to dash his glass in pieces, because it must needs represent to his own eyes an intolerable deformity. He, therefore, that resolves to live well, whatsoever it costs him; he that will go to heaven at any rate, shall best tend this duty by neglecting the affairs of the world in all things, where prudently he may. But if we do otherwise, we shall find that the accounts of our death-bed, and the examination made by a disturbed understanding, will be very empty of comfort and full of inconveniences.

6. For hence it comes, that men die so timorously and uncomfortably, as if they were forced out of their lives by the violences of an executioner. Then, without much examination, they remember, how wickedly they have lived, without religion, against the laws of the covenant of grace, without God in the world; then they see sin goes off like an amazed, wounded, affrighted person from a lost battle, without honour, without a veil, with nothing but shame and sad remembrances; then they can consider, that if they had lived virtuously, all the trouble and objection of that would now be past, and all that had remained, should be peace and joy, and all that good which dwells within the house of God, and eternal life. But now they find, they have done amiss and dealt wickedly, they have no bank of good works, but a huge treasure of wrath, and they are going to a strange place, and what shall be their lot is uncertain; (so they say, when they would comfort and flatter themselves;) but in truth of religion their portion is sad and intolerable, without hope and without refreshment, and they must use little silly arts to make them go off from their stage of sins with some handsome circumstances of opinion; they will in civility be abused, that they may die quietly, and go decently to their execution, and leave their friends indifferently contented, and apt to be comforted; and by that time they are gone awhile, they see, that they deceived themselves all their days, and were by others deceived at last.

Let us make it our own case; we shall come to that state and period of condition, in which we shall be infinitely comforted if we have lived well, or else be amazed and go off trembling, because we are guilty of heaps of unrepented and unforsaken sins. It may happen, we shall not then understand it so, because most men of late ages have been abused with false principles, and they are taught (or they are willing to believe) that a little thing is enough to save them, and that heaven is so cheap a purchase, that it will fall upon them, whether they will or no. The misery of it is, they will not suffer themselves to be confuted till it be too late to recant their error. In the interim, they are impatient to be examined, as a leper is of a comb, and are greedy of the world, as children of raw fruit; and they hate a severe reproof, as they do thorns in their bed; and they love to lay aside religion, as a drunken person does to forget his sorrow; and all the way they dream of fine things, and their dreams prove contrary, and become the hieroglyphics of an eternal sorrow. The daughter of Polycrates dreamed, that her father was lifted up, and that Jupiter washed him, and the sun anointed him; but it proved to him but a sad prosperity; for after a long life of constant prosperous successes he was surprised by his enemies, and hanged up till the dew of heaven wet his cheeks, and the sun melted his grease. Such is the condition of those persons who, living either in the despite or in the neglect of religion, lie wallowing in the drunkenness of prosperity or worldly cares; they think themselves to be exalted, till the evil day overtakes them; and then they can expound their dream of life to end in a sad and hopeless death. I remember that Cleomenes was called a god by the Egyptians, because, when he was hanged, a serpent grew out of his body, and wrapped itself about his head; till the philosophers of Egypt said, it was natural, that from the marrow of some bodies such productions should arise. And indeed it represents the condition of some men, who being dead are

[q] Elige vitam optimam, consuetudo faciet jucundissimam. —SENECA.

[r] Securæ et quietæ mentis est in omnes vitæ partes discurrere; occupatorum animi velut sub jugo sunt, respicere non possunt.—SENECA.

esteemed saints and beatified persons, when their head is encircled with dragons, and is entered into the possession of the devil, that old serpent and deceiver. For indeed their life was secretly so corrupted, that such serpents fed upon the ruins of the spirit, and the decays of grace and reason. To be cozened in making judgments concerning our final condition is extremely easy; but if we be cozened, we are infinitely miserable.

SECTION III.

Of exercising Charity during our whole Life.

He that would die well and happily, must, in his life-time, according to all his capacities, exercise charity;[s] and because religion is the life of the soul, and charity is the life of religion, the same which gives life to the better part of man, which never dies, may obtain of God a mercy to the inferior part of man in the day of its dissolution.

1. Charity is the great channel through which God passes all his mercy upon mankind. For we receive absolution of our sins in proportion to our forgiving our brother. This is the rule of our hopes, and the measure of our desire in this world; and in the day of death and judgment the great sentence upon mankind shall be transacted according to our alms, which is the other part of charity. Certain it is, that God cannot, will not, never did, reject a charitable man in his greatest needs and in his most passionate prayers;[t] for God himself is love, and every degree of charity that dwells in us, is the participation of the Divine nature; and therefore, when upon our death-bed a cloud covers our head, and we are enwrapped with sorrow; when we feel the weight of a sickness, and do not feel the refreshing visitations of God's loving-kindness; when we have many things to trouble us, and looking round about us we see no comforter; then call to mind, what injuries you have forgiven, how apt you were to pardon all affronts and real persecutions, how you embraced peace when it was offered you, how you followed after peace when it ran from you; and when you are weary of one side, turn upon the other, and remember the alms that, by the grace of God and his assistances, you have done, and look up to God, and with the eye of faith behold him coming in the cloud, and pronouncing the sentence of doomsday according to his mercies and thy charity.

2. Charity, with its twin-daughters, alms and forgiveness, is especially effectual for the procuring God's mercies in the day and the manner of our death. "Alms deliver from death," said old Tobias;[u] and "alms make an atonement for sins," said the son of Sirach;[v] and so said Daniel,[w] and so say all the wise men of the world. And in this sense also, is that of St. Peter,[x] "Love covers a multitude of sins;" and St. Clement[y] in his Constitutions gives this counsel, "If you have any thing in your hands, give it, that it may work to the remission of thy sins; for by faith and alms sins are purged." The same also is the counsel of Salvian, who wonders, that men, who are guilty of great and many sins, will not work out their pardon by alms and mercy. But this also must be added out of the words of Lactantius, who makes this rule complete and useful; "But think not, because sins are taken away by alms, that, by thy money, thou mayest purchase a license to sin. For sins are abolished, if, because thou hast sinned, thou givest to God," that is, to God's poor servants, and his indigent necessitous creatures: but if thou sinnest upon confidence of giving, thy sins are not abolished. For God desires infinitely, that men should be purged from their sins, and therefore commands us to repent; but to repent is nothing else but to profess and affirm (that is, to purpose, and to make good that purpose) that they will sin no more.[z]

Now alms are therefore effective to the abolition and pardon of our sins, because they are preparatory to, and impetratory of, the grace of repentance, and are fruits of repentance: and therefore St. Chrysostom affirms,[a] that repentance without alms is dead, and without wings, and can never soar upwards to the element of love. But because they are a part of repentance, and hugely pleasing to Almighty God, therefore they deliver us from the evils of an unhappy and accursed death; for so Christ delivered his disciples from the sea, when he appeased the storm, though they still sailed in the channel: and this St. Jerome verifies with all his reading and experience, saying, "I do not remember to have read, that ever any charitable person died an evil death."[b] And although a long experience hath observed God's mercies to descend upon charitable people, like the dew upon Gideon's fleece, when all the world was dry; yet for this also we have a promise, which is not only an argument of a certain number of years, (as experience is,) but a security for eternal ages. "Make ye friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." When faith fails, and chastity is useless, and temperance shall be no more, then charity shall bear you upon wings of cherubim to the eternal mountain of the Lord. "I have been a lover of mankind, and a friend, and merciful; and now I expect to communicate in that great kindness, which he shows, that is the great God and Father of men and mercies," said Cyrus the Persian, on his death-bed.[c]

[s] Respice quid prodest præsentis temporis ævum;
Omne quod est, nihil est, præter amare Deum.

[t] Quod expendi habui,
Quod donavi habeo;
Quod negavi punior,
Quod servavi perdidi.

[u] Tob. iv. 10. xii. 9.
[v] Ecclus. iii. 30.
[w] Dan. iv. 27.
[x] 1 Pet. iv. 8. Isa. i. 17.

[y] Lib. vii. cap. 13. Ἐὰν ἔχεις διὰ τῶν χειρῶν σου, δὸς, ἵνα ἐργάσῃ εἰς λύτρωσιν ἁμαρτιῶν σοῦ· ἐλεημοσύναις γὰρ καὶ πίστεσιν ἀποκαθαίρονται ἁμαρτίαι.

[z] Agere autem pœnitentiam nihil aliud est quàm profiteri et affirmare se non ulteriùs peccaturum.

[a] Orat. ii. de Pœnitentiâ.

[b] Nunquam memini me legisse, malâ morte mortuum, qui libenter opera charitatis exercuit.—Ad Nepot.

[c] Ἐγὼ φιλάνθρωπος ἐγενόμην, καὶ νῦν ἡδέως ἄν μοι δοκῶ κοινωνῆσαι τοῦ εὐεργετοῦντος ἀνθρώπου.

I do not mean, this should only be a death-bed charity, any more than a death-bed repentance; but it ought to be the charity of our life and healthful years, a parting with portions of our goods then,[d] when we can keep them: we must not first kindle our lights, when we are to descend into our houses of darkness, or bring a glaring torch suddenly to a dark room, that will amaze the eye, and not delight it, or instruct the body; but if our tapers have, in their constant course, descended into their grave, crowned all the way with light, then let the death-bed charity be doubled, and the light burn brightest when it is to deck our hearse. But concerning this I shall afterwards give account.

SECTION IV.

General Considerations to enforce the former Practices.

These are the general instruments of preparation in order to a holy death: it will concern us all to use them diligently and speedily; for we must be long in doing that, which must be done but once:[e] and therefore we must begin betimes, and lose no time; especially since it is so great a venture, and upon it depends so great a state. Seneca said well, "There is no science or art in the world so hard as to live and die well: the professors of other arts are vulgar and many:"[f] but he that knows how to do this business, is certainly instructed to eternity. But then let me remember this, that a wise person will also put most upon the greatest interest. Common prudence will teach us this. No man will hire a general to cut wood, or shake hay with a sceptre, or spend his soul and all his faculties upon the purchase of a cockle-shell; but he will fit instruments to the dignity and exigence of the design: and therefore since heaven is so glorious a state, and so certainly designed for us, if we please, let us spend all that we have, all our passions and affections, all our study and industry, all our desires and stratagems, all our witty and ingenious faculties,[g] towards the arriving thither; whither if we do come, every minute will infinitely pay for all the troubles of our whole life; if we do not, we shall have the reward of fools, an unpitied and an upbraided misery.[h]

To this purpose I shall represent the state of dying and dead men in the devout words of some of the fathers of the church, whose sense I shall exactly keep, but change their order; that by placing some of their dispersed meditations into a chain or sequel of discourse, I may with their precious stones make a union, and compose them into a jewel: for though the meditation is plain and easy, yet it is affectionate, and material, and true, and necessary.

The Circumstances of a dying Man's Sorrow and Danger.

When the sentence of death is decreed, and begins to be put in execution, it is sorrow enough to see or feel respectively the sad accents of the agony and last contentions of the soul, and the reluctances and unwillingnesses of the body: the forehead washed with a new and stranger baptism, besmeared with a cold sweat, tenacious and clammy, apt to make it cleave to the roof of his coffin; the nose cold and undiscerning, not pleased with perfumes, nor suffering violence with a cloud of unwholesome smoke;[i] the eyes dim as a sullied mirror, or the face of heaven when God shows his anger in a prodigious storm; the feet cold, the hands stiff, the physicians despairing, our friends weeping, the rooms dressed with darkness and sorrow, and the exterior parts betraying what are the violences which the soul and spirit suffer;[k] the nobler part, like the lord of the house, being assaulted by exterior rudenesses, and driven from all the outworks, at last faint and weary with short and frequent breathings, interrupted with the longer accents of sighs, without moisture, but the excrescences of a spilt humour, when the pitcher is broken at the cistern, it retires to its last fort, the heart; whither it is pursued, and stormed, and beaten out, as when the barbarous Thracian sacked the glory of the Grecian empire. Then calamity is great, and sorrow rules in all the capacities of man: then the mourners weep, because it is civil, or because they need thee, or because they fear: but who suffers for thee with a compassion sharp as is thy pain? Then the noise is like the faint echo of a distant valley, and few hear, and they will not regard thee, who seemest like a person void of understanding and of a departing interest. *Verè tremendum est mortis sacramentum.* But these accidents are common to all that die; and when a special Providence shall distinguish them, they shall die with easy circumstances; but as no piety can secure it, so must no confidence expect it; but wait for the time, and accept the manner of the dissolution. But that which distinguishes them, is this:

He that hath lived a wicked life, if his conscience be alarmed, and that he does not die like a wolf or a tiger, without sense or remorse of all his wildness and his injury, his beastly nature, and desert and untilled manners, if he have but sense of what he is going to suffer, or what he may expect to be his portion; then we may imagine the terror of their abused fancies, how they see affrighting shapes, and, because they fear them, they feel the gripes of devils, urging the unwilling souls from the kinder and fast embraces of the body, calling to the grave and hastening to judgment, exhibiting great bills of uncancelled crimes, awaking and amazing the conscience, breaking all their hope in pieces, and making faith useless and terrible, be-

[d] Da dum tempus habes; tibi propria sit manus hæres;
Auferet hoc nemo, quod dabis ipse Deo.

[e] Quod sæpe fieri non potest, fiat diu.—Seneca.

[f] Nullius rei quàm vivere difficilior est scientia: professores aliarum artium vulgò multique sunt.—Seneca.

[g] Nunc ratio nulla est restandi, nulla facultas;
Æternas quoniam pœnas in morte timendum.
Lucret. i. 112.

[h] Virtutem videant, intabescantque relictâ.

[i] Nilus. [k] St. Basil.

cause the malice was great, and the charity was none at all. Then they look for some to have pity on them, but there is no man.[l] No man dares be their pledge: no man can redeem their soul, which now feels what it never feared. Then the tremblings and the sorrow, the memory of the past sin, and the fear of future pains, and the sense of an angry God, and the presence of some devils, consign him to the eternal company of all the damned and accursed spirits.[m] Then they want an angel for their guide, and the Holy Spirit for their comforter, and a good conscience for their testimony, and Christ for their advocate, and they die and are left in prisons of earth or air, in secret and undiscerned regions, to weep and tremble, and infinitely to fear the coming of the day of Christ; at which time they shall be brought forth to change their condition into a worse, where they shall for ever feel more than we can believe or understand.

But when a good man dies, one that hath lived innocently, or made joy in heaven at his timely and effective repentance, and in whose behalf the holy Jesus hath interceded prosperously, and for whose interest the Spirit makes interpellations with groans and sighs unutterable, and in whose defence the angels drive away the devils on his death-bed, because his sins are pardoned, and because he resisted the devil in his life-time, and fought successfully, and persevered unto the end; then the joys break forth through the clouds of sickness, and the conscience stands upright, and confesses the glories of God, and owns so much integrity, that it can hope for pardon, and obtain it too; then the sorrows of the sickness, and the flames of the fever, or the faintness of the consumption, do but untie the soul from its chain, and let it go forth, first into liberty, and then to glory: for it is but for a little while that the face of the sky was black, like the preparations of the night, but quickly the cloud was torn and rent, the violence of thunder parted it into little portions, that the sun might look forth with a watery eye, and then shine without a tear. But it is an infinite refreshment to remember all the comforts of his prayers, the frequent victory over his temptations, the mortification of his lust, the noblest sacrifice to God, in which he most delights, that we have given him our wills, and killed our appetites for the interests of his services: then all the trouble of that is gone; and what remains, is a portion in the inheritance of Jesus, of which he now talks no more as a thing at distance, but is entering into the possession. When the veil is rent,[n] and the prison-doors are open at the presence of God's angel, the soul goes forth full of hope, sometimes with evidence, but always with certainty in the thing, and instantly it passes into the throngs of spirits, where angels meet it singing, and the devils flock with malicious and vile purposes, desiring to lead it away with them into their houses of sorrow: there they see things which they never saw, and hear voices which they never heard. There the devils charge them with many sins, and the angels remember, that themselves rejoiced, when they were repented of. Then the devils aggravate and describe all the circumstances of the sin, and add calumnies; and the angels bear the sword forward still, because their Lord doth answer for them. Then the devils rage and gnash their teeth:[o] they see the soul chaste and pure, and they are ashamed; they see it penitent, and they despair; they perceive that the tongue was refrained and sanctified, and then hold their peace. Then the soul passes forth and rejoices, passing by the devils in scorn and triumph, being securely carried into the bosom of the Lord, where they shall rest, till their crowns are finished, and their mansions are prepared; and then they shall feast and sing, rejoice and worship, for ever and ever.[p] Fearful and formidable to unholy persons is the first meeting with spirits in their separation. But the victory, which holy souls receive by the mercies of Jesus Christ and the conduct of angels, is a joy, that we must not understand till we feel it; and yet such which by an early and a persevering piety we may secure; but let us inquire after it no further, because it is secret.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE STATE OF SICKNESS, AND THE TEMPTATIONS INCIDENT TO IT, WITH THEIR PROPER REMEDIES.

SECTION I.

Of the State of Sickness.

Adam's sin brought death into the world, and man did die the same day in which he sinned, according as God had threatened. He did not die, as death is taken for a separation of soul and body; that is, not death properly, but the ending of the last act of death; just as a man is said to be born, when he ceases any longer to be borne in his mother's womb; but whereas to man was intended a life long and happy, without sickness, sorrow, or infelicity, and this life should be lived here or in a better place, and the passage from one to the other should have been easy, safe, and pleasant, now that man sinned, he fell from that state to a contrary.

[l] St. Chrysostomus. [m] Ephram Syrus.
[n] S. Martyrius S. Eustratius Martyr. [o] S. Chrysostomus.

[p] Μεγίστη τῶν αἱρετῶν θεοσέβεια, δι' ἧς ἀθανατίζεται ἡ ψυχή.—Philo.

If Adam had stood, he should not always have lived in this world; for this world was not a place capable of giving a dwelling to all those myriads of men and women, which should have been born in all the generations of infinite and eternal ages; for so it must have been, if man had not died at all, nor yet have removed hence at all. Neither is it likely that man's innocence should have lost to him all possibility of going thither, where the duration is better, measured by a better time, subject to fewer changes, and which is now the reward of a returning virtue, which in all natural senses is less than innocence, save that it is heightened by Christ to an equality of acceptation with the state of innocence; but so it must have been, that his innocence should have been punished with an eternal confinement to this state, which in all reason is the less perfect, the state of a traveller, not of one possessed of his inheritance. It is therefore certain, man should have changed his abode; for so did Enoch, and so did Elias, and so shall all the world, that shall be alive at the day of judgment; they shall not die, but they shall change their place and their abode, their duration and their state, and all this without death.

That death, therefore, which God threatened to Adam, and which passed upon his posterity, is not the going out of this world, but the manner of going. If he had stayed in innocence, he should have gone from hence placidly and fairly, without vexations and afflictive circumstances; he should not have died by sickness, misfortune, defect, or unwillingness; but when he fell, then he began to die; the same day (so said God); and that must needs be true: and therefore it must mean, that upon that very day he fell into an evil and dangerous condition, a state of change and affliction;[q] then death began, that is, the man began to die by a natural diminution, and aptness to disease and misery. His first state was, and should have been (so long as it lasted) a happy duration; his second, was a daily and miserable change; and this was the dying properly.

This appears in the great instance of damnation, which, in the style of Scripture, is called eternal death; not because it kills or ends the duration; it hath not so much good in it; but because it is a perpetual infelicity. Change or separation of soul and body is but accidental to death; death may be with or without either; but the formality, the curse and the sting of death, that is, misery, sorrow, fear, diminution, defect, anguish, dishonour, and whatsoever is miserable and afflictive in nature, that is death. Death is not an action, but a whole state and condition; and this was first brought in upon us by the offence of one man.

But this went no farther than thus to subject us to temporal infelicity. If it had proceeded so far as was supposed, man had been much more miserable; for man had more than one original sin, in this sense; and though this death entered first upon us by Adam's fault, yet it came nearer unto us and increased upon us by the sins of more of our forefathers. For Adam's sin left us in strength enough to contend with human calamities for almost a thousand years together. But the sins of his children, our forefathers, took off from us half the strength about the time of the flood; and then from five hundred to two hundred and fifty, and from thence to one hundred and twenty, and from thence to threescore and ten: so often halving it, till it is almost come to nothing. But by the sins of men in the several generations of the world, death, that is, misery and disease, is hastened so upon us, that we are of a contemptible age: and because we are to die by suffering evils, and by the daily lessening of our strength and health; this death is so long a doing, that it makes so great a part of our short life useless and unserviceable, that we have not time enough to get the perfection of a single manufacture, but ten or twelve generations of the world must go to the making up of one wise man, or one excellent art: and in the succession of those ages there happen so many changes and interruptions, so many wars and violences, that seven years' fighting sets a whole kingdom back in learning and virtue, to which they were creeping, it may be, a whole age.

And thus also we do evil to our posterity, as Adam did to his, and Cham did to his, and Eli to his, and all they to theirs, who by sins caused God to shorten the life and multiply the evils of mankind: and for this reason it is, the world grows worse and worse, because so many original sins are multiplied, and so many evils from parents descend upon the succeeding generations of men, that they derive nothing from us but original misery.

But he who restored the law of nature, did also restore us to the condition of nature; which, being violated by the introduction of death, Christ then repaired, when he suffered and overcame death for us; that is, he hath taken away the unhappiness of sickness, and the sting of death, and the dishonours of the grave, of dissolution and weakness, of decay and change, and hath turned them into acts of favour, into instances of comfort, into opportunities of virtue; Christ hath now knit them into rosaries and coronets; he hath put them into promises and rewards; he hath made them part of the portion of his elect: they are instruments, and earnests, and securities, and passages, to the greatest perfection of human nature, and the Divine promises. So that it is possible for us now to be reconciled to sickness; it came in by sin, and therefore is cured, when it is turned into virtue; and although it may have in it the uneasiness of labour, yet it will not be uneasy as sin, or the restlessness of a discomposed conscience. If, therefore, we can well manage our state of sickness, that we may not fall by pain, as we usually do by pleasure, we need not fear; for no evil shall happen to us.

[q] Prima quæ vitam dedit hora carpsit.—Hercul. Fur. Nascentes morimur, finisque ab origine pendet.—Manil.

SECTION II.

Of the first Temptation proper to the state of Sickness, Impatience.

Men that are in health, are severe exactors of patience at the hands of them that are sick; and they usually judge it not by terms of relation between God and the suffering man, but between him and the friends that stand by the bed-side. It will be therefore necessary, that we truly understand to what duties and actions the patience of a sick man ought to extend.

1. Sighs and groans, sorrow and prayers, humble complaints and dolorous[r] expressions, are the sad accents of a sick man's language; for it is not to be expected, that a sick man should act a part of patience with a countenance like an orator, or grave like a dramatic person: it were well, if all men could bear an exterior decency in their sickness, and regulate their voice, their face, their discourse, and all their circumstances, by the measures and proportions of comeliness, and satisfaction to all the standers by. But this would better please them than assist him; the sick man would do more good to others than he would receive to himself.

2. Therefore, silence and still composures, and not complaining, are no parts of a sick man's duty; they are not necessary parts of patience.[s] We find, that David roared for the very disquietness of his sickness: and he lay chattering like a swallow, and his throat was dry with calling for help upon his God. That's the proper voice of sickness: and certain it is, that the proper voices of sickness are expressly vocal and petitory in the ears of God, and call for pity in the same accent, as the cries and oppressions of widows and orphans do for vengeance upon their persecutors, though they say no collect against them. For there is the voice of man, and there is the voice of the disease, and God hears both; and the louder the disease speaks, there is the greater need of mercy and pity, and therefore God will the sooner hear it. Abel's blood had a voice, and cried to God; and humility hath a voice, and cries so loud to God, that it pierces the clouds; and so hath every sorrow and every sickness: and when a man cries out, and complains but according to the sorrows of his pain,[t] it cannot be any part of a culpable impatience, but an argument for pity.

3. Some men's senses are so subtile, and their perceptions so quick and full of relish, and their spirits so active, that the same load is double upon them, to what it is to another person: and therefore comparing the expressions of the one to the silence of the other, a different judgment cannot be made concerning their patience. Some natures are querulous, and melancholy, and soft, and nice, and tender, and weeping, and expressive; others are sullen, dull, without apprehension, apt to tolerate and carry burdens: and the crucifixion of our blessed Saviour, falling upon a delicate and virgin body of curious temper, and strict, equal composition, was naturally more full of torment than that of the ruder thieves, whose proportions were coarser and uneven.

4. In this case, it was no imprudent advice which Cicero gave:[u] nothing in the world is more amiable than an even temper in our whole life, and in every action; but this evenness cannot be kept, unless every man follows his own nature, without striving to imitate the circumstances of another. And what is so in the thing itself, ought to be so in our judgments concerning the things. We must not call any one impatient, if he be not silent in a fever, as if he were asleep; or as if he were dull, as Herod's son of Athens.

5. Nature, in some cases, hath made cryings out and exclamations to be an entertainment of the spirit, and an abatement or diversion of the pain. For so did the old champions, when they threw their fatal nets, that they might load their enemy with the snares and weights of death; they groaned aloud, and sent forth the anguish of their spirit into the eyes and heart of the man, that stood against them:[v] so it is in the endurance of some sharp pains, the complaints and shriekings, the sharp groans and the tender accents, send forth the afflicted spirits, and force a way, that they may ease their oppression and their load; that, when they have spent some of their sorrows by a sally forth, they may return better able to fortify the heart. Nothing of this is a certain sign, much less an action or part of impatience; and when our blessed Saviour suffered his last and sharpest pang of sorrow, he cried out with a loud voice, and resolved to die, and did so.

SECTION III.

Constituent or integral Parts of Patience.

1. That we may secure our patience, we must take care that our complaints be without despair. Despair sins against the reputation of God's goodness, and the efficacy of all our old experience. By despair we destroy the greatest comfort of our sorrows, and turn our sickness into the state of devils and perishing souls. No affliction is greater than despair; for that is it which makes hell-fire, and turns a natural evil into an intolerable; it hinders prayers, and fills up the intervals of sickness with a worse torture; it makes all spiritual arts useless, and the office of spiritual comforters and guides to be impertinent.

Against this, hope is to be opposed: and its proper acts, as it relates to the virtue and exercise of patience, are, 1. Praying to God for help and remedy; 2. Sending for the guides of souls; 3.

[r] Ejulatu, questu, gemitu, fremitibus, resonando multùm flebiles voces refert.—Cic. Tusc. ii. 13.

[s] Concedendum est gementi.

[t] ———Flagrantior æquo
Non debet dolor esse viri, nec vulnere major.
Juv. Sat. xiii. 11.

[u] Omnino si quicquam est decorum, nihil est profectò magis quàm æquabilitas universæ vitæ, tum singularum actionum; quam autem conservare non possis, si aliorum naturam imitans, omittas tuam.—1 Offic. 88.

[v] Quia profundendâ voce omne corpus intenditur, venitque plaga vehementior.—Cic. Pro Muren. 48.

Using all holy exercises and acts of grace proper to that state; which whoso does, hath not the impatience of despair; every man that is patient, hath hope in God in the day of his sorrows.

2. Our complaints in sickness must be without murmur. Murmur sins against God's providence and government: by it we grow rude, and, like the falling angels, displeased at God's supremacy; and nothing is more unreasonable: it talks against God, for whose glory all speech was made; it is proud and fantastic, hath better opinions of a sinner than of the Divine justice, and would rather accuse God than himself.

Against this is opposed that part of patience, which resigns the man into the hands of God, saying with old Eli, "It is the Lord; let him do what he will;" and, "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven:" and so by admiring God's justice and wisdom, does also dispose the sick person for receiving God's mercy, and secures him the rather in the grace of God. The proper acts of this part of patience are, 1. To confess our sins and our own demerits: 2. It increases and exercises humility: 3. It loves to sing praises to God, even from the lowest abyss of human misery.

3. Our complaints in sickness must be without peevishness. This sins against civility, and that necessary decency which must be used towards the ministers and assistants. By peevishness we increase our own sorrows, and are troublesome to them that stand there to ease ours. It hath in it harshness of nature and ungentleness, wilfulness and fantastic opinions, morosity and incivility.

Against it are opposed obedience, tractability, easiness of persuasion, aptness to take counsel. The acts of this part of patience are, 1. To obey our physicians; 2. To treat our persons with respect to our present necessities; 3. Not to be ungentle and uneasy to the ministers and nurses, that attend us;[w] but to take their diligent and kind offices as sweetly as we can, and to bear their indiscretions or unhandsome accidents contentedly and without disquietness within, or evil language or angry words without; 4. Not to use unlawful means for our recovery.

If we secure these particulars, we are not lightly to be judged of by noises and postures, by colours and images of things, by paleness, or tossings from side to side. For it were a hard thing, that those persons, who are loaden with the greatest of human calamities, should be strictly tied to ceremonies and forms of things. He is patient, that calls upon God; that hopes for health or heaven; that believes God is wise and just in sending him afflictions; that confesses his sins, and accuses himself, and justifies God; that expects God will turn this into good; that is civil to his physicians and his servants; that converses with the guides of souls, the ministers of religion; and in all things submits to God's will, and would use no indirect means for his recovery; but had rather be sick and die, than enter at all into God's displeasure.

[w] Vide ch. iv. sect. i.

SECTION IV.

Remedies against Impatience, by Way of Consideration.

As it happens concerning death, so it is in sickness, which is death's handmaid. It hath the fate to suffer calumny and reproach, and hath a name worse than its nature.

1. For there is no sickness so great but children endure it, and have natural strengths to bear them out quite through the calamity, what period soever nature hath allotted it. Indeed they make no reflections upon their sufferings, and complain of sickness with an uneasy sigh or a natural groan, but consider not what the sorrows of sickness mean; and so bear it by a direct sufferance, and as a pillar bears the weight of a roof. But then why cannot we bear it so too? For this which we call a reflection upon or a considering of our sickness, is nothing but a perfect instrument of trouble, and consequently a temptation to impatience. It serves no end of nature: it may be avoided, and we may consider it only as an expression of God's anger, and an emissary or procurator of repentance. But all other considering it,[x] except where it serves the purposes of medicine and art, is nothing but, under the colour of reason, an unreasonable device to heighten the sickness and increase the torment. But then, as children want this act of reflex perception or reasonable sense, whereby their sickness becomes less pungent and dolorous; so also do they want the helps of reason, whereby they should be able to support it. For certain it is, reason was as well given us to harden our spirits, and stiffen them in passions and sad accidents, as to make us bending and apt for action: and if in men God hath heightened the faculties of apprehension, he hath increased the auxiliaries of reasonable strengths; that God's rod and God's staff might go together, and the beam of God's countenance may as well refresh us with its light as scorch us with its heat. For poor children that endure so much, have not inward supports and refreshments to bear them through it: they never heard the sayings of old men, nor have been taught the principles of severe philosophy, nor are assisted with the results of a long experience, nor know they how to turn a sickness into virtue, and a fever into a reward; nor have they any sense of favours, the remembrance of which may alleviate their burden; and yet nature hath in them teeth and nails enough to scratch and fight against the sickness, and by such aids, as God is pleased to give them, they wade through the storm, and murmur not. And besides this, yet, although infants have not such brisk perceptions upon the stock of reason, they have a more tender feeling upon the accounts of sense, and their flesh is as uneasy by their natural softness and weak shoulders, as ours by too forward apprehensions. Therefore

[x] Prætulerim—delirus inersque videri,
Dum mea delectent mala me, vel denique fallant,
Quam sapere et ringi.—Horat. lib. ii. ep. 2.

bear up:[y] either you or I, or some man wiser, and many a woman weaker than us both, or the very children, have endured worse evil than this that is upon thee now.

That sorrow is hugely tolerable, which gives its smart but by instants and smallest proportions of time. No man at once feels the sickness of a week, or of a whole day; but the smart of an instant: and still every portion of a minute feels but its proper share; and the last groan ended all the sorrow of its peculiar burden. And what minute can that be, which can pretend to be intolerable? and the next minute is but the same as the last, and the pain flows like the drops of a river, or the little shreds of time; and if we do but take care of the present minute, it cannot seem a great charge or a great burden; but that care will secure our duty, if we still but secure the present minute.

3. If we consider, how much men can suffer, if they list, and how much they do suffer for greater and little causes, and that no causes are greater than the proper causes of patience in sickness, (that is, necessity in religion,) we cannot, without huge shame to our nature, to our persons, and to our manners, complain of this tax and impost of nature. This experience added something to the old philosophy. When the gladiators were exposed naked to each other's short swords, and were to cut each other's souls away in portions of flesh, as if their forms had been as divisible as the life of worms, they did not sigh or groan, it was a shame to decline the blow, but according to the just measures of art. The women that saw the wound,[z] shriek out; and he that receives it, holds his peace. He did not only stand bravely, but would also fall so; and when he was down, scorned to shrink his head, when the insolent conqueror came to lift it from his shoulders: and yet this man, in his first design, only aimed at liberty, and the reputation of a good fencer; and when he sunk down, he saw he could only receive the honour of a bold man, the noise of which he shall never hear when his ashes are crammed in his narrow urn. And what can we complain of the weakness of our strengths, or the pressures of diseases, when we see a poor soldier stand in a breach almost starved with cold and hunger, and his cold apt to be relieved only by the heats of anger, a fever, or a fired musket, and his hunger slackened by a greater pain and a huge fear? This man shall stand in his arms and wounds, *patiens luminis atque solis*, pale and faint, weary and watchful; and at night shall have a bullet pulled out of his flesh, and shivers from his bones, and endure his mouth to be sewed up from a violent rent to its own dimension; and all this for a man whom he never saw, or, if he did, was not noted by him; but one that shall condemn him to the gallows, if he runs from all this misery. It is seldom that God sends such calamities upon men, as men bring upon themselves, and suffer willingly. But that which is most considerable is, that any passion and violence upon the spirit of man makes him able to suffer huge calamities with a certain constancy and an unwearied patience. Scipio Africanus was wont to commend that saying in Xenophon, That the same labours of warfare were easier far to a general than to a common soldier; because he was supported by the huge appetites of honour, which made his hard marches nothing but stepping forward and reaching at a triumph. Did not the lady of Sabinus, for others' interest, bear twins privately and without groaning? Are not the labours and cares, the spare diet and the waking nights, of covetous and adulterous, of ambitious and revengeful persons, greater sorrows and of more smart than a fever, or the short pains of child-birth? What will not tender women suffer to hide their shame? And if vice and passion, lust and inferior appetites, can supply to the tenderest persons strengths more than enough for the sufferance of the greatest natural violences, can we suppose that honesty and religion and the grace of God are more nice, tender, and effeminate?

4. Sickness is the more tolerable, because it cures very many evils, and takes away the sense of all the cross fortunes, which amaze the spirits of some men, and transport them certainly beyond all the limits of patience. Here all losses and disgraces, domestic cares and public evils, the apprehensions of pity and a sociable calamity, the fears of want and the troubles of ambition, lie down and rest upon the sick man's pillow. One fit of the stone takes away from the fancies of men all relations to the world and secular interests; at least they are made dull and flat, without sharpness and an edge.

And he, that shall observe the infinite variety of troubles which afflict some busy persons, and almost all men in very busy times, will think it not much amiss, that those huge numbers were reduced to certainty, to method, and an order; and there is no better compendium for this, than that they be reduced to one. And a sick man seems so unconcerned in the things of the world, that, although this separation be done with violence, yet it is no otherwise than all noble contentions are, and all honours are purchased, and all virtues are acquired, and all vices mortified, and all appetites chastised, and all rewards obtained; there is infallibly to all these a difficulty and a sharpness annexed, without which there could be no proportion between a work and a reward. To this add, that sickness does not take off the sense of secular troubles and worldly cares from us, by employing all the perceptions and apprehensions of men; by filling all faculties with sorrow, and leaving no room for the lesser instances of troubles, as little rivers are swallowed up in the sea; but sickness is a messenger of God, sent with purposes of abstraction and separation, with a secret power and a proper efficacy to draw

[y] Στῆθος δὲ πλήξας, κραδίην ἠνίπαπε μύθῳ·
Τέτλαθι δή, κραδίη· καὶ κύντερον ἄλλο ποτ' ἔτλης.
Ulysses apud Hom. Od. ν. 17.

[z] Spectatores vociferantur, ictus tacet.—Quis mediocris gladiator ingemuit? Quis vultum mutavit unquam? Quis non modò stetit, verùm etiam decubuit turpiter?—Tusc. Q. lib. ii. 16.

us off from unprofitable and useless sorrows; and this is effected partly, by reason that it represents the uselessness of the things of this world, and that there is a portion of this life, in which honours and things of the world cannot serve us to many purposes; partly, by preparing us to death, and telling us, that a man shall descend thither, whence this world cannot redeem us, and where the goods of this world cannot serve us.

5. And yet, after all this, sickness leaves in us appetites so strong, and apprehensions so sensible, and delights so many, and good things in so great a degree, that a healthless body and a sad disease do seldom make men weary of this world, but still they would fain find an excuse to live.[a] The gout, the stone, and the tooth-ach, the sciatica, sore eyes, and an aching head, are evils indeed; but such, which, rather than die, most men are willing to suffer; and Mecænas added also a wish, rather to be crucified than to die: and though his wish was low, timorous, and base, yet we find the same desires in most men, dressed up with better circumstances. It was a cruel mercy in Tamerlane, who commanded all the leprous persons to be put to death, as we knock some beasts quickly on their head, to put them out of pain, and lest they should live miserably: the poor men would rather have endured another leprosy, and have more willingly taken two diseases than one death. Therefore Cæsar wondered, that the old crazed soldier begged leave he might kill himself, and asked him, "Dost thou think then to be more alive than now thou art?" We do not die suddenly, but we descend to death by steps and slow passages: and therefore men (so long as they are sick) are unwilling to proceed and go forward in the finishing that sad employment. Between a disease and death there are many degrees, and all those are like the reserves of evil things, the declining of every one of which is justly reckoned amongst those good things, which alleviate the sickness and make it tolerable. Never account that sickness intolerable, in which thou hadst rather remain than die: and yet if thou hadst rather die than suffer it, the worst of it that can be said is this, that this sickness is worse than death; that is, it is worse than that, which is the best of all evils, and the end of all troubles; and then you have said no great harm against it.

6. Remember, that thou art under a supervening necessity. Nothing is intolerable that is necessary: and therefore when men are to suffer a sharp incision, or what they are pleased to call intolerable, tie the man down to it, and he endures it.[b] Now God hath bound this sickness upon thee by the condition of nature; for every flower must wither and droop; it is also bound upon thee by special providence, and with a design to try thee, and with purposes to reward and to crown thee. These cords thou canst not break; and therefore lie thou down gently, and suffer the hand of God to do what he please, that at least thou mayest swallow an advantage, which the care and severe mercies of God force down thy throat.

7. Remember, that all men have passed this way,[c] the bravest, the wisest, and the best men have been subject to sickness and sad diseases; and it is esteemed a prodigy, that a man should live to a long age and not be sick; and it is recorded for a wonder concerning Xenophilus the musician, that he lived to one hundred and six years of age in a perfect and continual health. No story tells the like of a prince, or a great or a wise person;[d] unless we have a mind to believe the tales concerning Nestor and the Eubœan sibyl, or reckon Cyrus of Persia, or Masinissa the Mauritanian, to be rivals of old age, or that Argantonius the Tartesian king did really outstrip that age, according as his story tells, reporting him to have reigned eighty years,[e] and to have lived one hundred and twenty. Old age and healthful bodies are seldom made the appendages to great fortunes: and under so great and so universal precedents,[f] so common fate of men, he that will not suffer his portion, deserves to be something else than a man, but nothing that is better.

8. We find in story, that many gentiles, who walked by no light but that of reason, opinion, and human examples, did bear their sickness nobly, and with great contempt of pain, and with huge interests of virtue. When Pompey came from Syria, and called at Rhodes, to see Posidonius the philosopher, he found him hugely afflicted with the gout, and expressed his sorrow that he could not hear his lectures, from which by this pain he must needs be hindered. Posidonius told him, "But you may hear me for all this:" and he discoursed excellently in the midst of his tortures, even then when the torches were put to his feet,[g] "That nothing was good but what was honest;" and therefore "nothing could be an evil if it were not criminal:" and summed up his lectures with this saying, "O pain, in vain dost thou attempt me; for I will never confess thee to be an evil as long as I can honestly bear thee." And when Pompey himself was desperately sick at Naples, the Neapolitans wore crowns and triumphed, and the men of Puteoli came to congratulate his sickness, not because they loved him not, but because it was the custom of their country to have better opinions of sickness than we have. The boys of Sparta would, at their altars, endure whipping, till their very entrails saw the light through their torn flesh; and some of them to death, without crying or complaint. Cæsar would drink his portions of rhubarb rudely mixed, and unfitly allayed, with little sippings, and taking the horror of the medicine, spreading the loathsomeness of his physic so, that all the parts of his tongue and palate might have an entire share: and when C. Marius suffered the veins of his leg to be cut out for the curing his gout, and yet shrunk not, he declared not only the rudeness of their physic, but the strength of a man's spirit, if it be contracted

[a] Debilem facito manu, debilem pede, coxâ, lubricos quate dentes; vita dum superest, bene est. Hanc mihi, vel acutam, si das, sustineo crucem.—SEN. ep. x. 1.

[b] Improbæque Tigres indulgent patientiam flagello. Impiger et fortis virtute coactus.

[c] Cerno equidem geminâ constratos morte Philippos, Thessaliæque rogos, et funera gentis Iberæ.

[d] Rara est in nobilitate senectus.

[e] Cicero de Senect.

[f] Ferre quam sortem patiuntur omnes, nemo recusat.

[g] Tusc. l. ii. Cùm faces doloris admoverentur.

and united by the aids of reason or religion, by resolution or any accidental harshness, against a violent disease.

9. All impatience, howsoever expressed, is perfectly useless to all purposes of ease, but hugely affective to the multiplying the trouble: and the impatience and vexation is another, but the sharper disease of the two; it does mischief by itself, and mischief by the disease. For men grieve themselves as much as they please;[h] and when, by impatience, they put themselves into the retinue of sorrows, they become solemn mourners. For so I have seen the rays of the sun or moon dash upon a brazen vessel, whose lips kissed the face of those waters, that lodged within its bosom; but being turned back, and sent off with its smooth pretences or rougher waftings, it wandered about the room, and beat upon the roof, and still doubled its heat and motion. So is a sickness and a sorrow, entertained by an unquiet and a discontented man, turned back either with anger or with excuses; but then the pain passes from the stomach to the liver, and from the liver to the heart, and from the heart to the head, and from feeling to consideration, from thence to sorrow, and at last ends in impatience and useless murmur; and all the way the man was impotent and weak, but the sickness was doubled, and grew imperious and tyrannical over the soul and body. Masurius Sabinus tells, that the image of the goddess Angerona was, with a muffler upon her mouth, placed upon the altar of Volupia, to represent, that those persons, who bear their sicknesses and sorrows without murmurs,[i] shall certainly pass from sorrow to pleasure, and the ease and honours of felicity; but they, that with spite and indignation bite the burning coal, or shake the yoke upon their necks, gall their spirits, and fret the skin, and hurt nothing but themselves.

10. Remember, that this sickness is but for a short time; if it be sharp it will not last long; if it be long, it will be easy and very tolerable. And although St. Eadsine, archbishop of Canterbury, had twelve years of sickness, yet, all that while, he ruled his church prudently, gave example of many virtues, and, after his death, was enrolled in the calendar of saints, who had finished their course prosperously. Nothing is more unreasonable than to entangle our spirits in wildness and amazement, like a partridge fluttering in a net, which she breaks not, though she breaks her wings.

SECTION V.

Remedies against Impatience, by Way of Exercise.

1. THE fittest instrument of esteeming sickness easily tolerable is, to remember that which indeed makes it so; and that is, that God doth minister proper aids and supports to every of his servants whom he visits with his rod. He knows our needs, he pities our sorrows, he relieves our miseries, he supports our weakness, he bids us ask for help, and he promises to give us all that, and he usually gives us more; and indeed it is observable, that no story tells of any godly man, who, living in the fear of God, fell into a violent and unpardoned impatience in his natural sickness, if he used those means, which God and his holy church have appointed. We see almost all men bear their last sickness with sorrows indeed, but without violent passions; and unless they fear death violently, they suffer the sickness with some indifferency; and it is a rare thing to see a man who enjoys his reason in his sickness, to express the proper signs of a direct and solemn impatience. For when God lays a sickness upon us, he seizes commonly on a man's spirits, which are the instruments of action and business; and when they are secured from being tumultuous, the sufferance is much the easier; and therefore sickness secures all that which can do the man mischief; it makes him tame and passive, apt for suffering, and confines him to an unactive condition. To which if we add, that God then commonly produces fear, and all those passions which naturally tend to humility and poverty of spirit, we shall soon perceive by what instruments God verifies his promise to us, (which is the great security for our patience, and the easiness of our condition,) that God will lay no more upon us than he will make us able to bear, but together with the affliction he will find a way to escape.[k] Nay, if any thing can be more than this, we have two or three promises, in which we may safely lodge ourselves, and roll from off our thorns, and find ease and rest; God hath promised to be with us in our trouble, and to be with us in our prayers, and to be with us in our hope and confidence.[l]

2. Prevent the violence and trouble of thy spirit by an act of thanksgiving; for which in the worst of sicknesses thou canst not want cause, especially if thou rememberest that this pain is not an eternal pain. Bless God for that; but take heed also, lest you so order your affairs, that you pass from hence to an eternal sorrow. If that be hard, this will be intolerable; but as for the present evil, a few days will end it.

3. Remember that thou art a man, and a christian; as the covenant of nature hath made it necessary, so the covenant of grace hath made it to be chosen by thee, to be a suffering person; either you must renounce your religion, or submit to the impositions of God, and thy portion of sufferings. So that here we see our advantages, and let us use them accordingly. The barbarous and warlike nations of old could fight well and willingly, but could

[h] Tantum doluerunt, quantum doloribus se inseruerunt.—ST. AUGUST. Virg. l. viii. v. 4.
Ceu rore seges viret,
Sic crescunt riguis tristia fletibus;
Urget lacryma lacrymam,
Fœcundusque sui se numerat dolor
Quem fortuna semel virum
Udo degenerum lumine viderit,
Illum sæpe ferit——
[i] —— Levius fit patientiâ
Quicquid corrigere est nefas.—HORAT.

[k] 1 Cor. x. 13.

[l] Psalm ix. 9. Matt. vii. 7. Jam. v. 13. Psalm xxxi. 19, 24. xxxiv. 22.

not bear sickness manfully. The Greeks were cowardly in their fights, as most wise men are; but because they were learned and well taught, they bore their sickness with patience and severity. The Cimbrians and Celtiberians rejoice in battle, like giants; but, in their diseases, they weep like women. These, according to their institutions and designs, had unequal courages, and accidental fortitude. But since our religion hath made a covenant of sufferings, and the great business of our lives is sufferings, and most of the virtues of a christian are passive graces, and all the promises of the gospel are passed upon us through Christ's cross, we have a necessity upon us to have an equal courage in all the variety of our sufferings; for, without universal fortitude, we can do nothing of our duty.

4. Resolve to do as much as you can; for certain it is we can suffer very much, if we list; and many men have afflicted themselves unreasonably by not being skilful to consider, how much their strength and state could permit; and our flesh is nice and imperious, crafty to persuade reason, that she hath more necessities than indeed belong to her, and that she demands nothing superfluous. Suffer as much in obedience to God, as you can suffer for necessity or passion, fear or desire. And if you can for one thing, you can for another, and there is nothing wanting but the mind. Never say, I can do no more, I cannot endure this; for God would not have sent it, if he had not known thee strong enough to abide it: only he, that knows thee well already, would also take this occasion to make thee know thyself, but it will be fit, that you pray to God to give you a discerning spirit, that you may rightly distinguish just necessity from the flattery and fondness of flesh and blood.

5. Propound to your eyes and heart the example of the holy Jesus upon the cross; he endured more for thee, than thou canst either for thyself or him: and remember, that if we be put to suffer, and do suffer in a good cause, or in a good manner, so that in any sense your sufferings be conformable to his sufferings, or can be capable of being united to his, we shall reign together with him. The high-way of the cross, which the King of sufferings hath trodden before us, is the way to ease, to a kingdom, and to felicity.

6. The very suffering is a title to an excellent inheritance: for God chastens every son whom he receives; and if we be not chastised, we are bastards, and not sons. And be confident, that although God often sends pardon without correction, yet he never sends correction without pardon, unless it be thy fault; and therefore take every or any affliction as an earnest-penny of thy pardon; and, upon condition there may be peace with God, let any thing be welcome, that he can send as its instrument or condition. Suffer therefore God to choose his own circumstances of adopting thee, and be content to be under discipline, when the reward of that is to become the son of God: and by such inflictions he hews and breaks thy body, first dressing it to funeral, and then preparing it for immortality. And, if this be the effect of the design of God's love to thee, let it be occasion of thy love to him: and remember, that the truth of love is hardly known but by somewhat that puts us to pain.

7. Use this as a punishment for thy sins; and so God intends it most commonly; that is certain: if therefore thou submittest to it, thou approvest of the Divine judgment: and no man can have cause to complain of any thing but himself, if either he believes God to be just, or himself to be a sinner; if he either thinks he hath deserved hell, or that this little may be a means to prevent the greater, and bring him to heaven.

8. It may be, that this may be the last instance and the last opportunity, that ever God will give thee to exercise any virtue, to do him any service, or thyself any advantage: be careful that thou losest not this; for to eternal ages this never shall return again.

9. Or if thou, peradventure, shalt be restored to health, be careful, that, in the day of thy thanksgiving, thou mayest not be ashamed of thyself, for having behaved thyself poorly and weakly upon thy bed. It will be a sensible and excellent comfort to thee, and double upon thy spirit, if, when thou shalt worship God for restoring thee, thou shalt also remember, that thou didst do him service in thy suffering, and tell that God was hugely gracious to thee in giving thee the opportunity of a virtue at so easy a rate as a sickness, from which thou didst recover.

10. Few men are so sick, but they believe that they may recover; and we shall seldom see a man lie down with a perfect persuasion, that it is his last hour; for many men have been sicker, and yet have recovered: but whether thou dost or no, thou hast a virtue to exercise, which may be a handmaid to thy patience. Epaphroditus was sick, sick unto death; and yet God had mercy upon him: and he hath done so to thousands, to whom he found it useful in the great order of things, and the events of universal providence. If, therefore, thou desirest to recover, here is cause enough of hope; and hope is designed in the arts of God and of the Spirit to support patience. But if thou recoverest not, yet there is something that is matter of joy naturally, and very much spiritually, if thou belongest to God; and joy is as certain a support to patience as hope: and it is no small cause of being pleased, when we remember, that if we recover not, our sickness shall the sooner sit down in rest and joy. For recovery by death, as it is easier and better than the recovery by a sickly health, so it is not so long in doing: it suffers not the tediousness of a creeping restitution, nor the inconvenience of surgeons and physicians, watchfulness and care, keepings in and suffering trouble, fears of relapse, and the little relics of a storm.

11. While we hear, or use, or think of, these remedies, part of the sickness is gone away, and all of it is passing. And if, by such instruments, we stand armed and ready dressed beforehand, we shall avoid the mischiefs of amazements and surprise;[m] while

[m] Nulla mihi nova nunc facies inopinave surgit:
Omnia præcepi atque animo mecum ante peregi.
Virgil. lib. vi.

the accidents of sickness are such as were expected, and against which we stood in readiness, with our spirits contracted, instructed, and put upon the defensive.

12. But our patience will be the better secured, if we consider, that it is not violently tempted by the usual arrests of sickness; for patience is, with reason, demanded while the sickness is tolerable, that is, so long as the evil is not too great; but if it be also eligible, and have in it some degrees of good, our patience will have in it the less difficulty and the greater necessity. This, therefore, will be a new stock of consideration: sickness is, in many degrees, eligible, to many men, and to many purposes.

SECTION VI.

Advantages of Sickness.

1. I CONSIDER, one of the greatest felicities of heaven consists in an immunity from sin: then we shall love God without mixtures of malice: then we shall enjoy without envy: then we shall see fuller vessels running over with glory, and crowned with bigger circles; and this we shall behold without spilling from our eyes (those vessels of joy and grief) any sign of anger, trouble, or a repining spirit: our passions shall be pure, our charity without fear, our desire without lust, our possessions all our own; and all in the inheritance of Jesus, in the richest soil of God's eternal kingdom. Now half of this reason, which makes heaven so happy by being innocent, is also in the state of sickness, making the sorrows of old age smooth, and the groans of a sick heart apt to be joined to the music of angels: and, though they sound harsh to our untuned ears and discomposed organs; yet those accents must needs be in themselves excellent, which God loves to hear, and esteems them as prayers, and arguments of pity, instruments of mercy and grace, and preparatives to glory.

In sickness, the soul begins to dress herself for immortality. And first, she unties the strings of vanity, that made her upper garment cleave to the world and sit uneasy: first she puts off the light and fantastic summer robe of lust and wanton appetite; and as soon as that cestus, that lascivious girdle, is thrown away, then the reins chasten us, and give us warning in the night; then that, which called us formerly to serve the manliness of the body and the childishness of the soul, keeps us waking, to divide the hours with the intervals of prayer, and to number the minutes with our penitential groans; then the flesh sits uneasily, and dwells in sorrow; and then the spirit feels itself at ease, freed from the petulant solicitations of those passions, which in health were as busy and as restless as atoms in the sun, always dancing, and always busy, and never sitting down, till a sad night of grief and uneasiness draws the veil, and lets them die alone in secret dishonour.

2. Next to this, the soul by the help of sickness knocks off the fetters of pride and vainer complacencies. Then she draws the curtains, and stops the light from coming in, and takes the pictures down, those fantastic images of self-love,[n] and gay remembrances of vain opinion and popular noises. Then the spirit stoops into the sobrieties of humble thoughts, and feels corruption chiding the forwardness of fancy, and allaying the vapours of conceit and factious opinions. For humility is the soul's grave, into which she enters, not to die, but to meditate, and inter some of its troublesome appendages. There she sees the dust, and feels the dishonours of the body, and reads the register of all its sad adherences; and then she lays by all her vain reflections, beating upon her crystal and pure mirror from the fancies of strength and beauty, and little decayed prettinesses of the body. And when, in sickness, we forget all our knotty discourses of philosophy, and a syllogism makes our head ache, and we feel our many and loud talkings served no lasting end of the soul, no purpose that now we must abide by, and that the body is like to descend to the land, where all things are forgotten; then she lays aside all her remembrances of applauses, all her ignorant confidences, and cares only to know "Christ Jesus and him crucified," to know him plainly, and with much heartiness and simplicity. And I cannot think this to be a contemptible advantage. For ever since man tempted himself by his impatient desires of knowing, and being as God, man thinks it the finest thing in the world to know much, and therefore is hugely apt to esteem himself better than his brethren, if he knows some little impertinencies, and them imperfectly, and that with infinite uncertainty: but God hath been pleased, with a rare art, to prevent the inconveniences apt to arise by this passionate longing after knowledge; even by giving to every man a sufficient opinion of his own understanding: and who is there in the world, that thinks himself to be a fool, or indeed not fit to govern his brother? There are but few men, but they think they are wise enough, and every man believes his own opinion the soundest; and, if it were otherwise, men would burst themselves with envy, or else become irrecoverable slaves to the talking and disputing man. But when God intended this permission to be an antidote of envy, and a satisfaction and allay to the troublesome appetites of knowing, and made, that this universal opinion, by making men in some proportions equal, should be a keeper out or a great restraint to slavery and tyranny respectively; man (for so he uses to do) hath turned this into bitterness: for when nature had made so just a distribution of understanding, that every man might think he had enough, he is not content with that, but will think, he hath more than his brother: and whereas it might well be employed in restraining slavery, he hath used it to break off the bands of all obedience, and it ends in pride and schisms, in heresies and tyrannies; and it being a spiritual evil, it grows upon the soul with old age and flattery,

[n] Nunc festinatos nimiùm sibi sentit honores,
Actaque lauriferæ damnat Syllana juventæ.
LUCAN. lib. viii.

with health and the supports of a prosperous fortune. Now, besides the direct operations of the Spirit, and a powerful grace, there is in nature left to us no remedy for this evil, but a sharp sickness, or an equal sorrow, and allay of fortune: and then we are humble enough to ask counsel of a despised priest, and to think, that even a common sentence from the mouth of an appointed comforter, streams forth more refreshment than all our own wiser and more reputed discourses: then our understandings and our bodies,[o] peeping through their own breaches, see their shame and their dishonour, their dangerous follies and their huge deceptions; and they go into the clefts of the rock, and every little hand may cover them.

3. Next to these, as the soul is still undressing, she takes off the roughness of her great and little angers and animosities, and receives the oil of mercies and smooth forgiveness, fair interpretations and gentle answers, designs of reconcilement and christian atonement in their places. For so did the wrestlers in Olympus, they stripped themselves of all their garments, and then anointed their naked bodies with oil, smooth and vigorous; with contracted nerves and enlarged voice they contended vehemently, till they obtained their victory, or their ease; and a crown of olive, or a huge pity, was the reward of their fierce contentions. Some wise men have said, that anger sticks to a man's nature as inseparably[p] as other vices do to the manners of fools, and that anger is never quite cured: but God, that hath found out remedies for all diseases, hath so ordered the circumstances of man, that, in the worser sort of men, anger and great indignation consume and shrivel into little peevishnesses and uneasy accents of sickness, and spend themselves in trifling instances; and, in the better and more sanctified, it goes off in prayers, and alms, and solemn reconcilement. And however the temptations of this state, such, I mean, which are proper to it, are little and inconsiderable; the man is apt to chide a servant too bitterly, and to be discontented with his nurse, or not satisfied with his physician, and he rests uneasily, and (poor man!) nothing can please him: and indeed these little indecencies must be cured and stopped, lest they run into an inconvenience. But sickness is, in this particular, a little image of the state of blessed souls, or of Adam's early morning in Paradise, free from the troubles of lust, and violences of anger, and the intricacies of ambition, or the restlessness of covetousness. For though a man may carry all these along with him into his sickness, yet there he will not find them; and in despite of all his own malice, his soul shall find some rest from labouring in the galleys, and baser captivity of sin: and if we value those moments of being in the love of God and in the kingdom of grace, which certainly are the beginnings of felicity, we may also remember, that the not sinning actually is one step of innocence; and therefore that state is not intolerable, which, by a sensible trouble, makes it in most instances impossible to commit those great sins, which make death, hell, and horrid damnations. And then let us but add this to it, that God sends sicknesses, but he never causes sin; that God is angry with a sinning person, but never with a man for being sick; that sin causes God to hate us, and sickness causes him to pity us; that all wise men in the world choose trouble rather than dishonour, affliction rather than baseness; and that sickness stops the torrent of sin, and interrupts its violence, and even to the worst men makes it to retreat many degrees. We may reckon sickness amongst good things, as we reckon rhubarb, and aloes, and child-birth, and labour, and obedience, and discipline: these are unpleasant, and yet safe; they are troubles in order to blessings, or they are securities from danger, or the hard choices of a less and a more tolerable evil.

4. Sickness is, in some sense, eligible, because it is the opportunity and the proper scene of exercising some virtues.[q] It is that agony, in which men are tried for a crown. And if we remember what glorious things are spoken of the grace of faith, that it is the life of just men, the restitution of the dead in trespasses and sins, the justification of a sinner, the support of the weak, the confidence of the strong, the magazine of promises, and the title to very glorious rewards; we may easily imagine, that it must have in it a work and a difficulty, in some proportion answerable to so great effects. But when we are bidden to believe strange propositions, we are put upon it, when we cannot judge, and those propositions have possessed our discerning faculties, and have made a party there, and are become domestic, before they come to be disputed; and then the articles of faith are so few, and are made so credible, and, in their event and in their object, are so useful and gaining upon the affections, that he were a prodigy of man, and would be so esteemed, that should, in all our present circumstances, disbelieve any point of faith: and all is well as long as the sun shines, and the fair breath of heaven gently wafts us to our own purposes. But if you will try the excellency and feel the work of faith, place the man in a persecution; let him ride in a storm; let his bones be broken with sorrow, and his eyelids loosened with sickness; let his bread be dipped in tears, and all the daughters of music be brought low; let God commence a quarrel against him, and be bitter in the accents of his anger or his discipline: then God tries your faith. Can you then trust his goodness, and believe him to be a father, when you groan under his rod? Can you rely upon all the strange propositions of Scripture, and be content to perish if they be not true? Can you receive comfort in the discourses of death and heaven, of immortality and the resurrection, of

[o] —Ubi jam validis quassatum est viribus ævi
Corpus, et obtusis ceciderunt viribus artus,
Claudicat ingenium, delirat linguaque mensque.
LUCR. l. iii.

[p] Quatenus excidi penitus vitium iræ,
Cætera item nequeunt stultis hærentia——
HOR. lib. i. sat. 3.

[q] Nolo quod cupio statim tenere,
Nec victoria mî placet parata.—PETRON.

the death of Christ and conforming to his sufferings? Truth is, there are but two great periods, in which faith demonstrates itself to be a powerful and mighty grace; and they are, persecution and the approaches of death, for the passive part; and a temptation, for the active. In the days of pleasure and the night of pain, faith is to fight her *agonisticon*, to contend for mastery; and faith overcomes all alluring and fond temptations to sin, and faith overcomes all our weaknesses and faintings in our troubles. By the faith of the promises, we learn to despise the world, choosing those objects which faith discovers; and, by expectation of the same promises, we are comforted in all our sorrows, and enabled to look through and see beyond the cloud: but the vigour of it is pressed and called forth, when all our fine discourses come to be reduced to practice. For in our health and clearer days it is easy to talk of putting trust in God;[r] we readily trust him for life, when we are in health; for provisions, when we have fair revenues; and for deliverance, when we are newly escaped: but let us come to sit upon the margent of our grave, and let a tyrant lean hard upon our fortunes, and dwell upon our wrong, let the storm arise, and the keels toss till the cordage crack, or that all our hopes bulge under us, and descend into the hollowness of sad misfortunes; then can you believe, when you neither hear, nor see, nor feel any thing but objections? This is the proper work of sickness: faith is then brought into the theatre; and so exercised, that if it abides but to the end of the contention, we may see the work of faith, which God will hugely crown. The same I say of hope, and of charity or the love of God, and of patience, which is a grace produced from the mixtures of all these: they are virtues, which are greedy of danger, and no man was ever honoured by any wise or discerning person for dining upon Persian carpets, nor rewarded with a crown for being at ease.[s] It was the fire that did honour to Mutius Scævola; poverty made Fabricius famous; Rutilius was made excellent by banishment; Regulus by torments; Socrates by prison; Cato by his death: and God hath crowned the memory of Job with a wreath of glory, because he sat upon his dunghill wisely and temperately; and his potsherd and his groans, mingled with praises and justifications of God, pleased him like an anthem, sung by angels in the morning of the resurrection. God could not choose but be pleased with the delicious accents of martyrs, when in their tortures they cried out nothing but "Holy Jesus" and "Blessed be God;" and they also themselves, who, with a hearty designation to the Divine pleasure, can delight in God's severe dispensation, will have the transportations of cherubim, when they enter into the joys of God. If God be delicious to his servants when he smites them, he will be nothing but ravishments and ecstasies to their spirits, when he refreshes them with the overflowings of joy in the day of recompences. No man is more miserable, than he that hath no adversity; that man is not tried,[t] whether he be good or bad: and God never crowns those virtues, which are only faculties and dispositions: but every act of virtue is an ingredient into reward. And we see many children fairly planted, whose parts of nature were never dressed by art, nor called from the furrows of their first possibilities by discipline and institution, and they dwell for ever in ignorance, and converse with beasts; and yet if they had been dressed and exercised, might have stood at the chairs of princes, or spoken parables amongst the rulers of cities. Our virtues are but in the seed when the grace of God comes upon us first: but this grace must be thrown into broken furrows, and must twice feel the cold, and twice feel the heat,[u] and be softened with storms and showers, and then it will arise into fruitfulness and harvests. And what is there in the world to distinguish virtues from dishonours, or the valour of Cæsar from the softness of the Egyptian eunuchs, or that can make any thing rewardable, but the labour and the danger, the pain and the difficulty? Virtue could not be any thing but sensuality, if it were the entertainment of our senses and fond desires; and Apicius had been the noblest of all the Romans, if feeding a great appetite and despising the severities of temperance had been the work and proper employment of a wise man. But otherwise do fathers, and otherwise do mothers handle their children. These soften them with kisses and imperfect noises, with the pap and breast-milk of soft endearments; they rescue them from tutors, and snatch them from discipline; they desire to keep them fat and warm,[v] and their feet dry, and their bellies full; and then the children govern, and cry, and prove fools and troublesome, so long as the feminine republic does endure. But fathers, because they design to have their children wise and valiant, apt for counsel or for arms, send them to severe governments,[w] and tie them to study, to hard labour, and afflictive contingencies. They rejoice, when the bold boy strikes a lion with his hunting spear, and shrinks not when the beast comes to affright his early courage. Softness is for slaves and beasts,[x] for minstrels and useless persons, for such who cannot ascend higher than the state of a fair ox, or a servant entertained for vainer offices: but the man, that designs his son for noble employments, to honours and to triumphs, to consular dignities and presidencies of

[r] Mors ipsa beatior indè est,
Quod per cruciamina lethi
Via panditur ardua justis,
Et ad astra doloribus itur.
Prud. Hymn. in Exeq. Defunct.

[s] Virtutes avidæ periculi monstrant, quàm non pœniteat tanto pretio æstimâsse virtutem.—Senec. Non enim hilaritate, nec lasciviâ, nec risu, aut joco comite levitatis, sed sæpe etiam tristes firmitate et constantiâ sunt beati.—Cic. de Fin. l. xxii.

[t] Nihil infelicius eo cui nihil unquam contigit adversi. Non licuit illi se experiri.—Seneca.

[u] ———Illa seges votis respondet avari
Agricolæ, bis quæ solem, bis frigora sensit.
Virg. Georg. l.

[v] Languent per inertiam saginata, nec labore tantùm, sed mole et ipso sui onere deficiunt.—Seneca.

[w] Callum per injurias ducunt;
Ut sit luminis atque aquæ cœlestis patiens latus.

[x] Modestiâ filiorum delectantur; vernularum licentia et canum, non puerorum.

councils, loves to see him pale with study, or panting with labour, hardened with sufferance, or eminent by dangers. And so God dresses us for heaven. He loves to see us struggling with a disease, and resisting the devil, and contesting against the weaknesses of nature, and against hope to believe in hope, resigning ourselves to God's will, praying him to choose for us, and dying in all things but faith and its blessed consequences; *ut ad officium cum periculo simus prompti;* and the danger and the resistance shall endear the office. For so I have known the boisterous north wind pass through the yielding air,[y] which opened its bosom, and appeased its violence by entertaining it with easy compliance in all the regions of its reception: but when the same breath of heaven hath been checked with the stiffness of a tower, or the united strength of wood, it grew mighty, and dwelt there, and made the highest branches stoop, and made a smooth pass for it on the top of all its glories. So is sickness, and so is the grace of God: when sickness hath made the difficulty, then God's grace hath made a triumph, and by doubling its power hath created new proportions of a reward; and then shows its biggest glory,[z] when it hath its greatest difficulty to master, the greatest weaknesses to support, the most busy temptations to contest with; for so God loves, that his strength should be seen in our weakness and our danger. Happy is that state of life, in which our services to God are the dearest and the most expensive.[a]

5. Sickness hath some degrees of elegibility, at least by an after-choice; because to all persons, which are within the possibilities and state of pardon, it becomes a great instrument of pardon of sins. For as God seldom rewards here and hereafter too; so it is not very often that he punishes in both states. In great and final sins he doth so; but we find it expressed only in the case of the sin against the Holy Ghost, "which shall never be forgiven in this world, nor in the world to come," that is, it shall be punished in both worlds, and the infelicities of this world shall but usher in the intolerable calamities of the next. But this is in a case of extremity, and in sins of an unpardonable malice: in those lesser stages of death, which are deviations from the rule, and not a destruction and perfect antinomy to the whole institution, God very often smites with his rod of sickness, that he may not for ever be slaying the soul with eternal death. "I will visit their offences with the rod, and their sin with scourges: nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my truth to fail."[b] And there is, in the New Testament, a delivering over to Satan,[c] and a consequent buffetting, for the mortification of the flesh indeed, but that the soul may be saved in the day of the Lord. And to some persons the utmost process of God's anger reaches but to a sharp sickness, or at most but to a temporal death; and then the little momentary anger is spent, and expires in rest and a quiet grave. Origen, St. Augustine, and Cassian say, concerning Ananias and Sapphira,[d] that they were slain with a sudden death, that by such a judgment their sin might be punished, and their guilt expiated, and their persons reserved for mercy in the day of judgment. And God cuts off many of his children from the land of the living; and yet, when they are numbered amongst the dead, he finds them in the book of life, written amongst those that shall live to him for ever. And thus it happened to many new christians, in the church of Corinth, for their little indecencies and disorders in the circumstances of receiving the holy sacrament. St. Paul says, that "many amongst them were sick, many were weak, and some were fallen asleep.[e]" He expresses the Divine anger against those persons in no louder accents; which is according to the style of the New Testament, where all the great transactions of duty and reproof are generally made upon the stock of heaven, and hell is plainly a reserve, and a period set to the declaration of God's wrath. For God knows, that the torments of hell are so horrid, so insupportable a calamity, that he is not easy and apt to cast those souls, which he hath taken so much care, and hath been at so much expense to save, into the eternal, never-dying flames of hell, lightly, for smaller sins, or after a fairly-begun repentance, and in the midst of holy desires to finish it; but God takes such penalties, and exacts such fines of us, which we may pay *salvo contenemento*, saving the main stake of all, even our precious souls. And therefore St. Augustine prayed to God in his penitential sorrows, "Here, O Lord, burn and cut my flesh, that thou mayest spare me for ever." For so said our blessed Saviour, "Every sacrifice must be seasoned with salt, and every sacrifice must be burnt with fire:" that is, we must abide in the state of grace; and, if we have committed sins, we must expect to be put into the state of affliction; and yet the sacrifice will send up a right and untroubled cloud, and a sweet smell to join with the incense of the altar, where the eternal Priest offers a never-ceasing sacrifice. And now I have said a thing, against which there can be no exceptions, and of which no just reason can make abatement. For when sickness, which is the condition of our nature, is called for with purposes of redemption; when we are sent to death to secure eternal life; when God strikes us, that he may spare us, it shows, that we have done things which he essentially hates; and therefore we must be smitten with the rod of God: but in the midst of judgment God remembers mercy, and makes the rod to be medicinal, and, like the rod of God in the hand of Aaron, to shoot forth buds, and leaves, and almonds, hopes and mercies, and eternal recompences, in the day of restitution. This is so great a good to us, if it be well conducted

[y] Ventus ut amittit vires, nisi robore densæ
Occurrunt sylvæ, spatio diffusus inani.—LUCAN.
[z] Marcet sine adversario virtus.
[a] Lætius est, quoties magno tibi constat honestum.
[b] Psalm lxxxix. 32, 33.
[c] 1 Cor. v. 5. 1 Tim. i. 20.

[d] Digni erant in hoc sæculo recipere peccatum suum, ut mundiores exeant ab hac vitâ, mundati castigatione sibi illatâ per mortem communem, quoniam credentes erant in Christum.—ORIGEN, ST. AUGUST. l. iii. c. 1. contr. Parmen. et CASSIAN. collat. vi. c. 11.
[e] 1 Cor. xi. 20.

in all the channels of its intention and design, that if we had put off the objections of the flesh, with abstractions, contempts, and separations, so as we ought to do, it were as earnestly to be prayed for as any gay blessing, that crowns our cups with joy, and our heads with garlands and forgetfulness. But this was it which I said, that this may, nay, that it ought to be chosen, at least by an after-election: for so said St. Paul, "If we judge ourselves, we shall not be condemned of the Lord:" that is, if we judge ourselves worthy of the sickness, if we acknowledge and confess God's justice in smiting us, if we take the rod of God in our own hands, and are willing to imprint it in the flesh, we are workers together with God in the infliction; and then the sickness, beginning and being managed in the virtue of repentance, and patience, and resignation, and charity, will end in peace, and pardon, and justification, and consignation to glory. That I have spoken truth, I have brought God's Spirit speaking in Scripture for a witness. But if this be true, there are not many states of life that have advantages, which can outweigh this great instrument of security to our final condition. Moses died at the mouth of the Lord, said the story; he died with the kisses of the Lord's mouth[f] (so the Chaldee paraphrase): it was the greatest act of kindness that God did to his servant Moses; he kissed him, and he died. But I have some things to observe for the better finishing this consideration.

1. All these advantages and lessenings of evils in the state of sickness are only upon the stock of virtue and religion. There is nothing can make sickness in any sense eligible, or in many senses tolerable, but only the grace of God;[g] that only turns sickness into easiness and felicity, which also turns it into virtue. For whosoever goes about to comfort a vicious person, when he lies sick upon his bed, can only discourse of the necessities of nature, of the unavoidableness of the suffering, of the accidental vexations and increase of torments by impatience, of the fellowship of all the sons of Adam, and such other little considerations; which indeed, if sadly reflected upon, and found to stand alone, teach him nothing but the degree of his calamity, and the evil of his condition, and teach him such a patience, and minister to him such a comfort, which can only make him to observe decent gestures in his sickness, and to converse with his friends and standers-by so as may do them comfort, and ease their funeral and civil complaints, but do him no true advantage; for, all that may be spoken to a beast when he is crowned with hair-laces, and bound with fillets to the altar, to bleed to death to appease the anger of the Deity, and to ease the burden of his relatives. And indeed what comfort can he receive, whose sickness, as it looks back, is an effect of God's indignation and fierce vengeance, and if it goes forward and enters into the gates of the grave, is the beginning of a sorrow that shall never have an ending? But when the sickness is a messenger sent from a chastising Father; when it first turns into degrees of innocence, and then into virtues, and thence into pardon; this is no misery, but such a method of the Divine economy and dispensation as resolves to bring us to heaven without any new impositions, but merely upon the stock and charges of nature.

2. Let it be observed, that these advantages, which spring from sickness, are not in all instances of virtue, nor to all persons. Sickness is the proper scene for patience and resignation, for all the passive graces of a christian, for faith and hope, and for some single acts of the love of God. But sickness is not a fit station for a penitent; and it can serve the ends of the grace of repentance but accidentally. Sickness may begin a repentance,[h] if God continues life, and if we co-operate with the Divine grace; or sickness may help to alleviate the wrath of God, and to facilitate the pardon, if all the other parts of this duty be performed in our healthful state; so that it may serve at the entrance in, or at the going out. But sickness, at no hand, is a good stage to represent all the substantial parts of this duty. 1. It invites to it; 2. It makes it appear necessary; 3. It takes off the fancies of vanity; 4. It attempers the spirit; 5. It cures hypocrisy; 6. It tames the fumes of pride; 7. It is the school of patience; 8. And by taking us from off the brisker relishes of the world, it makes us with more gust to taste the things of the Spirit: and all this, only when God fits the circumstances of the sickness so as to consist with acts of reason, consideration, choice, and a present and reflecting mind; which then God sends, when he means that the sickness of the body should be the cure of the soul. But let no man so rely upon it as by design, to trust the beginning, the progress, and the consummation of our piety to such an estate, which for ever leaves it imperfect; and though to some persons it adds degrees, and ministers opportunities, and exercises single acts with great advantage, in passive graces; yet it is never an entire or sufficient instrument for the change of our condition from the state of death to the liberty and life of the sons of God.

3. It were good, if we would transact the affairs of our souls with nobleness and ingenuity, and that we would, by an early and forward religion, prevent the necessary arts of the Divine providence. It is true, that God cures some by incision, by fire and torments; but these are ever the more obstinate and more unrelenting natures. God's providence is not so afflictive and full of trouble,[i] as that it hath placed sickness and infirmity amongst things simply necessary; and, in most persons, it is but a sickly and an effeminate virtue, which is imprinted upon our spirits with fears, and the sorrows of a fever, or

[f] Deut. xxxiv. 5.

[g] Hæc clementia non paratur arte: sed nôrunt cui serviunt leones.

Si latus aut renes morbo tententur acuto,
Quære fugam morbi. Vis rectè vivere? quis non?
Si virtus hoc una potest dare, fortis omissis
Hoc age deliciis.——Horat. l. i. ep. 6.

[h] Nec tamen putaverant ad rem pertinere, ubi inciperent, quod placuerat ut fieret.

[i] Neque tam aversa unquam videbitur ab opere suo providentia, ut debilitas inter optima inventa sit.

a peevish consumption. It is but a miserable remedy to be beholden to a sickness for our health; and though it be better to suffer the loss of a finger, than that the arm and the whole body should putrefy; yet even then also it is a trouble and an evil to lose a finger. He that mends with sickness, pares the nails of the beast, when they have already torn off part of the flesh; but he that would have a sickness become a clear and an entire blessing, a thing indeed to be reckoned among the good things of God, and the evil things of the world, must lead a holy life, and judge himself with an early sentence, and so order the affairs of his soul, that, in the usual method of God's saving us, there may be nothing left to be done, but that such virtues should be exercised, which God intends to crown; and then, as when the Athenians upon a day of battle, with longing and uncertain souls, sitting in their common-hall, expecting what would be the sentence of the day, at last received a messenger, who only had breath enough left him to say, "We are conquerors," and so died; so shall the sick person, who hath "fought a good fight and kept the faith," and only waits for his dissolution and his sentence, breathe forth his spirit with the accents of a conqueror, and his sickness and his death shall only make the mercy and the virtue more illustrious.

But for the sickness itself; if all the calumnies were true concerning it, with which it is aspersed, yet it is far to be preferred before the most pleasant sin, and before a great secular business and a temporal care; and some men wake as much in the foldings of the softest beds, as others on the cross; and sometimes the very weight of sorrow and the weariness of a sickness press the spirit into slumbers and the images of rest, when the intemperate or the lustful person rolls upon his uneasy thorns, and sleep is departed from his eyes. Certain it is, some sickness is a blessing. Indeed, blindness were a most accursed thing,[k] if no man were ever blind, but he, whose eyes were pulled out with tortures or burning basins; and if sickness were always a testimony of God's anger, and a violence to a man's whole condition, then it were a huge calamity; but because God sends it to his servants, to his children, to little infants, to apostles and saints, with designs of mercy, to preserve their innocence, to overcome temptation, to try their virtue, to fit them for rewards; it is certain that sickness never is an evil but by our own faults; and if we will do our duty, we shall be sure to turn it into a blessing. If the sickness be great, it may end in death, and the greater it is,[l] the sooner; and if it be very little, it hath great intervals of rest: if it be between both, we may be masters of it, and by serving the ends of Providence serve also the perfective end of human nature, and enter into the possession of everlasting mercies.

The sum is this: he that is afraid of pain, is afraid of his own nature; and if his fear be violent, it is a sign his patience is none at all; and an impatient person is not ready-dressed for heaven. None but suffering, humble, and patient persons can go to heaven; and when God hath given us the whole stage of our life to exercise all the active virtues of religion, it is necessary in the state of virtues, that some portion and period of our lives be assigned to passive graces; for patience, for christian fortitude, for resignation or conformity to the Divine will. But as the violent fear of sickness makes us impatient, so it will make our death without comfort and without religion; and we shall go off from our stage of actions and sufferings with an unhandsome exit, because we were willing to receive the kindness of God, when he expressed it as we listed; but we would not suffer him to be kind and gracious to us in his own method, nor were willing to exercise and improve our virtues at the charge of a sharp fever, or a lingering consumption. "Woe be to the man that hath lost patience; for what will he do when the Lord shall visit him?"[m]

SECTION VII.

The second Temptation proper to the State of Sickness, Fear of Death, with its Remedies.

THERE is nothing which can make sickness unsanctified, but the same also will give us cause to fear death. If, therefore, we so order our affairs and spirits that we do not fear death, our sickness may easily become our advantage; and we can then receive counsel, and consider, and do those acts of virtue, which are, in that state, the proper services of God; and such which men in bondage and fear are not capable of doing, or of advices how they should, when they come to the appointed days of mourning. And indeed, if men would but place their design of being happy in the nobleness, courage, and perfect resolutions of doing handsome things, and passing through our unavoidable necessities, in the contempt and despite of the things of this world, and in holy living, and the perfective desires of our natures, the longings and pursuances after heaven; it is certain, they could not be made miserable by chance and change, by sickness and death. But we are so softened, and made effeminate with delicate thoughts, and meditations of ease, and brutish satisfactions, that, if our death come, before we have seized upon a great fortune, or enjoy the promises of the fortune-tellers, we esteem ourselves to be robbed of our goods, to be mocked, and miserable. Hence it comes, that men are impatient of the thoughts of death: hence come those arts of protraction and delaying the significations of old age: thinking to deceive the world, men cozen themselves,[n] and by representing themselves youth-

[k] Detestabilis erit cæcitas, si nemo oculos perdiderit, nisi cui eruendi sunt.

[l] Memineris ergò maximos dolores morte finiri, parvos habere multa intervalla requietis, mediocrium nos esse dominos.—CICERO.

[m] Ecclus. ii. 15.

[n] Mentiris juvenem tinctis, Lentine, capillis,
Tam subitò, corvus, qui modò cygnus eras.
Non omnes fallis, scit te Proserpina canum;
Personam capiti detrahet illa tuo.
MART. l. iii. ep. 43.

ful, they certainly continue their vanity, till Proserpina pull the peruke from their heads. We cannot deceive God and nature: for a coffin is a coffin, though it be covered with a pompous veil; and the minutes of our time strike on, and are counted by angels, till the period comes, which must cause the passing bell to give warning to all the neighbours, that thou art dead, and they must be so: and nothing can excuse or retard this. And if our death could be put off a little longer, what advantage can it be, in thy accounts of nature or felicity? They that, three hundred years agone, died unwillingly, and stopped death two days, or stayed it a week, what is their gain? where is that week? And poor-spirited men use arts of protraction,[o] and make their persons pitiable, but their condition contemptible; being like the poor sinners at Noah's flood: the waters drove them out of their lower rooms; then they crept up to the roof, having lasted half a day longer, and then they knew not how to get down: some crept upon the top-branch of a tree, and some climbed up to a mountain, and stayed, it may be, three days longer; but all that while they endured a worse torment than death: they lived with amazement, and were distracted with the ruins of mankind, and the horror of a universal deluge.

Remedies against the Fear of Death, by Way of Consideration.

1. God having in this world placed us in a sea, and troubled the sea with a continual storm, hath appointed the church for a ship, and religion to be the stern; but there is no haven or port but death. Death is that harbour, whither God hath designed every one, that there he may find rest from the troubles of the world. How many of the noblest Romans have taken death for sanctuary, and have esteemed it less than shame or a mean dishonour! and Cæsar was cruel to Domitius, captain of Corfinium, when he had taken the town from him, that he refused to sign his petition of death. Death would have hid his head with honour, but that cruel mercy reserved him to the shame of surviving his disgrace.[p] The holy Scripture, giving an account of the reasons of the Divine Providence taking godly men from this world, and shutting them up in a hasty grave, says, "that they are taken from the evils to come:" and concerning ourselves it is certain, if we had ten years agone taken seizure of our portion of dust, death had not taken us from good things, but from infinite evils, such which the sun hath seldom seen. Did not Priamus weep oftener than Troilus?[q] and happy had he been, if he had died, when his sons were living, and his kingdom safe, and houses full, and his city unburnt. It was a long life that made him miserable, and an early death only could have secured his fortune. And it hath happened many times, that persons of a fair life and a clear reputation, of a good fortune and an honourable name, have been tempted in their age to folly and vanity,[r] have fallen under the disgrace of dotage, or into an unfortunate marriage, or have besotted themselves with drinking, or outlived their fortunes, or become tedious to their friends, or are afflicted with lingering and vexatious diseases, or lived to see their excellent parts buried, and cannot understand the wise discourses and productions of their younger years. In all these cases and infinite more, do not all the world say, that it had been better this man had died sooner?[s] But so have I known passionate women to shriek aloud, when their nearest relatives were dying, and that horrid shriek hath stayed the spirit of the man awhile to wonder at the folly, and represent the inconvenience; and the dying person hath lived one day longer full of pain, amazed with an indeterminate spirit, distorted with convulsions, and only come again to act one scene more of a new calamity, and to die with less decency. So also do very many men; with passion and a troubled interest they strive to continue their life longer; and, it may be, they escape this sickness, and live to fall into a disgrace; they escape the storm, and fall into the hands of pirates; and, instead of dying with liberty, they live like slaves, miserable and despised, servants to a little time, and sottish admirers of the breath of their own lungs. Paulus Æmilius did handsomely reprove the cowardice of the king of Macedon, who begged of him, for pity's sake and humanity, that having conquered him and taken his kingdom from him, he would be content with that, and not lead him in triumph a prisoner to Rome. Æmilius told him, he need not be beholden to him for that; himself might prevent that in despite of him. But the timorous king durst not die. But certainly every wise man will easily believe, that it had been better the Macedonian kings should have died in battle, than protract their life so long, till some of them came to be scriveners and joiners at Rome: or that the tyrant of Sicily better had perished in the Adriatic, than to be wafted to Corinth safely, and there turn schoolmaster. It is a sad calamity, that the fear of death shall so imbecile man's courage and understanding, that he dares not suffer the remedy of all his calamities; but that he lives to say, as Laberius did, "I have lived this one day longer than I should."[t] Either, therefore, let us be willing to die when God calls, or let us never more complain of the calamities of our life, which we feel so sharp and numerous. And when God sends his angel to us with the scroll of death, let us look on it as an act of mercy, to prevent many sins and many

[o] Audet iter, numeratque dies, spatioque viarum
Metitur vitam, torquetur morte futurâ.
Τί γὰρ βροτῶν ἂν οὐ κακοῖς μεμιγμένον;
Θνήσκειν ὁ μέλλων τοῦ χρόνου κέρδος φέροι.—Soph.
Nihil est miserius dubitatione volutantium quorsum evadant, quantum sit illud quod restat, aut quale.—Seneca. l. xvii. ep. 102.

[p] —— Heu, quanto meliùs vel cæde peractâ
Parcere Romano potuit fortuna pudori!—Lucanus.

[q] Hæc omnia vidit inflammari, Jovis aram sanguine turpari.

[r] —— Sic longius ævum
Destruit ingentes animos, et vita superstes
Imperio; nisi summa dies cum fine bonorum
Adfuit, et celeri prævertit tristia leto,
Dedecori est fortuna prior.—Lucan. lib. viii. 30.

[s] Mors illi meliùs quàm tu consuluit quidem: quisquam ne secundis tradere se fatis audet nisi morte paratâ?—Luc. l. viii.

[t] Nimirum hac die unâ plus vixi, mihi quàm vivendum fuit.

calamities of a longer life, and lay our heads down softly, and go to sleep without wrangling like babies and froward children. For a man (at least) gets this by death, that his calamities are not immortal.[u]

But I do not only consider death by the advantages of comparison; but if we look on it in itself, it is no such formidable thing, if we view it on both sides, and handle it, and consider all its appendages.

2. It is necessary, and therefore not intolerable: and nothing is to be esteemed evil which God and nature have fixed with eternal sanctions.[v] It is a law of God, it is a punishment of our sins, and it is the constitution of our nature. Two differing substances were joined together with the breath of God,[w] and when that breath is taken away, they part asunder, and return to their several principles; the soul to God our Father, the body to the earth our mother: and what in all this is evil? Surely nothing, but that we are men; nothing, but that we were not born immortal: but by declining this change with great passion, or receiving it with a huge natural fear, we accuse the Divine Providence of tyranny, and exclaim against our natural constitution, and are discontent that we are men.

3. It is a thing that is no great matter in itself; if we consider, that we die daily, that it meets us in every accident, that every creature carries a dart along with it, and can kill us. And therefore when Lysimachus threatened Theodorus to kill him, he told him, that was no great matter to do, and he could do no more than the cantharides could: a little fly could do as much.

4. It is a thing that every one suffers,[x] even persons of the lowest resolution, of the meanest virtue, of no breeding, of no discourse. Take away but the pomps of death, the disguises and solemn bugbears, the tinsel, and the actings by candle-light, and proper and fantastic ceremonies, the minstrels and the noise-makers, the women and the weepers, the swoonings and the shriekings, the nurses and the physicians, the dark room and the ministers, the kindred and the watchers; and then to die is easy, ready and quitted from its troublesome circumstances. It is the same harmless thing, that a poor shepherd suffered yesterday, or a maid-servant to-day; and at the same time in which you die, in that very night a thousand creatures die with you,[y] some wise men, and many fools; and the wisdom of the first will not quit him, and the folly of the latter does not make him unable to die.

5. Of all the evils of the world which are reproached with an evil character, death is the most innocent of its accusation. For when it is present, it hurts nobody;[z] and when it is absent, it is indeed troublesome, but the trouble is owing to our fears, not to the affrighting and mistaking object: and besides this, if it were an evil, it is so transient, that it passes like the instant or undiscerned portion of the present time; and either it is past, or it is not yet;[a] for just when it is, no man hath reason to complain of so insensible, so sudden, so undiscerned a change.

6. It is so harmless a thing, that no good man was ever thought the more miserable for dying, but much the happier. When men saw the graves of Calatinus, of the Servilii, the Scipios, the Metelli, did ever any man among the wisest Romans think them unhappy? And when St. Paul fell under the sword of Nero, and St. Peter died upon the cross, and St. Stephen from a heap of stones was carried into an easier grave, they that made great lamentation over them, wept for their own interest, and after the manner of men; but the martyrs were accounted happy, and their days kept solemnly, and their memories preserved in never-dying honours. When St. Hilary, bishop of Poictiers in France, went into the East to reprove the Arian heresy, he heard, that a young noble gentleman treated with his daughter Abra for marriage. The bishop wrote to his daughter, that she should not engage her promise, nor do countenance to that request, because he had provided for her a husband fair, rich, wise, and noble, far beyond her present offer. The event of which was this: she obeyed; and when her father returned from his eastern triumph to his western charge, he prayed to God that his daughter might die quickly; and God heard his prayers, and Christ took her into his bosom, entertaining her with antepasts and caresses of holy love, till the day of the marriage-supper of the Lamb shall come. But when the bishop's wife observed this event, and understood of the good man her husband what was done, and why, she never let him alone, till he obtained the same favour for her; and she also, at the prayers of St. Hilary, went into a more early grave and a bed of joys.

7. It is a sottish and an unlearned thing to reckon the time of our life, as it is short or long, to be good or evil fortune; life in itself being neither good nor bad, but just as we make it; and therefore so is death.

8. But when we consider, death is not only better than a miserable life, not only an easy and innocent thing in itself, but also that it is a state of advantage, we shall have reason not to double the sharpnesses of our sickness by our fear of death. Certain it is, death hath some good upon its proper stock; praise, and a fair memory, a reverence and religion towards them so great, that it is counted dishonest to speak evil of the dead;[b] then they rest in peace, and are quiet from their labours, and are designed to immortality. Cleobis and Biton, Trophonius

[u] Hoc homo morte lucratur, ne malum esset immortale.—NAZ.

[v] Nihil in malis ducamus, quod sit à Diis immortalibus vel à Naturâ parente omnium, constitutum.

[w] Concretum fuit, discretum est; rediitque unde venerat; terra deorsum, spiritus sursum. Quid ex his omnibus iniquum est? nihil.—EPICHAR.

[x] Natura dedit usuram vitæ tanquam pecuniæ; quid est ergo quod querare, si repetat cùm vult? eâdem enim lege acceperas.—SENECA.

[y] Vitæ est avidus, quisquis non vult mundo secum pereunte mori.—SENECA.

[z] Τοὺς γὰρ θανόντας οὐχ ὁρῶ λυπουμένους.
Par est moriri: neque est melius morte in malis rebus miseris.—PLAUT. Rud.

[a] Aut fuit, aut veniet; nihil est præsentis in illâ:
Morsque minus pœnæ quàm mora mortis habet.

[b] Virtutem incolumem odimus,
Sublatam ex oculis quærimus invidi.—HORAT.
Et laudas nullos nisi mortuos poetas.—MART.

and Agamedes, had an early death sent them as a reward; to the former, for their piety to their mother; to the latter, for building a temple. To this all those arguments will minister, which relate the advantages of the state of separation and resurrection.

SECTION VIII.

Remedies against Fear of Death, by Way of Exercise.

1. He that would willingly be fearless of death, must learn to despise the world; he must neither love any thing passionately, nor be proud of any circumstance of his life. "O death, how bitter is the remembrance of thee to a man, that liveth at rest in his possessions, to a man that hath nothing to vex him, and that hath prosperity in all things; yea, unto him that is yet able to receive meat!" said the son of Sirach. But the parts of this exercise help each other. If a man be not incorporated in all his passions to the things of this world, he will less fear to be divorced from them by a supervening death; and yet because he must part with them all in death, it is but reasonable he should not be passionate for so fugitive and transient interest. But if any man thinks well of himself for being a handsome person, or if he be stronger and wiser than his neighbours, he must remember,[c] that what he boasts of will decline into weakness and dishonour; but that very boasting and complacency will make death keener and more unwelcome, because it comes to take him from his confidences and pleasures, making his beauty equal to those ladies, that have slept some years in charnel-houses, and their strength not so stubborn as the breath of an infant, and their wisdom such, which can be looked for in the land where all things are forgotten.

2. He that would not fear death, must strengthen his spirits with the proper instruments of christian fortitude. All men are resolved upon this, that to bear grief honestly and temperately, and to die willingly and nobly, is the duty of a good and valiant man;[d] and they that are not so, are vicious, and fools, and cowards. All men praise the valiant and honest; and that which the very heathen admired in their noblest examples, is especially patience and contempt of death. Zeno Eleates endured torments rather than discover his friends, or betray them to the danger of the tyrant; and Calanus, the barbarous and unlearned Indian, willingly suffered himself to be burnt alive; and all the women did so, to do honour to their husband's funeral, and to represent and prove their affections great to their lords. The religion of a christian does more command fortitude, than ever did any institution; for we are commanded to be willing to die for Christ, to die for the brethren, to die rather than to give offence or scandal; the effect of which is this, that he that is instructed to do the necessary parts of his duty, is, by the same instrument, fortified against death; as he that does his duty need not fear death, so neither shall he; the parts of his duty are parts of his security. It is certainly a great baseness and pusillanimity of spirit, that makes death terrible, and extremely to be avoided.

3. Christian prudence is a great security against the fear of death. For if we be afraid of death, it is but reasonable to use all spiritual arts to take off the apprehension of the evil; but therefore we ought to remove our fear, because fear gives to death wings, and spurs, and darts. Death hastens to a fearful man; if therefore you would make death harmless and slow, to throw off fear is the way to do it; and prayer is the way to do that. If therefore you be afraid of death, consider you will have less need to fear it, by how much the less you do fear it; and so cure your direct fear by a reflex act of prudence and consideration. Fannius had not died so soon[e] if he had not feared death; and when Cneius Carbo begged the respite of a little time for a base employment of the soldiers of Pompey, he got nothing, but that the baseness of his fear dishonoured the dignity of his third consulship; and he chose to die in a place, where none but his meanest servants should have seen him. I remember a story of the wrestler Polydamas, that, running into a cave to avoid the storm, the water at last swelled so high, that it began to press that hollowness to a ruin; which when his fellows espied, they chose to enter into the common fate of all men, and went abroad; but Polydamas thought by his strength to support the earth, till its intolerable weight crushed him into flatness and a grave. Many men run for a shelter to a place, and they only find a remedy for their fears by feeling the worst of evils; fear itself finds no sanctuary but the worst of sufferance; and they that fly from a battle are exposed to the mercy and fury of the pursuers, who, if they faced about, were as well disposed to give laws of life and death as to take them, and at worst can but die nobly; but now, even at the very best, they live shamefully, or die timorously. Courage is the greatest security; for it does most commonly safeguard the man, but always rescues the condition from an intolerable evil.

4. If thou wilt be fearless of death, endeavour to be in love with the felicities of saints and angels, and be once persuaded to believe, that there is a condition of living better than this; that there are creatures more noble than we; that above there is a country better than ours; that the inhabitants know more and know better, and are in places of rest and desire; and first learn to value it, and then learn to purchase it, and death cannot be a formidable thing, which lets us into so much joy and so

[c] Εἰ δέ τις ὄλβον ἔχων Μορφᾷ παραμεύσεται ἄλλων,
'Εν τ' ἀέθλοισιν—στεύων ἐπέδειξεν ἑΐαν·
Θνατὰ μεμνάσθω περὶσέλλων μέλη,
Καὶ τελεῦτὰν ἁπάντων γᾶν ἐπιεσσόμενος.
Pindar. Nem. 10.

Dic, homo, vas cinerum, quid confert flos facierum?
Copia quid rerum? mors ultima meta dierum.

[d] Amittenda fortitudo est, aut sepeliendus dolor.—Cicero.
Fortem posce animum mortis terrore carentem,
Qui spatium vitæ extremum inter munera ponat.

[e] Hostem cùm fugeret, se Fannius ipse peremit. - Mart.

much felicity. And indeed who would not think his condition mended, if he passed from conversing with dull mortals, with ignorant and foolish persons, with tyrants, and enemies of learning, to converse with Homer and Plato, with Socrates and Cicero, with Plutarch and Fabricius? So the heathens speculated, but we consider higher. "The dead that die in the Lord," shall converse with St. Paul, and all the college of the apostles, and all the saints and martyrs, with all the good men, whose memory we preserve in honour, with excellent kings and holy bishops, and with the great Shepherd and bishop of our souls, Jesus Christ, and with God himself. For "Christ died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we might live together with him." Then we shall be free from lust and envy,[f] from fear and rage, from covetousness and sorrow, from tears and cowardice: and these indeed properly are the only evils, that are contrary to felicity and wisdom. Then we shall see strange things, and know new propositions, and all things in another manner, and to higher purposes. Cleombrotus was so taken with this speculation, that, having learned from Plato's Phædon the soul's abode, he had not patience to stay nature's dull leisure, but leaped from a wall to his portion of immortality. And when Pomponius Atticus resolved to die by famine, to ease the great pains of his gout, in the abstinence of two days he found his foot at ease: but when he began to feel the pleasures of an approaching death, and the delicacies of that ease he was to inherit below, he would not withdraw his foot, but went on and finished his death: and so did Cleanthes. And every wise man will despise the little evils of that state, which indeed is the daughter of fear, but the mother of rest, and peace, and felicity.

5. If God should say to us, Cast thyself into the sea, (as Christ did to St. Peter, or as God concerning Jonas,) I have provided for thee a dolphin, or a whale, or a port, a safety or a deliverance, security or a reward, were we not incredulous and pusillanimous persons, if we should tremble to put such a felicity into act, and ourselves into possession? The very duty of resignation and the love of our own interest are good antidotes against fear. In forty or fifty years we find evils enough and arguments enough to make us weary of this life; and to a good man there are very many more reasons to be afraid of life than death, this having in it less of evil and more of advantage. And it was a rare wish of that Roman,[g] that death might come only to wise and excellent persons, and not to fools and cowards; that it might not be a sanctuary for the timorous, but the reward of the virtuous: and indeed they only can make advantage of it.

6. Make no excuses to make thy desires of life seem reasonable; neither cover thy fear with pretences, but suppress it rather with arts of severity and ingenuity. Some are not willing to submit to God's sentence and arrest of death, till they have finished such a design,[h] or made an end of the last paragraph of their book, or raised such portions for their children, or preached so many sermons, or built their house, or planted their orchard, or ordered their estate with such advantages. It is well for the modesty of these men, that the excuse is ready; but if it were not, it is certain they would search one out: for an idle man is never ready to die, and is glad of any excuse; and a busied man hath always something unfinished, and he is ready for every thing but death. And I remember, that Petronius brings in Eumolpus composing verses in a desperate storm; and being called upon to shift for himself when the ship dashed upon the rock, crying out to let him alone, till he had trimmed and finished his verse, which was lame in the hinder leg: the man either had too strong a desire to end his verse, or too great a desire not to end his life. But we must know, God's times are not to be measured by our circumstances; and what I value, God regards not: or if it be valuable in the accounts of men, yet God will supply it with other contingencies of his providence: and if Epaphroditus had died, when he had his great sickness St. Paul speaks of, God would have secured the work of the gospel without him; and he could have spared Epaphroditus as well as St. Stephen, and St. Peter as well as St. James. Say no more; but, when God calls, lay aside thy papers; and first dress thy soul, and then dress thy hearse.

Blindness is odious, and widowhood is sad, and destitution is without comfort, and persecution is full of trouble, and famine is intolerable, and tears are the sad ease of a sadder heart: but these are evils of our life, not of our death. For the dead that die in the Lord, are so far from wanting the commodities of this life, that they do not want life itself.

After all this, I do not say it is a sin to be afraid of death: we find the boldest spirit, that discourses of it with confidence, and dares undertake a danger as big as death, yet doth shrink at the horror of it, when it comes dressed in its proper circumstances. And Brutus, who was as bold a Roman to undertake a noble action as any was, since they first reckoned by consuls, yet when Furius came to cut his throat after his defeat by Antony, he ran from it like a girl; and being admonished to die constantly, he swore by his life, that he would shortly endure death. But what do I speak of such imperfect persons? Our blessed Lord was pleased to legitimate fear to us by his agony and prayers in the garden. It is not a sin to be afraid, but it is a great felicity to be without fear; which felicity our dearest Saviour refused to have, because it was agreeable to his purposes to suffer any thing that was contrary to felicity, every thing but sin. But when men will by all means avoid death, they are like those who at any hand resolve to be rich.[i] The case may happen, in which they will blaspheme and dishonour Providence, or do a base action, or curse God and

[f] Beati erimus cùm, corporibus relictis, et cupiditatum et æmulationum erimus expertes, quodque nunc facimus, cùm laxati curis sumus, ut spectare aliquid velimus et visere.—TUSCUL. Q.

[g] Mors, utinam pavidos vitâ subducere nolles,
Sed virtus te sola daret———LUCAN.

[h] Pendent opera interrupta, minæque murorum ingentes.

[i] Ἀλλ' οἱ ἐξ ἅπαντος φεύγοντες τὸν θάνατον.

die: but, in all cases, they die miserable and insnared, and in no case do they die the less for it. Nature hath left us the key of the churchyard, and custom hath brought cemeteries and charnel-houses into cities and churches, places most frequented, that we might not carry ourselves strangely in so certain,[k] so expected, so ordinary, so unavoidable an accident. All reluctancy or unwillingness to obey the Divine decree is but a snare to ourselves, and a load to our spirits,[l] and is either an entire cause, or a great aggravation, of the calamity. Who did not scorn to look upon Xerxes, when he caused three hundred stripes to be given to the sea, and sent a chartel of defiance against the mountain Athos? Who did not scorn the proud vanity of Cyrus, when he took so goodly a revenge upon the river Cyndus for his hard passage over it? or did not deride or pity the Thracians, for shooting arrows against heaven when it thunders? To be angry with God,[m] to quarrel with the Divine providence, by repining against an unalterable, a natural, an easy sentence, is an argument of a huge folly, and the parent of a great trouble; a man is base and foolish to no purpose,[n] he throws away a vice to his own misery, and to no advantages of ease and pleasure. Fear keeps men in bondage all their life, saith St. Paul; and patience makes him his own man, and lord of his own interest and person. Therefore possess yourselves in patience, with reason and religion, and you shall die with ease.[o]

If all the parts of this discourse be true, if they be better than dreams, and unless virtue be nothing but words, as a grove is a heap of trees;[p] if they be not the phantasms of hypochondriacal persons, and designs upon the interest of men and their persuasions to evil purposes; then there is no reason, but that we should really desire death, and account it among the good things of God, and the sour and laborious felicities of man. St. Paul understood it well, when he desired to be dissolved: he well enough knew his own advantages, and pursued them accordingly. But it is certain, that he that is afraid of death, I mean, with a violent and transporting fear, with a fear apt to discompose his duty or his patience, that man either loves this world too much, or dares not trust God for the next.

SECTION IX.

General Rules and Exercises whereby our Sickness may become safe and sanctified.

1. Take care that the cause of thy sickness be such, as may not sour it in the principal and original causes of it. It is a sad calamity to pass into the house of mourning through the gates of intemperance, by a drunken meeting, or the surfeits of a loathed and luxurious table; for then a man suffers the pain of his own folly, and he is like a fool smarting under the whip, which his own viciousness twisted for his back; then a man pays the price of his sin, and hath a pure and an unmingled sorrow in his suffering; and it cannot be alleviated by any circumstances, for the whole affair is a mere process of death and sorrow. Sin is in the head, sickness is in the body, and death and an eternity of pains in the tail; and nothing can make this condition tolerable, unless the miracles of the Divine mercy will be pleased to exchange the eternal anger for the temporal. True it is, that, in all sufferings, the cause of it makes it noble or ignoble, honour or shame, tolerable or intolerable.[q] For when patience is assaulted by a ruder violence, by a blow from heaven or earth, from a gracious God or an unjust man, patience looks forth to the doors, which way she may escape. And if innocence or a cause of religion keep the first entrance, then, whether she escapes at the gates of life or death, there is a good to be received, greater than the evils of a sickness: but if sin thrust in that sickness, and that hell stands at the door, then patience turns into fury, and seeing it impossible to go forth with safety, rolls up and down with a circular and infinite revolution, makes its motion not from, but upon, its own centre; it doubles the pain,[r] and increases the sorrow, till by its weight it breaks the spirit, and bursts into the agonies of infinite and eternal ages. If we had seen St. Polycarp burning to death, or St. Laurence roasted upon his gridiron, or St. Ignatius exposed to lions, or St. Sebastian pierced with arrows, or St. Attalus carried about the theatre with scorn unto his death for the cause of Jesus, for religion, for God and a holy conscience; we should have been in love with flames, and have thought the gridiron fairer than the *spondæ*, the ribs of a marital bed; and we should have chosen to converse with those beasts, rather than those men that brought those beasts forth; and estimated the arrows to be the rays of light brighter than the moon; and that disgrace and mistaken pageantry were a solemnity richer and more magnificent than Mordecai's procession upon the king's horse, and in the robes of majesty: for so did these holy men account them; they kissed their stakes, and hugged their deaths, and ran violently to torments, and counted whippings and secular disgraces to be the enamel of their persons, and the ointment of their heads, and the embalming their names, and securing them for immortality. But to see Sejanus torn in pieces by the people, or Nero crying or creeping timorously to his death, when he was condemned to die *more majorum*; to see Judas pale and trembling, full of anguish, sorrow, and despair; to observe the groanings and intolerable agonies of Herod and Antiochus, will tell and demonstrate the causes of patience and impatience to proceed from the causes of the suffering: and it is sin only that makes the cup bitter and deadly.

[k] Quam pellunt lacrymæ, fovent sortem: dura negant cedere mollibus.

[l] Siccas si videat genas, duræ cedet hebes sors patientiæ.

[m] Νήπιοι, οἳ Ζηνὶ μενεαίνομεν ἀφρονέοντες.—Iliad. ὁ.

[n] Et cùm nihil imminuat dolores, cur frustrà turpes esse volumus?—Seneca.

[o] Non levat miseros dolor.

[p] Virtutem verba putas, ut lucum ligna.

[q] Solatium est pro honesto dura tolerare, et ad causam patientiæ.—1 Pet. ii. 19. Heb. xi. 36. Matt. v. 11.

[r] Magis his quæ patitur, vexat causa patiendi.

When men, by vomiting, measure up the drink they took in,[s] and sick and sad do again taste their meat turned into choler by intemperance, the sin and its punishment are mingled so, that shame covers the face, and sorrow puts a veil of darkness upon the heart: and we scarce pity a vile person, that is haled to execution for murder or for treason, but we say he deserves it, and that every man is concerned in it that he should die. If lust brought the sickness or the shame, if we truly suffer the rewards of our evil deeds, we must thank ourselves; that is, we are fallen into an evil condition, and are the sacrifice of the Divine justice. But if we live holy lives, and if we enter well in, we are sure to pass on safe, and to go forth with advantage, if we list ourselves.

2. To this relates, that we should not counterfeit sickness: for he, that is to be careful of his passage into a sickness, will think himself concerned, that he fall not into it through a trap-door: for so it hath sometimes happened, that such counterfeiting to light and evil purposes hath ended in a real sufferance. Appian tells of a Roman gentleman, who to escape the proscription of the triumvirate, fled, and to secure his privacy counterfeited himself blind on one eye, and wore a plaster upon it, till beginning to be free from the malice of the three prevailing princes, he opened his hood, but could not open his eye, but for ever lost the use of it, and with his eye paid for his liberty and hypocrisy. And Cælius counterfeited the gout,[t] and all its circumstances and pains, its dressings and arts of remedy, and complaint, till at last the gout really entered, and spoiled the pageantry. His arts of dissimulation were so witty, that they put life and motion into the very image of the disease; he made the very picture to sigh and groan.

It is easy to tell, upon the interest of what virtue such counterfeiting is to be reproved. But it will be harder to snatch the politics of the world from following that, which they call a canonized and authentic precedent: and David's counterfeiting himself mad before the king of Gath to save his life and liberty, will be sufficient to entice men to serve an end upon the stock and charges of so small an irregularity, not in the matter of manners, but in the rules and decencies of natural or civil deportment. I cannot certainly tell, what degrees of excuse David's action might put on. This only, besides his present necessity, the laws, whose coercive or directive power David lived under, had less of severity, and more of liberty, and towards enemies had so little of restraint and so great a power, that what amongst them was a direct sin, if used to their brethren the sons of Jacob, was lawful and permitted to be acted against enemies. To which also I add this general caution, that the actions of holy persons in scripture are not always good precedents to us christians, who are to walk by a rule and a greater strictness, with more simplicity and heartiness of pursuit. And amongst them, sanctity and holy living did, in very many of its instances, increase in new particulars of duty; and the prophets reproved many things, which the law forbad not; and taught many duties, which Moses prescribed not; and as the time of Christ's approach came, so the sermons and revelations too were more evangelical, and like the patterns, which were fully to be exhibited by the Son of God. Amongst which, it is certain, that christian simplicity and godly sincerity are to be accounted: and counterfeiting of sickness is a huge enemy to this: it is an upbraiding the Divine Providence, a jesting with fire, a playing with a thunderbolt, a making the decrees of God to serve the vicious or secular ends of men; it is a tempting of a judgment, a false accusation of God, a forestalling and antedating his anger; it is a cozening of men by making God a party in the fraud: and therefore, if the cozenage returns upon the man's own head, he enters like a fox into his sickness, and perceives himself catched in a trap, or earthed in the intolerable dangers of the grave.

3. Although we must be infinitely careful to prevent it, that sin does not thrust us into a sickness; yet when we are in the house of sorrow, we should do well to take physic against sin, and suppose that it is the cause of the evil; if not by way of natural casualty and proper effect, yet by a moral influence, and by a just demerit. We can easily see when a man hath got a surfeit; intemperance is as plain as the handwriting upon the wall, and easier to be read; but covetousness may cause a fever as well as drunkenness, and pride can produce a falling-sickness as well as long washings, and dilutions of the brain, and intemperate lust: and we find it recorded in Scripture, that the contemptuous and unprepared manner of receiving of the holy sacraments caused sickness and death; and sacrilege and vow-breach in Ananias and Sapphira made them to descend quick into their graves. Therefore, when sickness is upon us, let us cast about; and, if we can, let us find out the cause of God's displeasure; that, it being removed, we may return into the health and securities of God's loving-kindness. Thus, in the three years' famine, David inquired of the Lord what was the matter; and God answered, "It is for Saul and his bloody house:" and then David expiated the guilt, and the people were full again of food and blessing. And when Israel was smitten by the Amorites, Joshua cast about, and found out the accursed thing, and cast it out; and the people, after that, fought prosperously. And what God in that case said to Joshua, he will also verify to us: "I will not be with you any more, unless you destroy the accursed thing from among you."[u] But in pursuance of this we are to observe, that although, in case of loud and clamorous sins, the discovery is easy, and the remedy not difficult; yet because christianity is a nice thing, and religion is as pure as the sun, and the soul of man is apt to be troubled from more principles than the intricate and curiously-composed body in its innumerable parts, it

[s] Hi quicquid biberint, vomitu remetientur tristes, et bilem suam regustantes.—Seneca.

[t] Tantum cura potest et ars doloris: desît fingere Cœlius podagram.—Mart. l. vii. ep. 38.

[u] Josh. vii. 12.

will often happen, that if we go to inquire into the particular, we shall never find it out; and we may suspect drunkenness, when it may be also a morose delectation in unclean thoughts, or covetousness, or oppression, or a crafty invasion of my neighbour's rights, or my want of charity, or my judging unjustly in my own cause, or my censuring my neighbours, or a secret pride, or a base hypocrisy, or the pursuance of little ends with violence and passion, that may have procured the present messenger of death. Therefore ask no more after any one, but heartily endeavour to reform all: "sin no more, lest a worse thing happen:"[v] for a single search or accusation may be the design of an imperfect repentance; but no man does heartily return to God, but he that decrees against every irregularity; and then only we can be restored to health or life, when we have taken away the causes of sickness and a cursed death.

4. He that means to have his sickness turn into safety and life, into health and virtue, must make religion the employment of his sickness, and prayer the employment of his religion. For there are certain compendiums or abbreviatures and shortenings of religion, fitted to several states. They, that first gave up their names to Christ, and that turned from paganism to christianity, had an abbreviature fitted for them; they were to renounce their false worshippings, and give up their belief, and vow their obedience unto Christ; and in the very profession of this they were forgiven in baptism. For God hastens to snatch them from the power of the devil, and therefore shortens the passage, and secures the estate. In the case of poverty, God hath reduced this duty of man to an abbreviature of those few graces which they can exercise; such as are patience, contentedness, truth, and diligence; and the rest he accepts in good will, and the charities of the soul, in prayers, and the actions of a cheap religion. And to most men charity is also an abbreviature. And as the love of God shortens the way to the purchase of all virtues; so the expression of this to the poor goes a huge way in the requisites and towards the consummation of an excellent religion. And martyrdom is another abbreviature; and so is every act of an excellent and heroical virtue. But when we are fallen into the state of sickness, and that our understanding is weak and troubled, our bodies sick and useless, our passions turned into fear, and the whole state into suffering, God, in compliance with man's infirmity, hath also turned our religion into such a duty, which a sick man can do most passionately, and a sad man and a timorous can perform effectually, and a dying man can do to many purposes of pardon and mercy; and that is, prayer. For although a sick man is bound to do many acts of virtue of several kinds, yet the most of them are to be done in the way of prayer. Prayer is not only the religion that is proper to a sick man's condition, but it is the manner of doing other graces, which is then left, and in his power. For thus the sick man is to do his repentance and his mortifications, his temperance and his chastity, by a fiction of imagination bringing the offers of the virtue to the spirit, and making an action of election: and so our prayers are a direct act of chastity, when they are made in the matter of that grace; just as repentance for our cruelty is an act of the grace of mercy; and repentance for uncleanness is an act of chastity, is a means of its purchase, an act in order to the habit. And though such acts of virtue, which are only in the way of prayer, are ineffective to the entire purchase, and of themselves cannot change the vice into virtue; yet they are good renewings of the grace, and proper exercise of a habit already gotten.

The purpose of this discourse is, to represent the excellency of prayer, and its proper advantages, which it hath in the time of sickness. For besides that it moves God to pity, piercing the clouds, and making the heavens, like a pricked eye, to weep over us, and refresh us with showers of pity; it also doth the work of the soul, and expresses the virtue of his whole life in effigy, in pictures and lively representments, so preparing it for a never-ceasing crown, by renewing the actions in the continuation of a never-ceasing, a never-hindered affection. Prayer speaks to God, when the tongue is stiffened with the approachings of death: prayer can dwell in the heart, and be signified by the hand or eye, by a thought or a groan: prayer, of all the actions of religion, is the last alive, and it serves God without circumstances, and exercises material graces by abstraction from matter, and separation, and makes them to be spiritual; and therefore best dresses our bodies for funeral or recovery, for the mercies of restitution or the mercies of the grave.

5. In every sickness, whether it will, or will not, be so in nature and in the event, yet in thy spirit and preparations resolve upon it, and treat thyself accordingly, as if it were a sickness unto death. For many men support their unequal courages by flattery and false hopes; and because sicker men have recovered, believe that they shall do so; but therefore they neglect to adorn their souls, or set their house in order: besides the temporal inconveniences, that often happen by such persuasions, and putting off the evil day, such as are, dying intestate, leaving estates entangled, and some relatives unprovided for; they suffer infinitely in the interest and affairs of their soul, they die carelessly and surprised, their burdens on, and their scruples unremoved, and their cases of conscience not determined, and, like a sheep, without any care taken concerning their precious souls. Some men will never believe, that a villain will betray them, though they receive often advices from suspicious persons and likely accidents, till they are entered into the snare; and then they believe it, when they feel it, and when they cannot return: but so the treason entered, and the man was betrayed by his own folly, placing the snare in the regions and advantages of opportunity. This evil looks like boldness and a confident spirit, but it is the greatest timorousness and cowardice in the world. They are so fearful to die, that they dare not look upon it as possible; and think that

[v] "Ορα κακῶς πράσσοντες, μὴ μείζω κακὰ κτησώμεθα. SOPH.

the making of a will is a mortal sign, and sending for a spiritual man an irrecoverable disease; and they are so afraid, lest they should think and believe now they must die, that they will not take care that it may not be evil, in case they should. So did the eastern slaves drink wine, and wrapped their heads in a veil, that they might die without sense or sorrow, and wink hard, that they might sleep the easier. In pursuance of this rule, let a man consider, that whatsoever must be done in sickness, ought to be done in health; only let him observe, that his sickness as a good monitor chastises his neglect of duty, and forces him to live as he always should; and then all these solemnities and dressings for death are nothing else but the part of a religious life; which he ought to have exercised all his days; and if those circumstances can affright him, let him please his fancy by this truth, that then he does but begin to live. But it will be a huge folly, if he shall think that confession of his sins will kill him; or receiving the holy sacrament will hasten his agony, or the priest shall undo all the hopeful language and promises of his physician. Assure thyself, thou canst not die the sooner; but, by such addresses, thou mayest die much the better.

6. Let the sick person be infinitely careful, that he do not fall into a state of death upon a new account; that is, at no hand commit a deliberate sin, or retain any affection to the old; for, in both cases, he falls into the evils of a surprise, and the horrors of a sudden death; for a sudden death is but a sudden joy, if it takes a man in the state and exercises of virtue; and it is only then an evil, when it finds a man unready. They were sad departures, when Tigillinus, Cornelius Gallus the pretor, Lewis the son of Gonzaga duke of Mantua, Ladislaus king of Naples, Speusippus, Giachetius of Geneva, and one of the popes, died in the forbidden embraces of abused women; or if Job had cursed God, and so died; or when a man sits down in despair, and in the accusation and calumny of the Divine mercy: they make their night sad, and stormy, and eternal. When Herod began to sink with the shameful torment of his bowels, and felt the grave open under him, he imprisoned the nobles of his kingdom, and commanded his sister, that they should be a sacrifice to his departing ghost. This was an egress fit only for such persons, who meant to dwell with devils to eternal ages; and that man is hugely in love with sin, who cannot forbear in the week of the assizes, and when himself stood at the bar of scrutiny, and prepared for his final, never-to-be-reversed sentence. He dies suddenly, to the worse sense and event of sudden death, who so manages his sickness, that even that state shall not be innocent, but that he is surprised in the guilt of a new account. It is a sign of a reprobate spirit, and an habitual, prevailing, ruling sin, which exacts obedience when the judgment looks him in the face. At least go to God with the innocence and fair deportment of thy person in the last scene of thy life, that when thy soul breaks into the state of separation, it may carry the relishes of religion and sobriety to the places of its abode and sentence.[w]

7. When these things are taken care for, let the sick man so order his affairs, that he have but very little conversation with the world, but wholly (as he can) attend to religion, and antedate his conversation in heaven, always having intercourse with God, and still conversing with the holy Jesus, kissing his wounds, admiring his goodness, begging his mercy, feeding on him with faith, and drinking his blood; to which purpose it were very fit (if all circumstances be answerable) that the narrative of the passion of Christ be read or discoursed to him at length, or in brief, according to the style of the four gospels. But, in all things, let his care and society be as little secular as is possible.

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE PRACTICE OF THE GRACES PROPER TO THE STATE OF SICKNESS, WHICH A SICK MAN MAY PRACTISE ALONE.

SECTION I.

Of the Practice of Patience.

Now we suppose the man entering upon his scene of sorrows, and passive graces. It may be, he went yesterday to a wedding, merry and brisk, and there he felt his sentence, that he must return home and die (for men very commonly enter into the snare singing, and consider not whither their fate leads them); nor feared, that then the angel was to strike his stroke, till his knees kissed the earth, and his head trembled with the weight of the rod, which God put into the hand of an exterminating angel. But whatsoever the ingress was,

[w] Whoso him bethoft
Inwardly and oft
How hard it weze to flit
From bed unto the pit,
From pit unto pain
That nere shall cease again,
He would not do one sin
All the world to win.
Inscript. marmori in Eccles. paroch. de Feversham in agro Cantiano.

when the man feels his blood boil, or his bones weary, or his flesh diseased with a load of a dispersed and disordered humour, or his head to ache, or his faculties discomposed, then he must consider, that all those discourses he hath heard concerning patience and resignation, and conformity to Christ's sufferings, and the melancholy lectures of the cross, must, all of them, now be reduced to practice, and pass from an ineffective contemplation to such an exercise, as will really try whether we were true disciples of the cross, or only believed the doctrines of religion, when we were at ease, and that they never passed through the ear to the heart, and dwelt not in our spirits. But every man should consider, God does nothing in vain; that he would not to no purpose send us preachers, and give us rules, and furnish us with discourse, and lend us books, and provide sermons, and make examples, and promise his Spirit, and describe the blessedness of holy sufferings, and prepare us with daily alarms, if he did not really purpose to order our affairs, so that we should need all this, and use it all. There were no such thing as the grace of patience, if we were not to feel a sickness, or enter into a state of sufferings; whither, when we are entered, we are to practise by the following rules.

The Practice and Acts of Patience, by way of Rule.

1. At the first address and presence of sickness, stand still and arrest thy spirit, that it may, without amazement or affright, consider, that this was that thou lookedst for, and wert always certain should happen; and that now thou art to enter into the actions of a new religion, the agony of a strange constitution; but at no hand suffer thy spirits to be dispersed with fear, or wildness of thought, but stay their looseness and dispersion by a serious consideration of the present and future employment. For so doth the Libyan lion, spying the fierce huntsman, first beats himself with the strokes of his tail, and curls up his spirits, making them strong with union and recollection, till, being struck with a Mauritanian spear, he rushes forth into his defence and noblest contention; and either 'scapes into the secrets of his own dwelling, or else dies the bravest of the forest. Every man, when shot with an arrow from God's quiver, must then draw in all the auxiliaries of reason, and know, that then is the time to try his strength, and to reduce the words of his religion into action; and consider, that if he behaves himself weakly and timorously, he suffers nevertheless of sickness; but if he returns to health, he carries along with him the mark of a coward and a fool; and if he descends into his grave, he enters into the state of the faithless and unbelievers. Let him set his heart firm upon this resolution; "I must bear it inevitably, and I will, by God's grace, do it nobly."

2. Bear in thy sickness all along the same thoughts, propositions, and discourses, concerning thy person, thy life and death, thy soul and religion, which thou hadst in the best days of thy health, and when thou didst discourse wisely concerning things spiritual. For it is to be supposed (and if it be not yet done, let this rule remind thee of it, and direct thee) that thou hast cast about in thy health, and considered concerning thy change and the evil day, that thou must be sick and die, that thou must need a comforter, and that it was certain, thou shouldst fall into a state, in which all the cords of thy anchor should be stretched, and the very rock and foundation of faith should be attempted; and whatsoever fancies may disturb you, or whatsoever weaknesses may invade you, yet consider, when you were better able to judge and govern the accidents of your life, you concluded it necessary to trust in God, and possess your souls with patience. Think of things, as they think that stand by you, and as you did when you stood by others; that it is a blessed thing to be patient; that a quietness of spirit hath a certain reward; that still there is infinite truth and reality in the promises of the gospel; that still thou art in the care of God, in the condition of a son, and working out thy salvation with labour and pain, with fear and trembling; that now the sun is under a cloud, but it still sends forth the same influence: and be sure to make no new principles upon the stock of a quick and an impatient sense, or too busy an apprehension: keep your old principles, and, upon their stock, discourse and practise on towards your conclusion.

3. Resolve to bear your sickness like a child, that is, without considering the evils and the pains, the sorrows and the danger; but go straight forward, and let thy thoughts cast about for nothing, but how to make advantages of it by the instrument of religion. He that from a high tower looks down upon the precipice, and measures the space through which he must descend, and considers what a huge fall he shall have, shall feel more by the horror of it than by the last dash on the pavement: and he that tells his groans and numbers his sighs, and reckons one for every gripe of his belly or throb of his distempered pulse, will make an artificial sickness greater than the natural. And if thou beest ashamed that a child should bear an evil better than thou, then take his instrument, and allay thy spirit with it; reflect not upon thy evil, but contrive as much as you can for duty, and, in all the rest, inconsideration will ease your pain.

4. If then thou fearest thou shalt need, observe and draw together all such things as are apt to charm thy spirit, and ease thy fancy in the sufferance. It is the counsel of Socrates: "It is (said he) a great danger, and you must, by discourse and arts of reasoning, enchant it into slumber and some rest." [x] It may be, thou wert moved much to see a person of honour to die untimely; or thou didst love the religion of that death-bed, and it was dressed up in circumstances fitted to thy needs, and hit thee on that part where thou wert most sensible; or some little saying in a sermon or passage of a book was chosen and singled out by a peculiar apprehension, and made consent lodge awhile in thy spirit, even then, when thou didst place death in thy meditation, and didst view it in all its dress of fancy.

[x] Καλὸς γὰρ ὁ κίνδυνος, καὶ χρὴ τὰ τοιαῦτα ὥσπερ ἐπάδειν ἑαυτῷ.

Whatsoever that was, which, at any time, did please thee in thy most passionate and fantastic part, let not that go, but bring it home at that time especially; because when thou art in thy weakness, such little things will easier move thee than a more severe discourse and a better reason. For a sick man is like a scrupulous: his case is gone beyond the cure of arguments, and it is a trouble, that can only be helped by chance, or a lucky saying: and Ludovico Corbinelli was moved at the death of Henry the Second, more than if he had read the saddest elegy of all the unfortunate princes in christendom, or all the sad sayings of Scripture, or the threnes of the funeral prophets. I deny not but this course is most proper to weak persons; but it is a state of weakness, for which we are now providing remedies and instruction: a strong man will not need it; but when our sickness hath rendered us weak in all senses, it is not good to refuse a remedy, because it supposes us to be sick. But then, if to the catalogue of weak persons we add all those who are ruled by fancy, we shall find, that many persons in their health, and more in their sickness, are under the dominion of fancy, and apt to be helped by those little things, which themselves have found fitted to their apprehension, and which no other man can minister to their needs, unless by chance, or in a heap of other things. But therefore every man should remember, by what instruments he was at any time much moved, and try them upon his spirit in the day of his calamity.

5. Do not choose the kind of thy sickness, or the manner of thy death; but let it be what God please, so it be no greater than thy spirit or thy patience: and for that you are to rely upon the promise of God, and to secure thyself by prayer and industry; but in all things else let God be thy chooser, and let it be thy work to submit indifferently, and attend thy duty. It is lawful to beg of God, that thy sickness may not be sharp or noisome, infectious or unusual, because these are circumstances of evil, which are also proper instruments of temptation: and though it may well concern the prudence of thy religion to fear thyself, and keep thee from violent temptations, who hast so often fallen in little ones; yet, even in these things, be sure to keep some degrees of indifferency; that is, if God will not be entreated to ease thee, or to change thy trial, then be importunate that thy spirit and its interest be secured, and let him do what seemeth good in his eyes. But as in the degrees of sickness thou art to submit to God, so in the kind of it (supposing equal degrees) thou art to be altogether incurious, whether God call thee by a consumption or an asthma, by a dropsy or a palsy, by a fever in thy humours or a fever in thy spirits; because all such nicety of choice is nothing but a colour to a legitimate impatience, and to make an excuse to murmur privately, and for circumstances, when in the sum of affairs we durst not own impatience. I have known some persons vehemently wish, that they might die of a consumption, and some of these had a plot upon heaven, and hoped by that means to secure it after a careless life; as thinking a lingering sickness would certainly infer a lingering and a protracted repentance; and, by that means, they thought, they should be safest: others of them dreamed it would be an easier death; and have found themselves deceived, and their patience hath been tired with a weary spirit and a useless body, by often conversing with healthful persons and vigorous neighbours, by uneasiness of the flesh and the sharpness of their bones, by want of spirits and a dying life; and, in conclusion, have been directly debauched by peevishness and a fretful sickness: and these men had better have left it to the wisdom and goodness of God; for they both are infinite.

6. Be patient in the desires of religion: and take care that the frowardness of exterior actions do not discompose thy spirit; while thou fearest, that, by less serving God in thy disability, thou runnest backward in the accounts of pardon and the favour of God. Be content, that the time, which was formerly spent in prayer, be now spent in vomiting and carefulness, and attendances; since God hath pleased it should be so, it does not become us to think hard thoughts concerning it. Do not think, that God is only to be found in a great prayer, or a solemn office; he is moved by a sigh, by a groan, by an act of love: and therefore, when your pain is great and pungent, lay all your strength upon it, to bear it patiently; when the evil is something more tolerable, let your mind think some pious, though short, meditation: let it not be very busy, and full of attention; for that will be but a new temptation to your patience, and render your religion tedious and hateful. But record your desires, and present yourself to God by general acts of will and understanding, and by habitual remembrances of your former vigorousness, and by verification of the same grace, rather than proper exercises. If you can do more, do it; but if you cannot, let it not become a scruple to thee. We must not think man is tied to the forms of health, or that he who swoons and faints is obliged to his usual forms and hours of prayer: if we cannot labour, yet let us love. Nothing can hinder us from that, but our own uncharitableness.

7. Be obedient to thy physician in those things that concern him, if he be a person fit to minister unto thee. God is he only that needs no help,[y] and God hath created the physician for thine; therefore use him temperately, without violent confidences; and sweetly, without uncivil distrustings, or refusing his prescriptions upon humours or impotent fear. A man may refuse to have his arm or leg cut off, or to suffer the pains of Marius's incision; and if he believes, that to die is the less evil, he may compose himself to it, without hazarding his patience, or introducing that which he thinks a worse evil; but that which, in this article, is to be reproved and avoided, is, that some men will choose to die out of fear of death, and send for physicians, and do what themselves list, and call for counsel, and

[y] Ipsi ceu vi Deo est opus; apud Senecam. Scaliger rectè emendat, ipsi ceu Deo, &c. Ex Græco scilicet, Μόνος Θεὸς ἀνελλιπὴς καὶ ἀνενδεής.

follow none. When there is reason they should decline him, it is not to be accounted to the stock of a sin; but where there is no just cause, there is a direct impatience.

Hither is to be reduced, that we be not too confident of the physician, or drain our hopes of recovery from the fountain through so imperfect channels; laying the wells of God dry, and digging to ourselves broken cisterns. Physicians are the ministers of God's mercies and providence, in the matter of health and ease, of restitution or death; and when God shall enable their judgments, and direct their counsels, and prosper their medicines, they shall do thee good, for which you must give God thanks, and to the physician the honour of a blessed instrument. But this cannot always be done; and Lucius Cornelius,[z] the lieutenant in Portugal under Fabius the consul, boasted in the inscription of his monument, that he had lived a healthful and vegete age till his last sickness, but then complained he was forsaken by his physician, and railed upon Æsculapius, for not accepting his vow and passionate desire of preserving his life longer; and all the effect of that impatience and folly was, that it is recorded to following ages, that he died without reason and without religion. But it was a sad sight to see the favour of all France confined to a physician and a barber, and the king (Louis XI.) to be so much their servant, that he should acknowledge and own his life from them, and all his ease to their gentle dressing of his gout and friendly ministries; for the king thought himself undone and robbed, if he should die: his portion here was fair; and he was loath to exchange his possession for the interest of a bigger hope.[a]

8. Treat thy nurses and servants sweetly, and as it becomes an obliged and a necessitous person. Remember, that thou art very troublesome to them; that they trouble not thee willingly; that they strive to do thee ease and benefit, that they wish it, and sigh and pray for it, and are glad if thou likest their attendance: that whatsoever is amiss, is thy disease, and the uneasiness of thy head, or thy side, thy distemper or thy disaffections; and it will be an unhandsome injustice to be troublesome to them, because thou art so to thyself; to make them feel a part of thy sorrows, that thou mayest not bear them alone; evilly to requite their care by thy too curious and impatient wrangling and fretful spirit. That tenderness is vicious and unnatural, that shrieks out under the weight of a gentle cataplasm; and he will ill comply with God's rod, that cannot endure his friend's greatest kindness; and he will be very angry (if he durst) with God's smiting him, that is peevish with his servants that go about to ease him.

9. Let not the smart of your sickness make you to call violently for death: you are not patient, unless you be content to live;[b] God hath wisely ordered that we may be the better reconciled with death, because it is the period of many calamities; but wherever the general hath placed thee, stir not from thy station, until thou beest called off, but abide so, that death may come to thee by the design of him, who intends it to be thy advantage. God hath made sufferance to be thy work; and do not impatiently long for evening, lest, at night, thou findest the reward of him that was weary of his work: for he that is weary before his time, is an unprofitable servant, and is either idle or diseased.

10. That which remains in the practice of this grace, is, that the sick man should do acts of patience by way of prayer and ejaculations: in which he may serve himself of the following collection.

SECTION II.

Acts of Patience by way of Prayer and Ejaculation.

I WILL seek unto God, unto God will I commit my cause, which doth great things and unsearchable, marvellous things without number. Job v. 8, 9, 11, 16—20.

To set up on high those that be low, that those which mourn may be exalted to safety.

So the poor have hope, and iniquity stoppeth her mouth.

Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty.

For he maketh sore, and bindeth up; he woundeth, and his hands make whole.

He shall deliver thee in six troubles; yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee.

Thou shalt come to thy grave in a just age, like as a shock of corn cometh in his season.

I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate upon thee in the night watches. Because thou hast been my help, therefore under the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice. My soul followeth hard after thee; for thy right hand hath upholden me. Psalm lxiii. 6—8.

God restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the path of righteousness, for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me. Psalm xxiii. 3, 4.

In the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me, he shall set me up upon a rock. Psalm xxvii. 5.

The Lord hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from the heaven did the Lord behold the earth: to hear the groaning of his prisoners; to loose those that are appointed to death. Psalm cii. 19, 20.

[z] L. Cornel. legatus sub Fabio consule vividam naturam et virilem animum servavi, quoad animam efflavi; et tandem desertus ope medicorum et Æsculapii Dei ingrati, cui me voveram sodalem perpetuò futurum, si fila aliquantulùm optata protulisset.—Vetus Inscriptio in Lusitaniâ.

[a] ——— Nunc omnibus anxius aris
Illacrymat, signatque fores, et pectore tergit
Limina; nunc frustrà vocat exorabile numen.
PAPIN. lib. v.

[b] Ἀποκαρτερεῖν Græci vocant, cùm mors propter impatientiam petitur.

I cried unto God with my voice, even unto God with my voice, and he gave ear unto me. In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord; my sore ran in the night and ceased not; my soul refused to be comforted, I remembered God, and was troubled: I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed. Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so troubled that I cannot speak. Will the Lord cast me off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? Is his promise clean gone for ever? Doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? And I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High. Psalm lxxvii. 1—4, 7—10.

No temptation hath taken me, but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer me to be tempted above what I am able; but will, with the temptation, also make a way to escape, that I may be able to bear it. 1 Cor. x. 13.

Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning; that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope. Now the God of peace and consolation grant me to be so minded. Rom. xv. 4, 5.

It is the Lord: let him do what seemeth good in his eyes. 1 Sam. iii. 18.

Surely the word that the Lord hath spoken is very good; but thy servant is weak: O remember mine infirmities; and lift thy servant up, that leaneth upon thy right hand.

There is given unto me a thorn in the flesh to buffet me. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For when I am weak, then am I strong. 2 Cor. xii. 7—10.

O Lord, thou hast pleaded the causes of my soul; thou hast redeemed my life. And I said, My strength and my hope is in the Lord; remembering my affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall. My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled within me. This I recall to my mind, therefore I have hope.

It is the Lord's mercies, that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness. The Lord is my portion, said my soul; therefore will I hope in him.

The Lord is good to them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him. It is good, that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. For the Lord will not cast off for ever. But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion, according to the multitude of his mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men. Lam. iii. 58, 18—26, 31—33, 39.

Wherefore doth a living man complain? a man for the punishment of his sins? O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave [of Jesus], that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me! Job xiv. 13.

Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? Job ii. 20.

[The sick man may recite, or hear recited, the following Psalms in the intervals of his agony.]

I.

O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure. Psalm vi.

Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak; O Lord, heal me, for my bones are vexed.

My soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O Lord, how long?

Return, O Lord, deliver my soul: O save me, for thy mercies' sake.

For in death no man remembereth thee: in the grave, who shall give thee thanks?

I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim: I water my couch with my tears.

Mine eye is consumed because of grief; it waxeth old because of all my [*sorrows*].

Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping.

The Lord hath heard my supplication: the Lord will receive my prayer.

Blessed be the Lord, who hath heard my prayer, and hath not turned his mercy from me.

II.

In the Lord put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain? Psalm xi.

The Lord is in his holy temple; the Lord's throne is in heaven; his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men.

Preserve me, O God, for in thee do I put my trust. Psalm xvi. 1.

O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord; my goodness extendeth not to thee.

The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot.

I will bless the Lord who hath given me counsel: my reins also instruct me in the night seasons.

I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth; my flesh also shall rest in hope.

Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is the fulness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness. Psalm xvii.

III.

Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am in trouble: mine eye is consumed with grief; yea, my soul and my belly. Psalm xxxi.

For my life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing: my strength faileth because of mine iniquity, and my bones are consumed.

I am like a broken vessel.

But I trusted in thee, O Lord; I said, Thou art my God.

My times are in thy hand: make thy face to shine upon thy servant: save me, for thy mercy's sake.

When thou saidst, Seek ye my face, my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek. Psalm xxvii.

Hide not thy face from me; put not thy servant away in thine anger: thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.

I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

O how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men! Psalm xxxi.

Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man: thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues [*from the calumnies and aggravation of sins by devils*].

I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine eyes; nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplication when I cried unto thee.

O love the Lord, all ye his saints; for the Lord preserveth the faithful, and plenteously rewardeth the proud doer.

Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord.

The Prayer to be said in the Beginning of a Sickness.

O Almighty God, merciful and gracious, who, in thy justice, didst send sorrow and tears, sickness and death, into the world, as a punishment for man's sins, and hast comprehended all under sin, and this sad covenant of sufferings, not to destroy us, but that thou mightest have mercy upon all, making thy justice to minister to mercy, short afflictions to an eternal weight of glory; as thou hast turned my sins into sickness, so turn my sickness to the advantages of holiness and religion, of mercy and pardon, of faith and hope, of grace and glory. Thou hast now called me to the fellowship of sufferings: Lord, by the instrument of religion let my present condition be so sanctified, that my sufferings may be united to the sufferings of my Lord, that so thou mayest pity me and assist me. Relieve my sorrow, and support my spirit: direct my thoughts, and sanctify the accidents of my sickness, and that the punishment of my sin may be the school of virtue: in which, since thou hast now entered me, Lord, make me a holy proficient; that I may behave myself as a son under discipline, humbly and obediently, evenly and penitently, that I may come by this means nearer unto thee; that if I shall go forth of this sickness by the gate of life and health, I may return to the world with great strengths of spirit, to run a new race of a stricter holiness and a more severe religion: or if I pass from hence with the outlet of death, I may enter into the bosom of my Lord, and may feel the present joys of a certain hope of that sea of pleasures, in which all thy saints and servants shall be comprehended to eternal ages. Grant this for Jesus Christ's sake, our dearest Lord and Saviour. Amen.

An Act of Resignation to be said by a Sick Person in all the evil Accidents of his Sickness.

O eternal God, thou hast made me and sustained me; thou hast blessed me in all the days of my life, and hast taken care of me in all variety of accidents; and nothing happens to me in vain, nothing without thy providence; and I know thou smitest thy servants in mercy, and with designs of the greatest pity in the world: Lord, I humbly lie down under thy rod; do with me as thou pleasest; do thou choose for me, not only the whole state and condition of being, but every little and great accident of it. Keep me safe by thy grace, and then use what instrument thou pleasest, of bringing me to thee. Lord, I am not solicitous of the passage, so I may get to thee. Only, O Lord, remember my infirmities, and let thy servant rejoice in thee always, and feel, and confess, and glory in thy goodness. O be thou as delightful to me in this my medicinal sickness, as ever thou wert in any of the dangers of my prosperity: let me not peevishly refuse thy pardon at the rate of a severe discipline. I am thy servant and thy creature, thy purchased possession, and thy son: I am all thine: and because thou hast mercy in store for all that trust in thee, I cover mine eyes, and in silence wait for the time of my redemption. Amen.

A Prayer for the Grace of Patience.

Most merciful and gracious Father, who, in the redemption of lost mankind by the passion of thy most holy Son, hast established a covenant of sufferings, I bless and magnify thy name, that thou hast adopted me into the inheritance of sons, and hast given me a portion of my elder Brother. Lord, the cross falls heavy and sits uneasy upon my shoulders; my spirit is willing, but my flesh is weak: I humbly beg of thee that I may now rejoice in this thy dispensation and effect of providence. I know and am persuaded, that thou art then as gracious, when thou smitest us for amendment or trial, as when thou relievest our wearied bodies in compliance with our infirmity. I rejoice, O Lord, in thy rare and mysterious mercy, who, by sufferings, hast turned our misery into advantages unspeakable; for so thou makest us like to thy Son, and givest us a gift, that the angels never did receive; for they cannot die in conformity to, and imitation of, their Lord and ours; but blessed be thy name, we can; and, dearest Lord, let it be so. Amen.

II.

Thou, who art the God of patience and consolation, strengthen me in the inner man, that I may bear the yoke and burden of the Lord without any uneasy and useless murmurs and ineffective unwillingness. Lord, I am unable to stand under the cross, unable of myself: but thou, O holy Jesus, who didst feel the burden of it, who didst sink under it, and wert pleased to admit a man to bear

part of the load, when thou underwentest all for him, be thou pleased to ease this load by fortifying my spirit, that I may be strongest when I am weakest, and may be able to do and suffer every thing thou pleasest, through Christ, who strengthens me. Lord, if thou wilt support me, I will for ever praise thee: if thou wilt suffer the load to press me yet more heavily, I will cry unto thee, and complain unto my God; and at last I will lie down and die, and by the mercies and intercession of the holy Jesus, and the conduct of thy blessed Spirit, and the ministry of angels, pass into those mansions, where holy souls rest, and weep no more. Lord, pity me; Lord, sanctify this my sickness; Lord, strengthen me; holy Jesus, save me, and deliver me. Thou knowest how shamefully I have fallen with pleasure: in thy mercy and very pity, let me not fall with pain too. O let me never charge God foolishly, nor offend thee by my impatience and uneasy spirit, nor weaken the hands and hearts of those, that charitably minister to my needs; but let me pass through the valley of tears and the valley of the shadow of death with safety and peace, with a meek spirit and a sense of the Divine mercies; and though thou breakest me in pieces, my hope is thou wilt gather me up in the gatherings of eternity. Grant this, eternal God, gracious Father, for the merits and intercession of our merciful High Priest, who once suffered for me, and for ever intercedes for me, our most gracious and ever-blessed Saviour Jesus.

A Prayer to be said when the Sick Man takes Physic.

O most blessed and eternal Jesus, thou, who art the great Physician of our souls, and the Sun of righteousness arising with healing in thy wings, to thee is given by thy heavenly Father the government of all the world, and thou disposest every great and little accident to thy Father's honour, and to the good and comfort of them that love and serve thee: be pleased to bless the ministry of thy servant in order to my ease and health, direct his judgment, prosper the medicines, and dispose the chances of my sickness fortunately, that I may feel the blessing and loving-kindness of the Lord in the ease of my pain and the restitution of my health: that I, being restored to the society of the living, and to thy solemn assemblies, may praise thee and thy goodness, secretly among the faithful, and in the congregation of thy redeemed ones, here in the outer-courts of the Lord, and hereafter in thy eternal temple for ever and ever. Amen.

SECTION III.

Of the Practice of the Grace of Faith in the Time of Sickness.

Now is the time, in which the faith appears most necessary, and most difficult. It is the foundation of a good life, and the foundation of all our hopes: it is that, without which we cannot live well, and without which we cannot die well: it is a grace that then we shall need to support our spirits, to sustain our hopes, to alleviate our sickness, to resist temptation, to prevent despair; upon the belief of the articles of our religion, we can do the works of a holy life; but upon belief of the promises, we can bear our sickness patiently, and die cheerfully. The sick man may practise it in the following instances.

1. Let the sick man be careful, that he do not admit of any doubt concerning that, which he believed and received from a common consent in his best health and days of election and religion. For if the devil can but prevail so far as to unfix and unrivet the resolution and confidence or fulness of assent, it is easy for him so to unwind the spirit, that from *why* to *whether or no*, from *whether or no* to *scarcely not*, from *scarcely not* to *absolutely not at all*, are steps of a descending and falling spirit: and whatsoever a man is made to doubt of by the weakness of his understanding in a sickness, it will be hard to get an instrument strong and subtle enough to reinforce and insure: for when the strengths are gone, by which faith held, and it does not stand firm by the weight of its own bulk and great constitution, nor yet by the cordage of a tenacious root; then it is prepared for a ruin, which it cannot escape in the tempests of a sickness and the assaults of a devil. Discourse and argument, the line of tradition and a never-failing experience, the Spirit of God and the truth of miracles, the word of prophecy and the blood of martyrs, the excellency of the doctrine and the necessity of men, the riches of the promises and the wisdom of the revelations, the reasonableness and sublimity, the concordance and the usefulness, of the articles, and their compliance with all the needs of man, and the government of commonwealths, are like the strings and branches of the roots, by which faith stands firm and unmovable in the spirit and understanding of a man. But in sickness, the understanding is shaken, and the ground is removed in which the root did grapple, and support its trunk;[c] and therefore there is no way now, but that it be left to stand upon the old confidences, and by the firmament of its own weight; it must be left to stand, because it always stood there before: and as it stood all its life-time in the ground of understanding, so it must now be supported with will, and a fixed resolution.[d] But disputation tempts it, and shakes it with trying, and overthrows it with shaking. Above all things in the world, let the sick man fear a proposition, which his sickness hath put into him, contrary to the discourses of health and a sober, untroubled reason.

2. Let the sick man mingle the recital of his creed together with his devotions, and in that let him account his faith; not in curiosity and factions, in the confessions of parties and interests:[e] for some over-forward zeals are so earnest to profess their little and uncertain articles, and glory so to die in a

[c] Non jam validis radicibus hærens, Pondere fixa suo—.

[d] Sanctiusque ac reverentius visum de actis Deorum credere quàm scire.—Tacit.

[e] Fides tua te salvum faciet: non exercitatio Scripturarum. Fides in regulâ posita est; (scil. in symbolo quod jam recitaverat) habet legem, et salutem de observatione legis: exerci-

particular and divided communion, that, in the profession of their faith, they lose or discompose their charity. Let it be enough, that we secure our interest of heaven, though we do not go about to appropriate the mansions to our sect: for every good man hopes to be saved, as he is a christian, and not as he is a Lutheran, or of another division. However, those articles, upon which he can build the exercise of any virtue in his sickness, or upon the stock of which he can improve his present condition, are such as consist in the greatness and goodness, the veracity and mercy, of God through Jesus Christ; nothing of which can be concerned in the fond disputations, which faction and interest hath too long maintained in christendom.

3. Let the sick man's faith especially be active about the promises of grace, and the excellent things of the gospel; those, which can comfort his sorrows, enable his patience; those, upon the hopes of which he did the duties of his life, and for which he is not unwilling to die: such as the intercession and advocation of Christ, remission of sins, the resurrection, the mysterious arts and mercies of man's redemption, Christ's triumph over death, and all the powers of hell, the covenant of grace, or the blessed issues of repentance; and, above all, the article of eternal life, upon the strength of which eleven thousand virgins went cheerfully together to their martyrdom, and twenty thousand Christians were burned by Dioclesian on a christmas-day, and whole armies of Asian christians offered themselves to the tribunals of Arius Antonius, and whole colleges of severe persons were instituted, who lived upon religion, whose dinner was the eucharist, whose supper was praise, and their nights were watches, and their days were labour; for the hope of which, then, men counted it gain to lose their estates, and gloried in their sufferings, and rejoiced in their persecutions, and were glad at their disgraces. This is the article, that hath made all the martyrs of Christ confident and glorious; and if it does not more than sufficiently strengthen our spirits to the present suffering, it is because we understand it not, but have the appetites of beasts and fools. But if the sick man fixes his thoughts and sets his habitation to dwell here, he swells his hope, and masters his fears, and eases his sorrows, and overcomes his temptations.

4. Let the sick man endeavour to turn his faith of the articles into the love of them: and that will be an excellent instrument, not only to refresh his sorrows, but to confirm his faith in defiance of all temptations. For a sick man and a disturbed understanding are not competent and fit instruments to judge concerning the reasonableness of a proposition. But therefore let him consider and love it, because it is useful and necessary, profitable and gracious: and when he is once in love with it, and then also renews his love to it, when he feels the need of it, he is an interested person, and for his own sake will never let it go, and pass into the shadows of doubting, or the utter darkness of infidelity. An act of love will make him have a mind to it; and we easily believe what we love, but very uneasily part with our belief, which we for so great an interest have chosen, and entertained with a great affection.

5. Let the sick person be infinitely careful, that his faith be not tempted by any man, or any thing; and when it is in any degree weakened, let him lay fast hold upon the conclusion, upon the article itself, and by earnest prayer beg of God to guide him in certainty and safety. For let him consider, that the article is better than all its contrary or contradictory, and he is concerned that it be true, and concerned, also, that he do believe it: but he can receive no good at all, if Christ did not die, if there be no resurrection, if his creed hath deceived him; therefore all that he is to do, is to secure his hold, which he can do no way but by prayer and by his interest. And by this argument or instrument it was, that Socrates refreshed the evil of his condition, when he was to drink his aconite.[f] "If the soul be immortal, and perpetual rewards be laid up for wise souls, then I lose nothing by my death: but if there be not, then I lose nothing by my opinion; for it supports my spirit in my passage, and the evil of being deceived cannot overtake me, when I have no being." So it is with all that are tempted in their faith. If those articles be not true, then the men are nothing; if they be true, then they are happy: and if the articles fail, there can be no punishment for believing; but if they be true, my not believing destroys all my portion in them, and possibility to receive the excellent things which they contain. By faith we quench the fiery darts of the devil: but if our faith be quenched, wherewithal shall we be able to endure the assault? Therefore seize upon the article, and secure the great object, and the great instrument, that is, the hopes of pardon and eternal life through Jesus Christ; and do this by all means, and by any instrument, artificial or inartificial, by argument or by stratagem, by perfect resolution or by discourse, by the hand and ears of premises or the foot of the conclusion, by right or by wrong, because we understand it, or because we love it, *super totam materiam;* because I will, and because I ought; because it is safe to do so, and because it is not safe to do otherwise; because if I do, I may receive a good; and because if I do not, I am miserable; either for that I shall have a portion of sorrows, or that I can have no portion of good things, without it.

tatio autem in curiositate consistit, habens gloriam solam de peritiæ studio. Cedat curiositas fidei; cedat gloria saluti.—Tert. de Præscript. St. Augustinus vocat symbolum comprehensionem fidei vestræ atque perfectionem; cordis signaculum, et nostræ militiæ sacramentum.—Amb lib. iii. de Veland. Virgin. Aug. serm. 115. Non per difficiles nos Deus ad beatam vitam quæstiones vocat. In absoluto nobis et facili est æternitas; Jesum suscitatum à mortuis per Deum credere, et ipsum esse Dominum confiteri.—St. Hilar. lib. 10. de Trinit. Hæc est fides Catholica, de symbolo suo dixit Athanasius, vel quicunque auctor est St. Athanas. de Fide Nicenâ.

Γὰρ ἐν αὐτῇ παρὰ τῶν πατέρων κατὰ τὰς θείας γραφὰς ὁμολογηθεῖσα πίστις αὐτάρκης ἐστὶ πρὸς ἀνατροπὴν μὲν πάσης ἀσεβείας, σύστασιν δὲ τῆς εὐσεβείας ἐν Χριστῷ.—Ep. ad Epict.

[f] In Phædon.

SECTION IV.

Acts of Faith, by way of Prayer and Ejaculation, to be said by Sick Men, in the Days of their Temptation.

LORD, whither shall I go? thou hast the words of eternal life. John vi. 68.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, &c.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, &c.

Lord, I believe: help thou mine unbelief. Mark ix. 24.

I know and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself: for whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's. Rom. xiv. 14, 7, 8.

If God be for us, who can be against us? Rom. viii. 31—34.

He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him give us all things?

Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God; who also maketh intercession for us.

If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins. 1 John ii. 1, 2.

This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, That Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. 1 Tim. i. 15.

O grant that I may obtain mercy, that in me Jesus Christ may show forth all long-suffering, that I may believe in him to life everlasting.

I am bound to give thanks unto God alway, because God hath from the beginning chosen me to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, whereunto he called me by the gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14, 16, 17.

Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace, comfort my heart, and stablish me in every good word and work.

The Lord direct my heart into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ. 2 Thess. iii. 5.

O that our God would count me worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power; that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in me, and I in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Thess. i. 11, 12.

Let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for an helmet the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another. 1 Thess. v. 8—10, 12.

There is no name under heaven, whereby we can be saved, but only the name of the Lord Jesus. Acts iv. 12. And every soul which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. Acts iii. 23.

God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of Jesus Christ. Gal. vi. 14. I desire to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified. 1 Cor. ii. 2. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. Phil. i. 21.

Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of? Isa. ii. 22. But the just shall live by faith. Hab. ii. 4.

Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, John xi. 27. the Saviour of the world, John iv. 42. the resurrection and the life; and he that believeth in thee, though he were dead, yet shall he live. John xi. 25, 40.

Jesus said unto her, Said I not to thee, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?

O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Lord, make me stedfast and unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; for I know that my labour is not in vain in the Lord. 1 Cor. xv. 55—58.

The Prayer for the Grace and Strengths of Faith.

O holy and eternal Jesus, who didst die for me and all mankind, abolishing our sin, reconciling us to God, adopting us into the portion of thine heritage, and establishing with us a covenant of faith and obedience, making our souls to rely upon spiritual strengths, by the supports of a holy belief, and the expectation of rare promises, and the infallible truths of God; O let me for ever dwell upon the rock, leaning upon thy arm, believing thy word, trusting in thy promises, waiting for thy mercies, and doing thy commandments; that the devil may not prevail upon me, and my own weaknesses may not abuse or unsettle my persuasions, nor my sins discompose my just confidence in thee and thy eternal mercies. Let me always be thy servant and thy disciple, and die in the communion of thy church, of all faithful people. Lord, I renounce whatsoever is against thy truth; and if secretly I have, or do believe, any false proposition, I do it in the simplicity of my heart and great weakness; and if I could discover it, would dash it in pieces by a solemn disclaiming it; for thou art the way, the truth, and the life. And I know, that whatsoever thou hast declared, that is the truth of God; and I do firmly adhere to the religion thou hast taught, and glory in nothing so much as that I am a christian, that thy name is called upon me. O my God, though I die, yet will I put my trust in thee. In thee, O Lord, have I trusted; let me never be confounded. Amen.

SECTION V.

Of the Practice of the Grace of Repentance in the Time of Sickness.

MEN generally do very much dread sudden death, and pray against it passionately; and certainly it hath in it great inconveniences accidentally to men's estates, to the settlement of families, to the culture and trimming of souls, and it robs a man of the blessings which may be consequent to sickness, and to the passive graces and holy contentions of a christian, while he descends to his grave without an adversary or a trial:[g] and a good man may be taken at such a disadvantage, that a sudden death would be a great evil, even to the most excellent person, if it strikes him in an unlucky circumstance. But these considerations are not the only ingredients into those men's discourse, who pray violently against sudden deaths; for possibly, if this were all, there may be in the condition of sudden death something to make recompence for the evils of the over-hasty accident. For certainly, it is a less temporal evil to fall by the rudeness of a sword than the violences of a fever, and the axe is much a less affliction than a strangury; and though a sickness tries our virtues, yet a sudden death is free from temptation; a sickness may be more glorious, and a sudden death more safe. The deadest deaths are best, the shortest and least premeditate,[h] so Cæsar said; and Pliny called a short death the greatest fortune of a man's life. For even good men have been forced to an indecency of deportment by the violences of pain:[i] and Cicero observes concerning Hercules, that he was broken in pieces with pain even then, when he sought for immortality by his death, being tortured with a plague, knit up in the lappet of his shirt.[k] And therefore as a sudden death certainly loses the rewards of a holy sickness, so it makes, that a man shall not so much hazard and lose the rewards of a holy life.

But the secret of this affair is a worse matter: men live at that rate, either of an habitual wickedness, or else a frequent repetition of single acts of killing and deadly sins, that a sudden death is the ruin of all their hopes, and a perfect consignation to an eternal sorrow. But in this case, also, so is a lingering sickness: for our sickness may change us from life to health, from health to strength, from strength to the firmness and confirmation of habitual graces; but it cannot change a man from death to life, and begin and finish that process, which sits not down but in the bosom of blessedness. He that washes in the morning, when his bath is seasonable and healthful,[l] is not only made clean, but sprightly, and the blood is brisk and coloured like the first springing of the morning; but they that wash their dead, cleanse the skin, and leave paleness upon the cheek, and stiffness in all the joints. A repentance upon our death-bed is like washing the corpse: it is cleanly and civil; but makes no change deeper than the skin. But God knows, it is a custom so to wash them that are going to dwell with dust, and to be buried in the lap of their kindred earth,[m] but all their lives-time wallow in pollutions without any washing at all; or if they do, it is like that of the Dardani,[n] who washed but thrice all their life-time, when they are born, and when they marry, and when they die; when they are baptized, or against a solemnity, or for the day of their funeral: but these are but ceremonious washings, and never purify the soul, if it be stained, and hath sullied the whiteness of its baptismal robes.

God intended we should live a holy life: he contracted with us in Jesus Christ for a holy life: he made no abatements of the strictest sense of it,[o] but such as did necessarily comply with human infirmities or possibilities; that is, he understood it in the sense of repentance, which still is so to renew our duty, that it may be a holy life in the second sense; that is, some great portion of our life to be spent in living as christians should. A resolving to repent upon our death-bed, is the greatest mockery of God in the world, and the most perfect contradictory to all his excellent designs of mercy and holiness: for therefore he threatened us with hell if we did not, and he promised heaven if we did, live a holy life; and a late repentance promises heaven to us upon other conditions,[p] even when we have lived wickedly. It renders a man useless and intolerable to the world; taking off the great curb of religion, of fear and hope, and permitting all impiety with the greatest impunity and encouragement in the world. By this means we see so many *παῖδας πολυχρονίους*,[q] as Philo calls them, or, as the prophets, *pueros centum annorum*, children of almost a hundred years old, upon whose grave we may write the inscription which was upon the tomb of Similis in Xiphilin:[r] "Here he lies, who *was* so many years, but *lived* but seven." And the course of nature runs counter to the perfect designs of piety: and God, who gave us a life to live to him, is only served at our death, when we die to all the world; and we undervalue the great promises made by the holy Jesus,[s] for which the piety, the strictest unerring piety, of ten thousand ages is not a proportionable exchange: yet we think it a hard bargain to get

[g] Descendisti ad Olympia, sed nemo præter te: coronam habes, victoriam non habes.

[h] Mitiùs ille perit, subitâ qui mergitur undâ,
Quàm sua qui liquidis brachia lassat aquis.—OVID.

[i] Etiam innocentes mentiri cogit dolor.

[k] Ipse illigatus peste interimor textili.

[l] Lavor honestâ horâ et salubri, quæ mihi et calorem et sanguinem servet: rigere et pallere post lavacrum mortuus possum.—TERTUL. Apol. c. 42.

[m] —Cognatâ fæce sepulti.

[n] *Δαρδανεῖς τοὺς ὑπὸ τῆς Ἀλλυρίδος ἀκούω τρὶς λούεσθαι μόνον παρὰ πάντα τὸν ἑαυτῶν βίον, ἐξ ὠδίνων, καὶ γαμοῦντας καὶ ἀποθανόντας.*—ÆLIAN. lib. iv. Var. Hist. cap. 1.

[o] Vide Aug. lib. 5. Hom. iv. et Serm. 57. de Tempore. Faustum ad Paulinum, Ep. 1. in Biblioth. tom. 5. vet. edit. Concil. Arelat. i. c. 3. Carthag. 4. cap. 7, 8.

[p] ——Quis luce supremâ
Dimisisse meas serò non ingemit horas?—SIL. Ital. l 15.

[q] Sic contra rerum naturæ munera nota,
Corvus maturis frugibus ova refert.

[r] In Adrian. *Σίμιλις μὲν ἐν ταῦθα κεῖται, βιοῦς κατὰ ἔτη τόσα, ζήσας δὲ ἔτη ἑπτά.*

[s] Vide the Life of Christ, Disc. of Repentance; Rule of Holy Living, chap. iv. Sect. of Repentance; and Sermons, Serm. v. vi.

heaven, if we be forced to part with one lust or live soberly twenty years; but, like Demetrius Afer, (who, having lived a slave all his life-time, yet desiring to descend to his grave in freedom,[t] begged manumission of his lord,) we lived in the bondage of our sin all our days, and hope to die the Lord's freed-men. But above all, this course of a delayed repentance must of necessity therefore be ineffective and certainly mortal, because it is an entire destruction of the very formality and essential constituent reason of religion: which I thus demonstrate.

When God made man, and propounded to him an immortal and a blessed state, as the end of his hopes and the perfection of his condition, he did not give it him for nothing, but upon certain conditions; which, although they could add nothing to God, yet they were such things, which man could value, and they were his best; and God had made appetites of pleasure in man, that in them the scene of his obedience should lie. For when God made instances of man's obedience, he, 1. either commanded such things to be done, which man did naturally desire; or, 2. such things which contradict his natural desires; or, 3. such which were indifferent. Not the first and the last: for it could be no effect of love or duty towards God for a man to eat, when he was impatiently hungry, and could not stay from eating; neither was it any contention of obedience or labour of love for a man to look eastward once a day, or turn his back when the north wind blew fierce and loud. Therefore for the trial and instance of obedience, God made his laws so, that they should lay restraint upon man's appetites, so that man might part with something of his own, that he may give to God his will, and deny it to himself for the interest of his service: and chastity is the denial of a violent desire; and justice is parting with money that might help to enrich me; and meekness is a huge contradiction to pride and revenge; and the wandering of our eyes, and the greatness of our fancy, and our imaginative opinions, are to be lessened, that we may serve God. There is no other way of serving God, we have nothing else to present unto him; we do not else give him any thing or part of ourselves, but when we, for his sake, part with what we naturally desire: and difficulty is essential to virtue, and without choice there can be no reward, and in the satisfaction of our natural desires there is no election, we run to them, as beasts to the river or the crib. If, therefore, any man shall teach or practise such a religion, that satisfies all our natural desires in the days of desires and passion, of lust and appetites, and only turns to God when his appetites are gone and his desires cease; this man hath overthrown the very being of virtues, and the essential constitution of religion: religion is no religion, and virtue is no act of choice, and reward comes by chance and without condition, if we only are religious when we cannot choose; if we part with our money when we cannot keep it; with our lust, when we cannot act it; with our desires, when they have left us. Death is a certain mortifier; but that mortification is deadly, not useful to the purposes of a spiritual life. When we are compelled to depart from our evil customs,[u] and leave to live that we may begin to live, then we die to die; that life is the prologue to death, and thenceforth we die eternally.

St. Cyril speaks of certain people, that chose to worship the sun because he was a day-god: for, believing that he was quenched every night in the sea, or that he had no influence upon them that light up candles, and lived by the light of fire, they were confident they might be atheists all night, and live as they list. Men who divide their little portion of time between religion and pleasures, between God and God's enemy, think, that God is to rule but in his certain period of time, and that our life is the stage for passion and folly, and the day of death for the work of our life. But as to God both the day and night are alike, so are the first and last of our days: all are his due, and he will account severely with us for the follies of the first and the evil of the last. The evils and the pains are great, which are reserved for those who defer their restitution to God's favour till their death.[x] And therefore Antisthenes said well, "It is not the happy death, but the happy life, that makes man happy." It is in piety as in fame and reputation: he secures a good name but loosely[y] that trusts his fame and celebrity only to his ashes; and it is more a civility than the basis of a firm reputation, that men speak honour of their departed relatives; but if their life be virtuous, it forces honour from contempt, and snatches it from the hand of envy, and it shines through the crevices of detraction; and as it anointed the head of the living, so it embalms the body of the dead.[z] From these premises it follows, that when we discourse of a sick man's repentance, it is intended to be, not a beginning, but the prosecution and consummation of the covenant of repentance, which Christ stipulated with us in baptism, and which we needed all our life, and which we began long before this last arrest, and in which we are now to make further progress, that we may arrive to that integrity and fulness of duty, "that our sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord."[a]

SECTION VI.

Rules for the Practice of Repentance in Sickness.

1. Let the sick man consider, at what gate this sickness entered: and if he can discover the par-

[t] Ne tamen ad Stygias famulus descenderet umbras,
Ureret implicitum cùm scelerata lues,
Cavimus ———

[u] Cogimur à suetis animum suspendere rebus,
Atque ut vivamus, vivere desinimus.—Corn. Gall.

[x] Gnossius hæc Rhadamanthus habet durissima regna,
Castigatque, auditque dolos, subigitque fateri
Quæ quis apud superos furto lætatus inani
Distulit in seram commissa piacula mortem.—Æneid. 6.

[y] ———Cineri gloria sera venit.

[z] Tu mihi, quod rarum est, vivo sublime dedisti
Nomen, ab exsequiis quod dare fama solet.

[a] Acts iii. 19.

ticular, let him instantly, passionately, and with great contrition dash the crime in pieces, lest he descend into his grave in the midst of a sin, and thence remove into an ocean of eternal sorrow. But if he only suffers the common fate of man, and knows not the particular inlet, he is to be governed by the following measures.

2. Inquire into the repentance of thy former life particularly; whether it were of a great and perfect grief, and productive of fixed resolutions of holy living, and reductive of these to act; how many days and nights we have spent in sorrow or care, in habitual and actual pursuances of virtue; what instrument we have chosen and used for the eradication of sin; how we have judged ourselves, and how punished; and, in sum, whether we have, by the grace of repentance, changed our life from criminal to virtuous, from one habit to another; and whether we have paid for the pleasure of our sin by smart or sorrow, by the effusion of alms, or pernoctations or abodes in prayers, so as the spirit hath been served in our repentance as earnestly and as greatly, as our appetites have been provided for, in the days of our shame and folly.

3. Supply the imperfections of thy repentance by a general or universal sorrow for the sins, not only since the last communion or absolution, but of thy whole life; for all sins, known and unknown, repented and unrepented, of ignorance or infirmity, which thou knowest, or which others have accused thee of; thy clamorous and thy whispering sins, the sins of scandal and the sins of a secret conscience, of the flesh and of the spirit: for it would be but a sad arrest to thy soul wandering in strange and unusual regions, to see a scroll of uncancelled sins represented and charged upon thee for want of care and notices, and that thy repentance shall become invalid because of its imperfections.

4. To this purpose it is usually advised by spiritual persons, that the sick man make an universal confession, or a renovation and repetition of all the particular confessions and accusations of his whole life; that now, at the foot of his account he may represent the sum total to God and his conscience, and make provisions for their remedy and pardon, according to his present possibilities.

5. Now is the time to make reflex acts of repentance: that as, by a general repentance, we supply the want of the just extension of parts; so, by this, we may supply the proper measures of the intention of degrees. In our health, we can consider concerning our own acts, whether they be real or hypocritical, essential or imaginary, sincere or upon interest, integral or imperfect, commensurate or defective. And although it is a good caution of securities, after all our care and diligence still to suspect ourselves and our own deceptions, and for ever to beg of God pardon and acceptance in the union of Christ's passion and intercession; yet, in proper speaking, reflex acts of repentance, being a suppletory after the imperfection of the direct, are then most fit to be used, when we cannot proceed in and prosecute the direct actions. To repent because we cannot repent, and to grieve because we cannot grieve, was a device invented to serve the turn of the mother of Peter Gratian; but it was used by her, and so advised to be, in her sickness, and last actions of repentance: for in our perfect health and understanding, if we do not understand our first act, we cannot discern our second; and if we be not sorry for our sins, we cannot be sorry for want of sorrows: it is a contradiction to say we can; because want of sorrow, to which we are obliged, is certainly a great sin; and if we can grieve for that, then also for the rest; if not for all, then not for this. But in the days of weakness the case is otherwise; for then our actions are imperfect, our discourse weak, our internal actions not discernible, our fears great, our work to be abbreviated, and our defects to be supplied by spiritual arts: and therefore it is proper and proportionate to our state, and to our necessity, to beg of God pardon for the imperfections of our repentance, acceptance of our weaker sorrows, supplies out of the treasures of grace and mercy. And thus repenting of the evil and unhandsome adherences of our repentance, in the whole integrity of the duty it will become a repentance not to be repented of.

6. Now is the time, beyond which the sick man must, at no hand, defer to make restitution of all his unjust possessions,[b] or other men's rights, and satisfactions for all injuries and violences, according to his obligation and possibilities: for although many circumstances might impede the acting it in our life-time, and it was permitted to be deferred in many cases, because by it justice was not hindered, and oftentimes piety and equity were provided for; yet because this is the last scene of our life, he that does not act it, so far as he can, or put it into certain conditions and order of effecting, can never do it again, and therefore then to defer it is to omit, and leaves the repentance defective in an integral and constituent part.

7. Let the sick man be diligent and watchful, that the principle of his repentance be contrition, or sorrow for sins, commenced upon the love of God. For although sorrow for sins upon any motive may lead us to God by many intermedial passages, and is the threshold of returning sinners; yet it is not good nor effective upon our death-bed; because repentance is not then to begin, but must then be finished and completed; and it is to be a supply and preparation of all the imperfections of that duty, and therefore it must by that time be arrived to contrition; that is, it must have grown from fear to love, from the passions of a servant to the affections of a son. The reason of which (besides the precedent) is this, Because, when our repentance is in this state, it supposes the man also in a state of grace, a well-grown christian; for to hate sin out of the love of God is not the felicity of a new convert, or an infant grace; (or if it be, that love also is in its infancy;) but it supposes a good progress, and the man habitually virtuous, and tending to perfection: and therefore contrition, or repentance so qualified, is useful to great degrees of pardon, because the man is a gracious person, and that virtue

[b] Ou pendre, ou rendre, ou les peines d'enfers attendre.

is of good degree, and consequently a fit employment for him that shall work no more, but is to appear before his Judge to receive the hire of his day. And if his repentance be contrition even before this state of sickness, let it be increased by spiritual arts, and the proper exercises of charity.

Means of exciting Contrition, or Repentance of Sins, proceeding from the Love of God.

To which purpose the sick man may consider, and is to be reminded (if he does not) that there are in God all the motives and causes of amiability in the world; that God is so infinitely good, that there are some of the greatest and most excellent spirits of heaven, whose work, and whose felicity, and whose perfections, and whose nature it is, to flame and burn in the brightest and most excellent love; that to love God is the greatest glory of heaven; that in him there are such excellencies, that the smallest rays of them, communicated to our weaker understandings, are yet sufficient to cause ravishments, and transportations, and satisfactions, and joys unspeakable and full of glory; that all the wise christians of the world know and feel such causes to love God, that they all profess themselves ready to die for the love of God, and the apostles and millions of the martyrs did die for him; and although it be harder to live in his love than to die for it, yet all the good people, that ever gave their names to Christ, did, for his love, endure the crucifying their lusts, the mortification of their appetites, the contradictions and death of their most passionate, natural desires; that kings and queens have quitted their diadems, and many married saints have turned their mutual vows into the love of Jesus, and married him only, keeping a virgin chastity in a married life, that they may more tenderly express their love to God: that all the good we have derives from God's love to us, and all the good we can hope for is the effect of his love, and can descend only upon them that love him: that by his love it is that we receive the holy Jesus, and by his love we receive the Holy Spirit, and by his love we feel peace and joy within our spirits, and by his love we receive the mysterious sacrament. And what can be greater, than that from the goodness and love of God we receive Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, and adoption, and the inheritance of sons, and to be co-heirs with Jesus, and to have pardon of our sins, and a divine nature, and restraining grace, and the grace of sanctification, and rest and peace within us, and a certain expectation of glory? Who can choose but love him, who, when we had provoked him exceedingly, sent his Son to die for us, that we might live with him; who does so desire to pardon us, and save us, that he hath appointed his holy Son continually to intercede for us? that his love is so great, that he offers us great kindness, and entreats us to be happy, and makes many decrees in heaven concerning the interest of our soul, and the very provision and support of our persons, that he sends an angel to attend upon every of his servants, and to be their guard and their guide in all their dangers and hostilities: that for our sakes he restrains the devil, and puts his mightiness in fetters and restraints, and chastises his malice with decrees of grace and safety: that he it is, who makes all the creatures serve us, and takes care of our sleeps, and preserves all plants and elements, all minerals and vegetables, all beasts and birds, all fishes and insects, for food to us and for ornament, for physic and instruction, for variety and wonder, for delight and for religion: that as God is all good in himself, and all good to us, so sin is directly contrary to God, to reason, to religion, to safety, and pleasure, and felicity; that it is a great dishonour to a man's spirit to have been made a fool by a weak temptation and an empty lust; and to have rejected God, who is so rich, so wise, so good, and so excellent, so delicious, and so profitable to us: that all the repentance in the world of excellent men does end in contrition, or a sorrow for sins proceeding from the love of God; because they that are in the state of grace, do not fear hell violently, and so long as they remain in God's favour, although they suffer the infirmities of men, yet they are God's portion; and therefore all the repentance of just and holy men, which is certainly the best, is a repentance not for lower ends, but because they are the friends of God, and they are full of indignation, that they have done an act against the honour of their patron, and their dearest Lord and Father: that it is a huge imperfection and a state of weakness to need to be moved with fear or temporal respects; and they that are so, as yet are either immerged in the affections of the world or of themselves; and those men that bear such a character, are not yet esteemed laudable persons, or men of good natures, or the sons of virtue: that no repentance can be lasting that relies upon any thing but the love of God; for temporal motives may cease, and contrary contingencies may arise, and fear of hell may be expelled by natural or acquired hardnesses, and is always the least when we have most need of it and most cause for it; for the more habitual our sins are, the more cauterised our conscience is, the less is the fear of hell, and yet our danger is much the greater: that although fear of hell or other temporal motives may be the first inlet to a repentance, yet repentance, in that constitution and under those circumstances, cannot obtain pardon, because there is in that no union with God, no adhesion to Christ, no endearment of passion or of spirit, no similitude or conformity to the great instrument of our peace, our glorious Mediator: for as yet a man is turned from his sin, but not converted to God; the first and last of our returns to God being love, and nothing but love: for obedience is the first part of love, and fruition is the last; and because he that does not love God cannot obey him, therefore he that does not love him cannot enjoy him.

Now that this may be reduced to practice, the sick man may be advertised, that in the actions of repentance, he separate low, temporal, sensual, and self-ends from his thoughts, and so do his repentance, that he may still reflect honour upon God; that he confess his justice in punishing, that he acknowledge himself to have deserved the worst of

evils; that he heartily believe and profess, that if he perish finally, yet that God ought to be glorified by that sad event, and that he hath truly merited so intolerable a calamity; that he also be put to make acts of election and preference, professing that he would willingly endure all temporal evils, rather than be in the disfavour of God or in the state of sin; for, by this last instance, he will be quitted from the suspicion of leaving sin for temporal respects, because he, by an act of imagination or feigned presence of the object to him, entertains the temporal evil, that he may leave the sin; and therefore, unless he be a hypocrite, does not leave the sin to be quit of the temporal evil. And as for the other motive, of leaving sin out of the fear of hell, because that is an evangelical motive conveyed to us by the Spirit of God, and is immediate to the love of God; if the schoolmen had pleased, they might have reckoned it as the handmaid, and of the retinue of contrition; but the more the considerations are sublimed above this, of the greater effect and the more immediate to pardon will be the repentance.

8. Let the sick persons do frequent actions of repentance, by way of prayer for all those sins which are spiritual, and in which no restitution or satisfaction material can be made, and whose contrary acts cannot in kind be exercised. For penitential prayers, in some cases, are the only instances of repentance that can be. An envious man, if he gives God hearty thanks for the advancement of his brother, hath done an act of mortification of his envy, as directly as corporal austerities are an act of chastity, and an enemy to uncleanness; and if I have seduced a person that is dead or absent, if I cannot restore him to sober counsels by my discourse and undeceiving him, I can only repent of that by way of prayer: and intemperance is no way to be rescinded or punished by a dying man but by hearty prayers. Prayers are a great help in all cases; in some they are proper acts of virtue, and direct enemies to sin: but although alone and in long continuance they alone can cure some one or some few little habits, yet they can never alone change the state of the man; and therefore are intended to be a suppletory to the imperfections of other acts; and by that reason, are the proper and most pertinent employment of a clinic or death-bed penitent.

9. In those sins, whose proper cure is mortification corporal, the sick man is to supply that part of his repentance by a patient submission to the rod of sickness: for sickness does the work of penances, or sharp afflictions and dry diet, perfectly well: to which if we also put our wills, and make it our act by an after-election, by confessing the justice of God, by bearing it sweetly, by begging it may be medicinal, there is nothing wanting to the perfection of this part, but that God confirm our patience and hear our prayers. When the guilty man runs to punishment,[c] the injured person is prevented, and hath no whither to go but to forgiveness.

10. I have learned but of one suppletory more for the perfection and proper exercise of a sick man's repentance; but it is such an one, as will go a great way in the abolition of our past sins, and making our peace with God, even after a less severe life; and that is, that the sick man do some heroical actions in the matter of charity, or religion, of justice, or severity. There is a story of an infamous thief, who having begged his pardon of the emperor Mauricius, was yet put into the hospital of St. Samson, where he so plentifully bewailed his sins, in the last agonies of his death, that the physician who attended found him unexpectedly dead, and over his face a handkerchief bathed in tears; and soon after somebody or other pretended to a revelation of this man's beatitude. It was a rare grief that was noted in this man, which begot in that age a confidence of his being saved; and that confidence (as things then went) was quickly called a revelation. But it was a stranger severity, which is related by Thomas Cantipratanus concerning a young gentleman condemned for robbery and violence, who had so deep a sense of his sin, that he was not content with a single death, but begged to be tormented, and cut in pieces joint by joint, with intermedial senses, that he might by such a smart signify a greater sorrow. Some have given great estates to the poor and to religion; some have built colleges for holy persons; many have suffered martyrdom: and though those that died under the conduct of the Maccabees, in defence of their country and religion, had pendants on their breasts consecrated to the idols of the Jamnenses; yet that they gave their lives in such a cause with so great a duty, (the biggest things they could do or give,) it was esteemed to prevail hugely towards the pardon and acceptation of their persons. An heroic action of virtue is a huge compendium of religion: for if it be attained to by the usual measures and progress of a christian from inclination to act, from act to habit, from habit to abode, from abode to reigning, from reigning to perfect possession, from possession to extraordinary emanations, that is, to heroic actions, then it must needs do the work of man, by being so great towards the work of God; but if a man comes thither *per saltum*, or on a sudden, (which is seldom seen,) then it supposes the man always well inclined, but abused by accident or hope, by confidence or ignorance; then it supposes the man for the present in a great fear of evil, and a passionate desire of pardon: it supposes his apprehensions great, and his time little; and what the event of that will be, no man can tell; but it is certain, that to some purposes God will account for our religion on our death-bed, not by the measures of our time, but the eminency of affection (as said Celestine the First);[d] that is, supposing the man in the state of grace, or in the revealed possibility of salvation, then an heroical act hath the reward of a longer series of good actions, in an even and ordinary course of virtue.

11. In what can remain for the perfecting of a

[c] Quid debent læsi facere, ubi rei ad pœnam confugiunt?

[d] Vera ad Deum conversio in ultimis positorum mente potiùs est æstimanda quàm tempore.—Col. P. ep. ii. c. 9. Vera conversio scil. ab. infidelitate ad fidem Christi per baptismum.

sick man's repentance, he is to be helped by the ministries of a spiritual guide.

SECTION VII.

Acts of Repentance, by Way of Prayer and Ejaculation, to be used especially by Old Men in their Age, and by all Men in their Sickness.

Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord. Let us lift up our hearts with our hands unto God in the heavens. We have transgressed and rebelled; and thou hast not pardoned. Thou hast covered with anger and persecuted us: thou hast slain, thou hast not pitied. O cover not thyself with a cloud; but let our prayer pass through. Lam. iii. 40—44.

I have sinned: what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men? Why hast thou set me as a mark against thee, so that I am a burthen to myself? And why dost not thou pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquity? for now shall I sleep in the dust, and thou shalt seek me in the morning, but I shall not be. Job vii. 20, 21.

The Lord is righteous; for I have rebelled against his commandments. Hear, I pray, all ye people, behold my sorrow. Behold, O Lord, I am in distress: my bowels are troubled: my heart is turned within me; for I have grievously rebelled. Lam. i. 18, 40.

Thou, O Lord, remainest for ever; thy throne from generation to generation. Wherefore dost thou forget us for ever, and forsake us so long time? Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and so shall we be turned: renew our days as of old. O reject me not utterly, and be not exceeding wroth against thy servant. Lam. v. 19—22.

O remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions; but according to thy mercies remember thou me, for thy goodness' sake, O Lord. Psalm xxv. 7. Do thou for me, O God the Lord, for thy name's sake: because thy mercy is good, deliver thou me. For I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me. I am gone like the shadow that declineth: I am tossed up and down as the locust. Psalm cix. 21—23.

Then Zaccheus stood forth, and said, Behold, Lord, half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have wronged any man, I restore him four-fold. Luke xix. 8.

Hear my prayer, O Lord, and consider my desire. Psalm cxliii. 1. Let my prayer be set forth in thy sight as the incense, and let the lifting up of my hands be an evening sacrifice. Psalm cxli. 3. And enter not into judgment with thy servant; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified. Teach me to do the thing that pleaseth thee, for thou art my God: let thy loving Spirit lead me forth into the land of righteousness. Psalm cxliii. 2, 10.

I will speak of mercy and judgment: unto thee, O Lord, will I make my prayer. I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. O when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk in my house with a perfect heart. I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me. Psalm ci. 1—3.

Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, from malice, envy, the follies of lust and violences, of passion, &c. thou God of my salvation; and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness. Psalm li. 9, 10, 14.

The sacrifice of God is a broken heart; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. Ver. 17.

Lord, I have done amiss; I have been deceived: let so great a wrong as this be removed, and let it be so no more.

The Prayer for the Grace and Perfection of Repentance.

I.

O Almighty God, thou art the great Judge of all the world, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, the Father of men and angels; thou lovest not that a sinner should perish, but delightest in our conversion and salvation, and hast, in our Lord Jesus Christ, established the covenant of repentance, and promised pardon to all them that confess their sins and forsake them: O my God, be thou pleased to work in me what thou hast commanded should be in me. Lord, I am a dry tree, who neither have brought forth fruit unto thee and unto holiness, nor have wept out salutary tears, the instrument of life and restitution, but have behaved myself like an unconcerned person in the ruins and breaches of my soul; but, O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee; my soul thirsteth for thee in a barren and thirsty land, where no water is.[e] Lord, give me the grace of tears and pungent sorrow: let my heart be as a land of rivers of waters, and my head a fountain of tears: turn my sin into repentance, and let my repentance proceed to pardon and refreshment.

II.

Support me with thy graces, strengthen me with thy Spirit, soften my heart with the fire of thy love, and the dew of heaven, with penitential showers; make my care prudent, and the remaining portion of my days like the perpetual watches of the night, full of caution and observance, strong and resolute, patient and severe. I remember, O Lord, that I did sin with greediness and passion, with great desires and an unabated choice: O let me be as great in my repentance as ever I have been in my calamity and shame; let my hatred of sin be as great as my love to thee, and both as near to infinite as my proportion can receive.

III.

O Lord, I renounce all affection to sin, and would not buy my health nor redeem my life with doing any thing against the laws of my God, but would

[e] Psalm lxiii. 1.

rather die than offend thee. O dearest Saviour, have pity upon thy servant; let me, by thy sentence, be doomed to perpetual penance during the abode of this life; let every sigh be the expression of a repentance, and every groan an accent of spiritual life, and every stroke of my disease a punishment of my sin, and an instrument of pardon; that, at my return to the land of innocence and pleasure, I may eat of the votive sacrifice of the supper of the Lamb, that was, from the beginning of the world, slain for the sins of every sorrowful and returning sinner. O grant me sorrow here, and joy hereafter, through Jesus Christ, who is our hope, the resurrection of the dead, the justifier of a sinner, and the glory of all faithful souls. Amen.

A Prayer for Pardon of Sins, to be said frequently in Time of Sickness, and in all the Portions of Old Age.

I.

O eternal and most gracious Father, I humbly throw myself down at the foot of thy mercy-seat, upon the confidence of thy essential mercy, and thy commandment, that we should come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may find mercy in time of need. O my God, hear the prayers and cries of a sinner, who calls earnestly for mercy. Lord, my needs are greater than all the degrees of my desire can be; unless thou hast pity upon me, I perish infinitely and intolerably; and then there will be one voice fewer in the choir of singers, who shall recite thy praises to eternal ages. But, O Lord, in mercy deliver my soul. O save me for thy mercy's sake.[f] For, in the second death, there is no remembrance of thee: in that grave, who shall give thee thanks?

II.

O just and dear God, my sins are innumerable; they are upon my soul in multitudes; they are a burden too heavy for me to bear; they already bring sorrow and sickness, shame and displeasure, guilt and a decaying spirit, a sense of thy present displeasure, and fear of worse, of infinitely worse. But it is to thee so essential, so delightful, so usual, so desired by thee to show mercy, that although my sin be very great, and my fear proportionable, yet thy mercy is infinitely greater than all the world, and my hope and my comfort rise up in proportions towards it, that I trust the devils shall never be able to reprove it, nor my own weakness discompose it. Lord, thou hast sent thy Son to die for the pardon of my sins; thou hast given me thy Holy Spirit, as a seal of adoption to consign the article of remission of sins; thou hast, for all my sins, still continued to invite me to conditions of life by thy ministers the prophets; and thou hast, with variety of holy acts, softened my spirit, and possessed my fancy, and instructed my understanding, and bended and inclined my will, and directed or overruled my passions in order to repentance and pardon: and why should not thy servant beg passionately, and humbly hope for, the effects of all these thy strange and miraculous acts of loving-kindness? Lord, I deserve it not, but I hope thou wilt pardon all my sins; and I beg it of thee for Jesus Christ's sake, whom thou hast made the great endearment of thy promises, and the foundation of our hopes, and the mighty instrument whereby we can obtain of thee whatsoever we need and can receive.

[f] Psalm vi. 4, 5.

III.

O my God, how shall thy servant be disposed to receive such a favour, which is so great, that the ever-blessed Jesus did die to purchase it for us; so great, that the fallen angels never could hope, and never shall obtain it? Lord, I do from my soul forgive all that have sinned against me: O forgive me my sins, as I forgive them that have sinned against me. Lord, I confess my sins unto thee daily, by the accusations and secret acts of conscience; and if we confess our sins, thou hast called it a part of justice to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Lord, I put my trust in thee; and thou art ever gracious to them that put their trust in thee. I call upon my God for mercy; and thou art always more ready to hear, than we to pray. But all that I can do, and all that I am, and all that I know of myself, is nothing but sin, and infirmity, and misery; therefore I go forth of myself, and throw myself wholly into the arms of thy mercy through Jesus Christ, and beg of thee for his death and passion's sake, by his resurrection and ascension, by all the parts of our redemption, and thy infinite mercy, in which thou pleasest thyself above all the works of the creation, to be pitiful and compassionate to thy servant in the abolition of all my sins: so shall I praise thy glories with a tongue not defiled with evil language, and a heart purged by thy grace, quitted by thy mercy, and absolved by thy sentence, from generation to generation. Amen.

An Act of holy Resolution of Amendment of Life, in Case of Recovery.

O most just and most merciful Lord God, who has sent evil diseases, sorrow and fear, trouble and uneasiness, briers and thorns, into the world, and planted them in our houses and round about our dwellings, to keep sin from our souls, or to drive it thence; I humbly beg of thee, that this my sickness may serve the ends of the spirit, and be a messenger of spiritual life, an instrument of reducing me to more religious and sober courses. I say, O Lord, that I am unready and unprepared in my accounts, having thrown away great portions of my time in vanity, and set myself hugely back in the accounts of eternity; and I had need live my life over again, and live it better: but thy counsels are in the great deep, and thy footsteps in the water; and I know not what thou wilt determine of me. If I die, I throw myself into the arms of the holy Jesus, whom I love above all things; and if I perish, I know I have deserved it; but thou wilt not reject him that loves thee. But if I recover, I will live, by thy grace and help, to do the work of God, and passionately pursue my interest of heaven, and

serve thee in the labour of love, with the charities of a holy zeal, and the diligence of a firm and humble obedience. Lord, I will dwell in thy temple, and in thy service: religion shall be my employment, and alms shall be my recreation, and patience shall be my rest, and to do thy will shall be my meat and drink; and to live shall be Christ, and then to die shall be gain.

"O spare me a little, that I may recover my strength, before I go hence, and be no more seen." "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven." Amen.

SECTION VIII.

An Analysis or Resolution of the Decalogue, and the special Precepts of the Gospel, describing the Duties enjoined, and the Sins forbidden respectively; for the Assistance of Sick Men in making their Confessions to God and his Ministers, and the rendering their Repentance more particular and perfect.

I. Comm. *Thou shalt have none other gods but me.*

Duties commanded are, 1. To love God above all things. 2. To obey him and fear him. 3. To worship him with prayers, vows, thanksgivings; presenting to him our souls and bodies, and all such actions and expressions, which the consent of nations, or the laws and customs of the place where we live, have appropriated to God. 4. To design all to God's glory. 5. To inquire after his will. 6. To believe all his word. 7. To submit to his providence. 8. To proceed towards all our lawful ends by such means as himself hath appointed. 9. To speak and think honourably of God, and recite his praises, and confess his attributes and perfections.

They sin against this commandment, 1. Who love themselves or any of the creatures inordinately and intemperately. 2. They that despise or neglect any of the Divine precepts. 3. They that pray to unknown or false gods. 4. They that disbelieve, or deny, there is a God. 5. They that make vows to creatures. 6. Or say prayers to the honour of men or women, or angels; as paternosters to the honour of the Virgin Mary, or St. Peter, which is a taking a part of that honour which is due to God, and giving it to the creature: it is a religion paid to men and women out of God's proper portion, out of prayers directed to God immediately; and it is an act contrary to that religion, which makes God the last end of all things; for this, through our addresses to God, passes something to the creatures, as if they stood beyond him; for by the intermedial worship paid to God, they ultimately do honour to the man, or angel. 7. They that make consumptive oblations to the creatures; as the Collyridians, who offered cakes, and those that burnt incense or candles to the Virgin Mary. 8. They that give themselves to the devil, or make contracts with him, and use fantastic conversation with him. 9. They that consult witches and fortune-tellers. 10. They that rely upon dreams and superstitious observances. 11. That use charms, spells, superstitious words and characters, verses of psalms, the consecrated elements, to cure diseases, to be shot-free, to recover stolen goods, or inquire into secrets. 12. That are wilfully ignorant of the laws of God, or love to be deceived in their persuasions, that they may sin with confidence. 13. They that neglect to pray to God. 14. They that arrogate to themselves the glory of any action or power, and do not give the glory to God, as Herod. 15. They that doubt of, or disbelieve, any article of the Creed, or any proposition of Scripture, or put false glosses to serve secular or vicious ends, against their conscience, or with violence any way done to their reason. 16. They that violently or passionately pursue any temporal end with an eagerness greater than the thing is, in prudent account. 17. They that make religion to serve ill ends, or do good to evil purposes, or evil to good purposes. 18. They that accuse God of injustice or unmercifulness, remissness or cruelty; such as are the presumptuous and the desperate. 19. All hypocrites and pretenders to religion, walking in forms and shadows, but denying the power of godliness. 20. All impatient persons: all that repine or murmur against the prosperities of the wicked, or the calamities of the godly, or their own afflictions. 21. All that blaspheme God, or speak dishonourable things of so sacred a Majesty. 22. They that tempt God, or rely upon his protection against his rules, and without his promise, and besides reason, entering into danger, from which, without a miracle, they cannot be rescued. 23. They that are bold in the midst of judgment, and fearless in the midst of the Divine vengeance and the accents of his anger.

II. Comm. *Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven Image, nor worship it.*

The moral duties of this commandment are, 1. To worship God with all bodily worship and external forms of address, according to the custom of the church we live in. 2. To believe God to be a spiritual and pure substance, without any visible form or shape. 3. To worship God in ways of his own appointing, or by his proportions, or measures of nature, and right reason; or public and holy customs.

They sin against this commandment, 1. That make any image or pictures of the Godhead, or fancy any likeness to him. 2. They that use images in their religion, designing or addressing any religious worship to them: for if this thing could be naturally tolerable, yet it is too near an intolerable for a jealous God to suffer. 3. They that deny to worship God with lowly reverence of their bodies, according as the church expresses her reverence to God externally. 4. They that invent or practise superstitious worshippings, invented by man against God's word, or without reason, or besides the public customs or forms of worshipping, either foolishly or ridiculously, without the purpose of order, decency, proportion to a wise or a religious end, in prosecution of some virtue or duty.

III. Comm. *Thou shalt not take God's Name in vain.*

The duties of this commandment are, 1. To honour and revere the most holy name of God. 2. To invocate his name directly, or by consequence, in all solemn and permitted adjurations, or public oaths. 3. To use all things and persons, upon whom his name is called, or any ways imprinted, with a regardful and separate manner of usage, different from common, and far from contempt and scorn. 4. To swear in truth and judgment.

They sin against this commandment, 1. Who swear vainly and customarily, without just cause, without competent authority. 2. They that blaspheme or curse God. 3. They that speak of God without grave cause or solemn occasion. 4. They that forswear themselves; that is, they that do not perform their vows to God; or that swear, or call God to witness, to a lie. 5. They that swear rashly, or maliciously, to commit a sin, or an act of revenge. 6. They that swear by any creature falsely, or any way, but as it relates to God, and consequently invokes his testimony. 7. All curious inquirers into the secrets, and intruders into the mysteries and hidden things, of God. 8. They that curse God, or curse a creature by God. 9. They that profane churches, holy utensils, holy persons, holy customs, holy sacraments. 10. They that provoke others to swear voluntarily, and by design, or incuriously, or negligently, when they might avoid it. 11. They that swear to things uncertain and unknown.

IV. Comm. *Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath Day.*

The duties of this commandment are, 1. To set apart some portions of our time for the immediate offices of religion, and glorification of God. 2. This is to be done according as God or his holy church hath appointed. 3. One day in seven is to be set apart. 4. The christian day is to be subrogated into the place of the Jews' day: the resurrection of Christ and the redemption of man was a greater blessing than to create him. 5. God on that day to be worshipped and acknowledged as our Creator, and as our Saviour. 6. The day to be spent in holy offices, in hearing divine service, public prayers, frequenting the congregations, hearing the word of God read or expounded, reading good books, meditation, alms, reconciling enmities, remission of burdens and of offences, of debts and of work; friendly offices, neighbourhood, and provoking one another to good works; and to this end all servile works must be omitted, excepting necessary and charitable offices to men or beasts, to ourselves or others.

They sin against this commandment, 1. That do, or compel or entice others to do, servile works without the cases of necessity or charity, to be estimated according to common and prudent accounts. 2. They that refuse or neglect to come to the public assemblies of the church, to hear and assist at the divine offices entirely. 3. They that spend the day in idleness, forbidden or vain recreations, or the actions of sin and folly. 4. They that buy and sell without the cases of permission. 5. They that travel unnecessary journeys. 6. They that act or assist in contentions or lawsuits, markets, fairs, &c. 7. They that on that day omit their private devotion, unless the whole day be spent in public. 8. They that, by any cross or contradictory actions against the customs of the church, do purposely desecrate or unhallow and make the day common; as they that, in despite and contempt, fast upon the Lord's day, lest they may celebrate the festival after the manner of the christians.

V. Comm. *Honour thy Father and thy Mother.*

The duties are, 1. To do honour and reverence to and to love our natural parents. 2. To obey all their domestic commands; for in them the scene of their authority lies. 3. To give them maintenance and support in their needs. 4. To obey kings and all that are in authority. 5. To pay tribute and honours, custom and reverence. 6. To do reverence to the aged and all our betters. 7. To obey our masters, spiritual governors and guides, in those things which concern their several respective interest and authority.

They sin against this commandment, 1. That despise their parents' age or infirmity. 2. That are ashamed of their poverty and extraction. 3. That publish their vices, errors, and infirmities, to shame them. 4. That refuse and reject all or any of their lawful commands. 5. Children that marry without or against their consent, when it may be reasonably obtained. 6. That curse them, from whom they receive so many blessings. 7. That grieve the souls of their parents by not complying in their desires, and observing their circumstances. 8. That hate their persons, that mock them, or use uncomely jestings. 9. That discover their nakedness voluntarily. 10. That murmur against their injunctions, and obey them involuntarily. 11. All rebels against their kings, or the supreme power, where it is legally and justly invested. 12. That refuse to pay tributes and impositions imposed legally. 13. They that disobey their masters, murmur or repine against their commands, abuse or deride their persons, talk rudely, &c. 14. They that curse the king in their heart, or speak evil of the ruler of their people. 15. All that are uncivil and rude towards aged persons, mockers and scorners of them.[g]

VI. Comm. *Thou shalt do no Murder.*

The duties are, 1. To preserve our own lives, the lives of our relatives, and all with whom we converse, (or who can need us, and we assist,) by prudent, reasonable, and wary defences, advocations, discoveries of snares, &c. 2. To preserve our health, and the integrity of our bodies and minds, and of others. 3. To preserve and follow peace with all men.

They sin against this commandment, 1. That destroy the life of a man or woman, himself, or any other. 2. That do violence to, or dismember or

[g] Credebant hoc grande nefas et morte piandum,
Si juvenis vetulo non assurrexerat, et si
Barbato cuicunque puer.—— JUVEN. Sat. 13.

hurt, any part of the body with evil intent. 3. That fight duels, or commence unjust wars. 4. They that willingly hasten their own or others' death. 5. That by oppression or violence imbitter the spirits of any, so as to make their life sad and their death hasty. 6. They that conceal the dangers of their neighbour, which they can safely discover. 7. They that sow strife and contention among neighbours. 8. They that refuse to rescue or preserve those, whom they can and are obliged to preserve. 9. They that procure abortion. 10. They that threaten, or keep men in fears, or hate them.

VII. Comm. *Thou shalt not commit Adultery.*

The duties are, 1. To preserve our bodies in the chastity of a single life, or of marriage. 2. To keep all the parts of our bodies in the care and severities of chastity; so that we be restrained in our eyes as well as in our feet.

They sin against this commandment, 1. Who are adulterous, incestuous, sodomitical, or commit fornication. 2. They that commit folly alone, dishonouring their own bodies with softness and wantonness. 3. They that immoderately let loose the reins of their bolder appetite, though within the protection of marriage. 4. They that by wanton gestures, wandering eyes, lascivious dressings, discovery of the nakedness of themselves or others, filthy discourse, high diet, amorous songs, balls and revellings, tempt and betray themselves or others to folly. 5. They that marry a woman divorced for adultery. 6. They that divorce their wives, except for adultery, and marry another.

VIII. Comm. *Thou shalt not Steal.*

The duties are, 1. To give every man his due. 2. To permit every man to enjoy his own goods and estate quietly.

They sin against this commandment, 1. That injure any man's estate by open violence or by secret robbery, by stealth or cozenage, by arts of bargaining or vexatious lawsuits. 2. That refuse or neglect to pay their debts, when they are able. 3. That are forward to run into debt knowingly beyond their power, without hopes or purposes of repayment. 4. Oppressors of the poor. 5. That exact usury of necessitous persons, or of any beyond the permissions of equity, as determined by the laws. 6. All sacrilegious persons; people that rob God of his dues or of his possessions. 7. All that game, viz. at cards and dice, &c. to the prejudice and detriment of other men's estates. 8. They that embase coin and metals, and obtrude them for perfect and natural. 9. That break their promises to the detriment of a third person. 10. They that refuse to stand to their bargains. 11. They that by negligence imbecile other men's estates, spoiling or letting any thing perish which is intrusted to them. 12. That refuse to restore the pledge.

IX. Comm. *Thou shalt not bear False Witness.*

The duties are, 1. To give testimony to truth, when we are called to it by competent authority. 2. To preserve the good name of our neighbours. 3. To speak well of them that deserve it.

They sin against this commandment, 1. That speak false things in judgment, accusing their neighbour unjustly, or denying his crime publicly, when they are asked, and can be commanded lawfully to tell it. 2. Flatterers, and, 3. Slanderers; 4. Backbiters, and, 5. Detractors. 6. They that secretly raise jealousies and suspicion of their neighbours causelessly.

X. Comm. *Thou shalt not Covet.*

The duties are, 1. To be content with the portion God hath given us. 2. Not to be covetous of other men's goods.

They sin against this commandment, 1. That envy the prosperity of other men. 2. They that desire passionately to be possessed of what is their neighbour's. 3. They that with greediness pursue riches, honours, pleasures, and curiosities. 4. They that are too careful, troubled, distracted, or amazed, affrighted and afflicted, with being solicitous in the conduct of temporal blessings.

These are the general lines of duty, by which we may discover our failings, and be humbled, and confess accordingly: only the penitent person is to remember, that although these are the kinds of sins described after the sense of the Jewish church, which consisted principally in the external action or the deed done, and had no restraints upon the thoughts of men, save only in the tenth commandment, which was mixed, and did relate as much to action as to thought (as appear in the instances); yet upon us christians there are many circumstances and degrees of obligation, which endear our duty with greater severity and observation: and the penitent is to account of himself and enumerate his sins, not only by external actions or the deed done, but by words and by thoughts; and so to reckon, if he have done it directly or indirectly, if he have caused others to do it, by tempting or encouraging, by assisting or counselling, by not dissuading when he could and ought, by fortifying their hands or hearts, or not weakening their evil purposes; if he have designed or contrived its action, desired it or loved it, delighted in the thought, remembered the past sin with pleasure or without sorrow; these are the byways of sin, and the crooked lanes, in which a man may wander and be lost, as certainly as in the broad highways of iniquity.

But besides this, our blessed Lord and his apostles have added divers other precepts; some of which have been with some violence reduced to the decalogue, and others have not been noted at all in the catalogues of confession. I shall therefore describe them entirely, that the sick man may discover his failings, that, by the mercies of God in Jesus Christ, and by the instrument of repentance, he may be presented pure and spotless before the throne of God.

The special Precepts of the Gospel.

1. Prayer, frequent, fervent, holy, and persevering.[h] 2. Faith.[i] 3. Repentance.[k] 4. Poverty of

[h] 1 Thess. v. 17. Luke xviii. 1. [i] Mark xvi. 16. [k] Luke xiii. 3. Acts iii. 19.

spirit, as opposed to ambition and high designs.[l] 5. And in it is humility, or sitting down in the lowest place, and in giving honour to go before another.[m] 6. Meekness, as it is opposed to waywardness, fretfulness, immoderate grieving, disdain and scorn.[n] 7. Contempt of the world. 8. Prudence, or the advantageous conduct of religion;[o] 9. Simplicity, or sincerity in words and actions, pretences and substances.[o] 10. Hope.[p] 11. Hearing the word.[q] 12. Reading.[r] 13. Assembling together.[s] 14. Obeying them that have the rule over us in spiritual affairs.[t] 15. Refusing to communicate with persons excommunicate:[u] whither also may be reduced, to reject heretics.[v] 16. Charity:[w] viz. Love to God above all things; brotherly kindness, or profitable love to our neighbours as ourselves, to be expressed in alms,[x] forgiveness,[y] and to die for our brethren.[z] 17. To pluck out the right eye, or violently to rescind all occasions of sins, though dear to us as an eye.[a] 18. To reprove our erring brother.[b] 19. To be patient in afflictions:[c] and longanimity is referred hither, or long-sufferance;[d] which is the perfection and perseverance of patience, and is opposed to hastiness and weariness of spirit. 20. To be thankful to our benefactors; but above all, in all things, to give thanks to God.[e] 21. To rejoice in the Lord always.[f] 22. Not to quench,[g] not to grieve,[h] not to resist, the Spirit.[i] 23. To love our wives as Christ loved his church, and to reverence our husbands.[k] 24. To provide for our families.[l] 25. Not to be bitter to our children.[m] 26. To bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.[n] 27. Not to despise prophesying.[o] 28. To be gentle, and easy to be entreated.[p] 29. To give no scandal or offence.[q] 30. To follow after peace with all men, and to make peace.[r] 31. Not to go to law before the unbelievers.[s] 32. To do all things that are of good report, or the actions of public honesty;[t] abstaining from all appearances of evil.[u] 33. To convert souls, or turn sinners from the error of their ways.[v] 34. To confess Christ before all the world.[w] 35. To resist unto blood, if God calls us to it.[x] 36. To rejoice in tribulation for Christ's sake.[y] 37. To remember and show forth the Lord's death till his second coming,[z] by celebrating the Lord's supper.[a] 38. To believe all the New Testament.[b] 39. To add nothing to St. John's last book, that is, to pretend to no new revelations.[c] 40. To keep the customs of the church, her festivals and solemnities; lest we be reproved, as the Corinthians were by St. Paul, "We have no such customs, nor the churches of God."[d] 41. To contend earnestly for the faith.[e] Not to be contentious in matters not concerning the eternal interest of our souls; but in matters indifferent to have faith to ourselves.[f] 42. Not to make schisms or divisions in the body of the church.[g] 43. To call no man master upon earth, but to acknowledge Christ our master and lawgiver.[h] 44. Not to domineer over the Lord's heritage.[i] 45. To try all things, and keep that which is best.[k] 46. To be temperate in all things.[l] 47. To deny ourselves.[m] 48. To mortify our lusts and their instruments.[n] 49. To lend, looking for nothing again, nothing by way of increase, nothing by way of recompence.[o] 50. To watch and stand in readiness against the coming of the Lord.[p] 51. Not to be angry without cause.[q] 52. Not at all to revile.[r] 55. Not to swear.[s] 54. Not to respect persons.[t] 56. To lay hands suddenly on no man.[u] [This especially pertains to bishops; to whom also, and to all the ecclesiastical order, it is enjoined, that they preach the word,[v] that they be instant in season and out of season, that they rebuke, reprove, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.] 56. To keep the Lord's day (derived into an obligation from a practice apostolical). 57. To do all things to the glory of God.[w] 58. To hunger and thirst after righteousness and its rewards.[x] 59. To avoid foolish questions.[y] 60. To pray for persecutors, and to do good to them that persecute us, and despitefully use us.[z] 61. To pray for all men.[a] 62. To maintain good works for necessary uses.[b] 63. To work with our own hands, that we be not burdensome to others, avoiding idleness.[c] 64. To be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect.[d] 65. To be liberal and frugal; for he that will call us to account for our time, will also for the spending our money.[e] 66. Not to use uncomely jestings.[f] 67. Modesty; as opposed to boldness, to curiosity, to indecency.[g] 68. To be swift to hear, slow to speak.[h] 69. To worship the holy Jesus at the mention of his holy name; as of old God was at the mention of Jehovah.[i]

These are the straight lines of Scripture, by which we may also measure our obliquities, and discover crooked walking. If the sick man hath not done these things, or if he have done contrary to any of them in any particular, he hath cause enough for his sorrow, and matter for his confession; of which he needs no other forms, but that he heartily deplore and plainly enumerate his follies, as a man tells the sad stories of his own calamity.

[l] Matt. v. 3. [m] Luke xiv. 10. John xiii. 14.
[n] Matt. v. 5. Col. iii. 12. [o] Matt. x. 16. 1 Thess. v. 8.
[p] Rom. viii. 24. [q] Luke xvi. 29. Mark iv. 24.
[r] 1 Tim. iv. 13. [s] Heb. x. 25. [t] Heb. xiii. 17. Matt. xviii. 17.
[u] 2 Thess. iii. 6. 2 John 10. [v] Titus iii. 10
[w] Coloss. iii. 14. 1 Tim. i. 5. 2 Tim. ii. 22. [x] Mark xii. 30.
[y] Matt. vi. 14. [z] 1 John iii. 16. [a] Matt. xviii. 9.
[b] Matt. xviii. 15. [c] James i. 4. Luke xxi. 19.
[d] Heb. xii. 3. Gal. vi. 9.
[e] Eph. v. 20. 2 Thess. i. 3. Luke vi. 32. 2 Tim. iii. 2.
[f] 1 Thess. v. 16. Philip. iii. 1. vi. 4. [g] 1 Thess. v. 19.
[h] Ephes. iv. 30. [i] Acts vii. 51. [k] Ephes. v. 33.
[l] 1 Tim. v. 8. [m] Coloss. iii. 21. [n] Ephes. vi. 4.
[o] 1 Thess. v. 20. [p] 2 Tim. ii. 24.
[q] Matt. xviii. 7. 1 Cor. x. 32. [r] Heb. xii. 14.
[s] 1 Cor. vi. 1. [t] Philip. iv. 8. 2 Cor. viii. 21.
[u] 1 Thess. v. 22. [v] James v. 19, 20. [w] Matt. x. 32.
[x] Heb. xii. 4. [y] Matt. v. 12. James i. 2.
[z] Luke xxii. 19. [a] 1 Cor. xi. 26.
[b] John xx. 30, 31. Acts iii. 23. Mark i. 1. Luke x. 16.
[c] Rev. xxii. 18. [d] 1 Cor. xi. 16. [e] Jude 3.
[f] Rom. xiv. 13, 22. [g] Rom. xvi. 17. [h] Matt. xxiii. 8–10.
[i] 1 Pet. v. 3. [k] 1 John iv. 1. 1 Thess. v. 21.
[l] 1 Cor. ix. 25. Tit. ii. 2. [m] Matt. xvi. 24.
[n] Col. iii. 5. Rom. viii. 13. [o] Luke vi. 36.
[p] Matt. xxiv. 42. [q] Matt. v 22. [r] 1 Cor. vi. 10.
[s] Matt. v. 34. [t] James ii. 1. [u] 1 Tim. v. 22.
[v] 2 Tim. iv. 2. [w] 1 Cor. x. 31. [x] Matt. v. 6.
[y] Tit. iii. 9. [z] Matt. v. 44. Rom. xii. 14. [a] 1 Tim. ii. 1.
[b] Titus iii. 14. [c] Ephes. iv. 28. [d] Matt. v. 48.
[e] 1 Pet. iii. 8. 2 Pet. i. 6, 7. 2 Cor. viii. 7. ix. 5. [f] Ephes. v. 4.
[g] 1 Tim. ii. 9. [h] James i. 19. [i] Phil. ii. 10.

SECTION IX.

Of the Sick Man's Practice of Charity and Justice, by way of Rule.

1. LET the sick man set his house in order before he die; state his cases of conscience, reconcile the fractures of his family, reunite brethren, cause right understandings, and remove jealousies; give good counsels for the future conduct of their persons and estates, charm them into religion by the authority and advantages of a dying person; because the last words of a dying man are like the tooth of a wounded lion, making a deeper impression in the agony, than in the most vigorous strength.[k]

2. Let the sick man discover every secret of art, or profit, physic, or advantage to mankind, if he may do it without the prejudice of a third person.[l] Some persons are so uncharitably envious, that they are willing that a secret receipt should die with them, and be buried in their grave, like treasure in the sepulchre of David. But this, which is a design of charity, must therefore not be done to any man's prejudice; and the mason of Herodotus the king of Egypt, who kept secret his notice of the king's treasure, and when he was a dying told his son, betrayed his trust then, when he should have kept it most sacredly for his own interest. In all other cases let thy charity outlive thee, that thou mayest rejoice in the mansion of rest, because, by thy means, many living persons are eased or advantaged.

3. Let him make his will with great justice and piety, that is, that the right heirs be not defrauded for collateral respects, fancies, or indirect fondnesses; but the inheritances descend in their legal and due channel; and in those things, where we have a liberty, that we take the opportunity of doing virtuously, that is, of considering how God may be best served by our donatives, or how the interest of any virtue may be promoted; in which we are principally to regard the necessities of our nearest kindred and relatives, servants and friends.

4. Let the will or testament be made with ingenuity, openness, and plain expression,[m] that he may not entail a lawsuit upon his posterity and relatives, and make them lose their charity, or entangle their estates, or make them poorer by the gift. He hath done me no charity, but dies in my debt, that makes me sue for a legacy.

5. It is proper for the state of sickness, and an excellent annealing us to burial, that we give alms in this state, so burying treasure in our graves that will not perish, but rise again in the resurrection of the just. Let the dispensation of our alms be as little intrusted to our executors as may be, excepting the lasting and successive portions;[n] but, with our own present care, let us exercise the charity, and secure the stewardship.[o] It was a custom amongst the old Greeks, to bury horses, clothes, arms, and whatsoever was dear to the deceased person, supposing they might need them, and that, without clothes, they should be found naked by their judges; and all the friends did use to bring gifts,[p] by such liberality thinking to promote the interest of their dead. But we may offer our ἐντάφια ourselves best of all;[q] our doles and funeral meals, if they be our own early provisions, will then spend the better: and it is good so to carry our passing penny in our hand, and by reaching that hand to the poor, make a friend in the everlasting habitations. He that gives with his own hand, shall be sure to find it, and the poor shall find it;[r] but he that trusts executors with his charity, and the economy and issues of his virtue, by which he must enter into his hopes of heaven and pardon, shall find but an ill account, when his executors complain he died poor. Think on this. To this purpose, wise and pious was the counsel of Salvian:[s] "Let a dying man, who hath nothing else, of which he may make an effective oblation, offer up to God of his substance; let him offer it with compunction and tears, with grief and mourning, as knowing that all our oblations have their value, not by the price, but by the affection; and it is our faith that commendeth the money, since God receives the money by the hands of the poor, but at the same time gives, and does not take the blessing; because he receives nothing but his own, and man gives that which is none of his own, that of which he is only a steward, and shall be accountable for every shilling. Let it therefore be offered humbly, as a creditor pays his debts; not magnifically, as a prince gives a donative: and let him remember, that such doles do not pay for the sin, but they ease the punishment: they are not proper instruments of redemption, but instances of supplication, and advantages of prayer; and when we have done well, remember that we have not paid our debt, but shown our willingness to give a little of the vast sum we owe: and he that gives plentifully according to the measure of his estate, is still behind-hand according to the measure of his sins. Let him pray to God, that this late oblation may be accepted; and so it will, if it sails to him in a sea of peniten-

[k] Magnifica verba mors propè admota excutit.

[l] Nam veræ voces tum demum pectore ab imo ejiciuntur——LUCRET. iii. 57.

[m] Δεῖ δὲ καὶ τὴν βασιλείαν μὲ ἤδη σαφηνίσαντα καταλιπεῖν, ὡς ἂν μὴ ἀμφίλογος γενομένη, πράγματα ὑμῖν παράσχη.—CYRUS apud Xenoph. l. viii. Institut.

[n] Lucian. de Luctu.

[o] Vide reg. 6. paulo infr. Herodot. Musa 5. Plin. lib. iv. cap. 11. Xiphilin, in Severo.

[p] Ἀλλὰ, κόραι, τῷ παιδὶ λεχώϊα δῶρα φέρουσαι,
Θερμὰ κατὰ ψυχροῦ δάκρυα χεῖτε τάφου.—NICARCHUS.

[q] Fallax sæpè fides, testataque vota peribunt:
Constitues tumulum, si sapis, ipse tuum.

[r] Man, thee behoveth oft to have this in mind,
That thou giveth with thine hand, that shalt thou find.
For widows be slothful, and children beth unkind,
Executors beth covetous, and keep all that they find.
If any body ask where the dead's goods became;
They answer,
So God me help and Halidam, he died a poor man.
Think on this.

Written upon a wall in St. Edmund's Church in Lombard Street.

[s] Contra Avaritiam.

tial tears or sorrows that it is so little, and that it is so late."

6. Let the sick man's charity be so ordered, that it may not come only to deck the funeral and make up the pomp, charity waiting like one of the solemn mourners; but let it be continued, that, besides the alms of health and sickness, there may be a rejoicing in God for his charity long after his funerals, so as to become more beneficial and less public; that the poor may pray in private, and give God thanks many days together. This is matter of prudence, and yet in this we are to observe the same regards which we had in the charity and alms of our lives; with this only difference, that, in the funeral alms also of rich and able persons, the public customs of the church are to be observed, and decency and solemnity, and the expectations of the poor, and matter of public opinion, and the reputation of religion; in all other cases, let thy charity consult with humility and prudence, that it never minister at all to vanity, but be as full of advantage and usefulness as it may.

7. Every man will forgive a dying person;[t] and therefore let the sick man be ready and sure, if he can, to send to such persons whom he hath injured, and beg their pardon, and do them right; for in this case he cannot stay for an opportunity of convenient and advantageous reconcilement; he cannot then spin out a treaty, nor beat down the price of composition, nor lay a snare to be quit from the obligation and coercion of laws; but he must ask forgiveness downright, and make him amends as he can, being greedy of making use of this opportunity of doing a duty, that must be done, but cannot any more, if not now, until time returns again, and tells the minutes backwards, so that yesterday shall be reckoned in the portions of the future.

8. In the intervals of sharper pains, when the sick man amasses together all the arguments of comfort and testimonies of God's love to him, and care of him, he must needs find infinite matter of thanksgiving and glorification of God: and it is a proper act of charity and love to God, and justice too, that he do honour to God on his death-bed for all the blessings of his life, not only in general communications, but those by which he hath been separate and discerned from others, or supported and blessed in his own person; such as are, "In all my life-time I never broke a bone: I never fell into the hands of robbers, never into public shame, or into noisome diseases: I have not begged my bread, nor been tempted by great and unequal fortunes: God gave me a good understanding, good friends, or delivered me in such a danger; and heard my prayers in such particular pressures of my spirit." This or the like enumeration and consequent acts of thanksgiving are apt to produce love to God, and confidence in the day of trial; for he that gave me blessings in proportion to the state and capacities of my life, I hope also will do so in proportion to the needs of my sickness and my death-bed. This we find practised, as a most reasonable piece of piety, by the wisest of the heathens. So Antipater Tarsensis gave God thanks for his prosperous voyage into Greece; and Cyrus made a handsome prayer upon the tops of the mountains, when by a fantasm he was warned of his approaching death. "Receive, O God my Father, these holy rites, by which I put an end to many and great affairs; and I give thee thanks for thy celestial signs and prophetic notices, whereby thou hast signified to me what I ought to do, and what I ought not. I present also very great thanks, that I have perceived and acknowledged your care of me, and have never exalted myself above my condition for any prosperous accident. And I pray that you will grant felicity to my wife, my children, and friends, and to me a death such as my life hath been." But that of Philagrius in Gregory Nazianzen is eucharistical, but it relates more especially to the blessings and advantages which are accidentally consequent to sickness. "I thank thee, O Father, and Maker of all thy children, that thou art pleased to bless and to sanctify us even against our wills, and by the outward man purgest the inward, and leadest us through cross-ways to a blessed ending, for reasons best known unto thee." However, when we go from our hospital and place of little intermedial rest in our journey to heaven, it is fit that we give thanks to the Major-domo for our entertainment. When these parts of religion are finished, according to each man's necessity, there is nothing remaining of personal duty to be done alone, but that the sick man act over these virtues by the renewings of devotion, and in the way of prayer; and that is to be continued as long as life, and voice, and reason dwell with us.

[t] Πρὸς τὸν τελευτήσανθ' ἕκαστος, κἂν σφόδρα Ἂν ἐχθρὸς ἦ τις, γίγνεται φίλος τότε.

SECTION X.

Acts of Charity, by way of Prayer and Ejaculation; which may also be used for Thanksgiving, in case of Recovery.

O MY soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord: my goodness extendeth not to thee; but to the saints, that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight. The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot. Psalm xvi. 2, 3, 5.

As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the Lord is tried: he is a buckler to all those that trust in him. For who is God, except the Lord? or who is a rock, save our God? It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect. Psalm xviii. 30—32.

Be not thou far from me, O Lord: O my strength, haste thee to help me. Psalm xxii. 19.

Deliver my soul from the sword, my darling from the power of the dog. Save me from the lion's mouth: and thou hast heard me also from among the horns of the unicorns. Ver. 20, 21.

I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee. Ver. 22.

Ye that fear the Lord, praise the Lord: ye sons

of God, glorify him, and fear before him, all ye sons of men. For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard. Ver. 23, 24.

As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so longeth my soul after thee, O God. Psalm xlii. 1.

My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before the Lord? Ver. 2.

O my God, my soul is cast down within me. All thy waves and billows are gone over me. As with a sword in my bones I am reproached. Yet the Lord will command his loving-kindness in the day-time: and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life. Ver. 6—8, 10.

Bless ye the Lord in the congregations; even the Lord from the fountains of Israel. Psalm lxviii. 26.

My mouth shall show forth thy righteousness and thy salvation all the day; for I know not the numbers thereof. Psalm lxxi. 15.

I will go in the strength of the Lord God: I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only. O God, thou hast taught me from my youth; and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. But I will hope continually, and will yet praise thee more and more. Ver. 16, 17, 14.

Thy righteousness, O God, is very high, who hast done great things. O God, who is like unto thee? Thou which hast showed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth. Ver. 19, 20.

Thou shalt increase thy goodness towards me, and comfort me on every side. Ver. 21.

My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee; and my soul, which thou hast redeemed. Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doth wondrous things. And blessed be his glorious name for ever; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen, Amen. Ver. 23. Psalm lxxii. 18, 19.

I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplication. The sorrows of death compassed me: I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the Lord: O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul. Gracious is the Lord and righteous; yea, our God is merciful. Psalm cxvi. 1, 3—5.

The Lord preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me. Return to thy rest, O my soul: the Lord hath dealt bountifully with me. For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling. Ver. 6—8.

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. O Lord, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: thou shalt loose my bonds. Ver. 15, 16.

He that loveth not the Lord Jesus, let him be accursed. 1 Cor. xvi. 22.

O that I might love thee as well as ever any creature loved thee! He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God. There is no fear in love. 1 John iv. 16, 18.

THE PRAYER.

I.

O most gracious and eternal God and loving Father, who hast poured out thy bowels upon us, and sent the Son of thy love unto us to die for love, and to make us dwell in love, and the eternal comprehensions of thy Divine mercies, O be pleased to inflame my heart with a holy charity towards thee and all the world. Lord, I forgive all that ever have offended me, and beg, that both they and I may enter into the possession of thy mercies, and feel a gracious pardon from the same fountain of grace: and do thou forgive me all the acts of scandal, whereby I have provoked, or tempted, or lessened, or disturbed any person. Lord, let me never have my portion amongst those that divide the union, and disturb the peace, and break the charities of the church, and christian communion. And though I am fallen into evil times, in which christendom is divided by the names of an evil division; yet I am in charity with all christians, with all that love the Lord Jesus, and long for his coming, and I would give my life to save the soul of any of my brethren; and I humbly beg of thee, that the public calamity of the several societies of the church may not be imputed to my soul, to any evil purposes.

II.

Lord, preserve me in the unity of thy holy church, in the love of God and of my neighbours. Let thy grace enlarge my heart to remember, deeply to resent, faithfully to use, wisely to improve, and humbly to give thanks to thee for all thy favours, with which thou hast enriched my soul, and supported my estate, and preserved my person, and rescued me from danger, and invited me to goodness in all the days and periods of my life. Thou hast led me through it with an excellent conduct; and I have gone astray after the manner of men; but my heart is towards thee. O do unto thy servant, as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name: let thy truth comfort me; thy mercy deliver me; thy staff support me; thy grace sanctify my sorrow; and thy goodness pardon all my sins: thy angels guide me with safety in this shadow of death, and thy most Holy Spirit lead me into the land of righteousness, for thy name's sake, which is so comfortable, and, for Jesus Christ's sake, our dearest Lord and most gracious Saviour. Amen.

CHAPTER V.

OF VISITATION OF THE SICK: OR THE ASSISTANCE THAT IS TO BE DONE TO DYING PERSONS BY THE MINISTRY OF THEIR CLERGY-GUIDES.

SECTION I.

GOD, who hath made no new covenant with dying persons distinct from the covenant of the living, hath also appointed no distinct sacraments for them, no other manner of usages but such as are common to all the spiritual necessities of living and healthful persons. In all the days of our religion, from our baptism to the resignation and delivery of our soul, God hath appointed his servants to minister to the necessities, and eternally to bless, and prudently to guide, and wisely to judge concerning souls; and the Holy Ghost, that anointing from above, descends upon us in several effluxes, but ever by the ministries of the church. Our heads are anointed with that sacred unction, baptism, (not in ceremony, but in real and proper effect,) our foreheads in confirmation, our hands in ordinations, all our senses in the visitation of the sick; and all by the ministry of especially-deputed and instructed persons: and we, who all our lifetime derive blessings from the fountains of grace, by the channels of ecclesiastical ministries, must do it then especially, when our needs are most pungent and actual. 1. We cannot give up our names to Christ, but the holy man, that ministers in religion, must enrol them, and present the persons, and consign the grace: when we beg for God's Spirit, the minister can best present our prayers, and by his advocation hallow our private desires, and turn them into public and potent offices. 2. If we desire to be established and confirmed in the grace and religion of our baptism, the holy man, whose hands were anointed by a special ordination to that and its symbolical purposes, lays his hands upon the catechumen, and the anointing from above descends by that ministry. 3. If we would eat the body and drink the blood of our Lord, we must address ourselves to the Lord's table, and he that stands there to bless and to minister, can reach it forth, and feed thy soul; and without his ministry thou canst not be nourished with that heavenly feast, nor thy body consigned to immortality, nor thy soul refreshed with the sacramental bread from heaven, except by spiritual suppletories, in cases of necessity and an impossible communion. 4. If we have committed sins, the spiritual man is appointed to restore us, and to pray for us, and to receive our confessions, and to inquire into our wounds, and to infuse oil and remedy, and to pronounce pardon. 5. If we be cut off from the communion of the faithful by our own demerits, their holy hands must reconcile us and give us peace; they are our appointed comforters, our instructors, our ordinary judges: and in the whole, what the children of Israel begged of Moses,[u] that God would no more speak to them alone, but by his servant Moses, lest they should be consumed; God, in compliance with our infirmities, hath of his own goodness established as a perpetual law in all ages of christianity, that God will speak to us by his ministers, and our solemn prayers shall be made to him by their advocation, and his blessings descend from heaven by their hands, and our offices return thither by their presidencies, and our repentance shall be managed by them, and our pardon in many degrees ministered by them: God comforts us by their sermons, and reproves us by their discipline, and cuts off some by their severity, and reconciles others by their gentleness, and relieves us by their prayers, and instructs us by their discourses, and heals our sicknesses by their intercession presented to God, and united to Christ's advocation: and in all this, they are no causes, but servants, of the will of God, instruments of the Divine grace and order, stewards and dispensers of the mysteries, and appointed to our souls to serve and lead, and to help in all accidents, dangers, and necessities.

And they, who received us in our baptism, are also to carry us to our grave, and to take care, that our end be, as our life was, or should have been:[v] and therefore it is established as an apostolical rule, "Is any man sick among you? let him send for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him,"[w] &c.

The sum of the duties and offices, respectively implied in these words, is in the following rules.

SECTION II.

Rules for the Manner of Visitation of Sick Persons.

1. LET the minister of religion be sent to not only against the agony or death, but be advised with in the whole conduct of the sickness; for in sickness indefinitely, and therefore in every sickness, and therefore in such which are not mortal, which end in health, which have no agony, or final temptations, St. James gives the advice; and the sick man, being bound to require them, is also tied to do it, when he can know them, and his own necessity. It is a very great evil, both in the matter of prudence and piety, that they fear the priest as they fear the embalmer or the sexton's spade; and love not to

[u] Exod. xx. 19.

[v] Οἷόν περ αἰῶνα δεδώκατε, τοιαύτην καὶ τελευτὴν δοῦναι. ΧΕΝΟΡΗ. περὶ παιδ. lib. viii.

[w] James v. 14.

converse with him, unless they can converse with no man else; and think his office so much to relate to the other world, that he is not to be treated with while we hope to live in this; and indeed, that our religion be taken care of only when we die: and the event is this, (of which I have seen some sad experience,) that the man is deadly sick, and his reason is useless, and he is laid to sleep, and his life is in the confines of the grave, so that he can do nothing towards the trimming of his lamp; and the curate shall say a few prayers by him, and talk to a dead man, and the man is not in a condition to be helped, but in a condition to need it hugely. He cannot be called upon to confess his sins, and he is not able to remember them, and he cannot understand an advice, nor hear a free discourse, nor be altered from a passion, nor cured of his fear, nor comforted upon any grounds of reason or religion, and no man can tell what is likely to be his fate; or if he does, he cannot prophesy good things concerning him, but evil. Let the spiritual man come when the sick man can be conversed withal and instructed, when he can take medicine and amend, when he understands, or can be taught to understand, the case of his soul, and the rules of his conscience; and then his advice may turn into advantage: it cannot otherwise be useful.

2. The intercourses of the minister with the sick man have so much variety in them, that they are not to be transacted at once: and therefore they do not well, that send once to see the good man with sorrow, and hear him pray, and thank him, and dismiss him civilly, and desire to see his face no more. To dress a soul for funeral, is not a work to be despatched at one meeting: at first he needs a comfort, and anon something to make him willing to die; and by and by he is tempted to impatience, and that needs a special cure; and it is a great work to make his confessions well and with advantages: and it may be the man is careless and indifferent, and then he needs to understand the evil of his sin, and the danger of his person; and his cases of conscience may be so many and so intricate, that he is not quickly to be reduced to peace, and one time the holy man must pray, and another time he must exhort, a third time administer the holy sacrament; and he that ought to watch all the periods and little portions of his life, lest he should be surprised and overcome, had need be watched when he is sick, and assisted and called upon, and reminded of the several parts of his duty, in every instant of his temptation. This article was well provided for among the easterlings; for the priests in their visitations of a sick person did abide in their attendance and ministry for seven days together. The want of this makes the visitations fruitless, and the calling of the clergy contemptible, while it is not suffered to imprint its proper effects upon them, that need it in a lasting ministry.

3. St. James advises, that when a man is sick, he should send for the elders;[x] one sick man for many presbyters; and so did the eastern churches,[y] they sent for seven: and, like a college of physicians, they ministered spiritual remedies, and sent up prayers like a choir of singing clerks. In cities they might do so, while the christians were few, and the priests many. But when they that dwelt in the *pagi* or villages ceased to be pagans, and were baptized, it grew to be an impossible felicity, unless in few cases, and to some more eminent persons: but because they need it most, God hath taken care, that they may best have it; and they that can, are not very prudent if they neglect it.

4. Whether they be many or few that are sent to the sick person, let the curate of his parish, or his own confessor, be amongst them; that is, let him not be wholly advised by strangers, who know not his particular necessities; but he that is the ordinary judge cannot safely be passed by in his extraordinary necessity, which, in so great portions, depends upon his whole life past: and it is a matter of suspicion, when we decline his judgment that knows us best, and with whom we formerly did converse, either by choice or by law, by private election or public constitution. It concerns us then to make severe and profitable judgments, and not to conspire against ourselves, or procure such assistances, which may handle us softly, or comply with our weaknesses more than relieve our necessities.

5. When the ministers of religion are come, first let them do their ordinary offices, that is, pray for grace to the sick man, for patience, for resignation, for health (if it seems good to God in order to his great ends). For that is one of the ends of the advice of the apostle. And therefore the minister is to be sent for, not while the case is desperate, but before the sickness is come to its crisis or period. Let him discourse concerning the causes of sickness, and by a general instrument move him to consider concerning his condition. Let him call upon him to set his soul in order; to trim his lamp; to dress his soul; to renew acts of grace by way of prayer; to make amends in all the evils he hath done; and to supply all the defects of duty, as much as his past condition requires, and his present can admit.

6. According as the condition of the sickness or the weakness of the man is observed, so the exhortation is to be less, and the prayers more, because the life of the man was his main preparatory; and therefore, if his condition be full of pain and infirmity, the shortness and small number of his own acts is to be supplied by the acts of the ministers and standers-by, who are, in such case, to speak more to God for him than to talk to him. For the prayer of the righteous,[z] when it is fervent, hath a promise to prevail much in behalf of the sick person. But exhortations must prevail with their own proper weight, not by the passion of the speaker. But yet this assistance by way of prayers is not to be done by long offices, but by frequent, and fervent, and holy: in which offices, if the sick man joins, let them be short and apt to comply with his little strength and great infirmities: if they be said in his behalf without his conjunction, they that pray may prudently use their own liberty, and take no

[x] James v. 14. [y] Gabriel in 4. sent. dist. 23. [z] James v. 16.

measures, but their own devotions and opportunities, and the sick man's necessities.

When he hath made this general address and preparatory entrance to the work of many days and periods, he may descend to particulars by the following instruments and discourses.

SECTION III.

Of ministering in the Sick Man's Confession of Sins and Repentance.

THE first necessity that is to be served, is that of repentance, in which the ministers can in no way serve him, but by first exhorting him to confession of his sins, and declaration of the state of his soul. For unless they know the manner of his life, and the degrees of his restitution, either they can do nothing at all, or nothing of advantage and certainty. His discourses, like Jonathan's arrows, may shoot short, or shoot over, but not wound where they should, nor open those humours that need a lancet or a cautery. To this purpose the sick man may be reminded—

Arguments and Exhortations to move the Sick Man to Confession of Sins.

1. That God hath made a special promise to confession of sins. "He that confesseth his sins, and forsaketh them, shall have mercy;"[a] and, "If we confess our sins, God is righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."[b] 2. That confession of sins is a proper act and introduction to repentance. 3. That when the Jews, being warned by the sermons of the Baptist, repented of their sins, they confessed their sins to John, in the susception of baptism.[c] 4. That the converts, in the days of the apostles, returning to christianity, instantly declared their faith and their repentance, by confession and declaration of their deeds,[d] which they then renounced, abjured, and confessed to the apostles. 5. That confession is an act of many virtues together. 6. It is the gate of repentance. 7. An instrument of shame and condemnation of our sins. 8. A glorification of God, so called by Joshua, particularly in the case of Achan. 9. An acknowledgment, that God is just in punishing; for by confessing of our sins, we also confess his justice, and are assessors with God in this condemnation of ourselves. 10. That, by such an act of judging ourselves, we escape the more angry judgment of God: St. Paul expressly exhorting us to it, upon that very inducement.[e] 11. That confession of sins is so necessary a duty, that, in all scriptures, it is the immediate preface to pardon, and the certain consequent of godly sorrow, and an integral or constituent part of that grace, which, together with faith, makes up the whole duty of the gospel. 12. That in all ages of the gospel, it hath been taught and practised respectively, that all the penitents made confessions proportionable to their repentance, that is, public or private, general or particular. 13. That God, by testimonies from heaven, that is, by his word, and by a consequent rare peace of conscience, hath given approbation to this holy duty. 14. That by this instrument, those, whose office it is to apply remedies to every spiritual sickness, can best perform their offices. 15. That it is by all churches esteemed a duty, necessary to be done in cases of a troubled conscience. 16. That what is necessary to be done in one case, and convenient in all cases, is fit to be done by all persons. 17. That without confession, it cannot easily be judged concerning the sick person, whether his conscience ought to be troubled or no, and therefore it cannot be certain that it is not necessary. 18. That there can be no reason against it, but such as consults with flesh and blood, with infirmity and sin, to all which confession of sins is a direct enemy. 19. That now is that time, when all the imperfections of his repentance and all the breaches of his duty are to be made up, and that, if he omits this opportunity, he can never be admitted to a salutary and medicinal confession. 20. That St. James gives an express precept, that we christians should confess our sins to each other,[f] that is, christian to christian, brother to brother, the people to their minister; and then he makes a specification of that duty, which a sick man is to do, when he hath sent for the elders of the church. 21. That, in all this, there is no more lies upon him; but "if he hides his sins, he shall not be directed," so said the wise man: but ere long he must appear before the great Judge of men and angels: and his spirit will be more amazed and confounded to be seen among the angels of light with the shadows of the works of darkness upon him, than he can suffer by confessing to God in the presence of him whom God hath sent to heal him. However, it is better to be ashamed here, than to be confounded hereafter. "Pol pudere præstat quam pigere, totidem literis."[g] 22. That confession, being in order to pardon of sins, it is very proper and analogical to the nature of the thing, that it be made there, where the pardon of sins is to be administered: and that, of pardon of sins God hath made the minister the publisher and dispenser: and all this is besides the accidental advantages, which accrue to the conscience, which is made ashamed, and timorous, and restrained by the mortifications and blushings of discovering to a man the faults committed in secret. 23. That the ministers of the gospel are the ministers of reconciliation, are commanded to restore such persons as are overtaken in a fault; and to that purpose they come to offer their ministry, if they may have cognizance

[a] Prov. xxviii. 13. [b] 1 John i. 9. [c] Matt. iii. 6.
[d] Acts xix. 18. [e] 1 Cor. xi. 31.
[f] Si tacuerit qui percussus est, et non egerit pœnitentiam, nec vulnus suum fratri et magistro voluerit confiteri, magister qui linguam habet ad curandum, facilè ei prodesse non poterit. Si enim erubescat ægrotus vulnus medico confiteri, quod ignorat medicina non curat. St. Hierom. ad caput. x. Eccles. Si enim hoc fecerimus, et revelaverimus peccata nostra non solùm Deo, sed et his qui possunt mederi vulneribus nostris atque peccatis, delebuntur peccata nostra.—ORIG. Hom. 17. in Lucam.
[g] Plaut. Trinum. Tam facile et pronum est superos contemnere testes, si mortalis idem nemo sciat.—JUV. Sat. 13.

of the fault and person. 24. That in the matter of prudence, it is not safe to trust a man's self in the final condition and last security of a man's soul, a man being no good judge in his own case. And when a duty is so useful in all cases, so necessary in some, and encouraged by promises evangelical, by Scripture precedents, by the example of both Testaments, and prescribed by injunctions apostolical, and by the canon of all churches, and the example of all ages, and taught us even by the proportions of duty, and the analogy to the power ministerial, and the very necessities of every man; he that for stubbornness, or sinful shamefacedness, or prejudice, or any other criminal weakness, shall decline to do it in the days of his danger, when the vanities of the world are worn off, and all affections to sin are wearied, and the sin itself is pungent and grievous, and that we are certain we shall not escape shame for them hereafter, unless we be ashamed of them here,[h] and use all the proper instruments of their pardon; this man, I say, is very near death, but very far off from the kingdom of heaven.

2. The spiritual man will find in the conduct of this duty many cases and varieties of accidents, which will alter his course and forms of proceedings. Most men are of a rude indifferency, apt to excuse themselves,[i] ignorant of their condition, abused by evil principles, content with a general and indefinite confession; and if you provoke them to it by the foregoing considerations, lest their spirits should be a little uneasy, or not secured in their own opinions, will be apt to say, they are sinners, as every man hath his infirmity, and he as well as any man; but, God be thanked, they bear no ill-will to any man, or are no adulterers, or no rebels, or they have fought on the right side; and God be merciful to them, for they are sinners. But you shall hardly open their breasts further; and to inquire beyond this, would be to do the office of an accuser.

3. But, which is yet worse, there are very many persons, who have been so used to an habitual course of a constant intemperance, or dissolution in any other instance, that the crime is made natural and necessary, and the conscience hath digested all the trouble, and the man thinks himself in a good estate, and never reckons any sins, but those which are the egressions and passings beyond his ordinary and daily drunkenness. This happens in the cases of drunkenness, and intemperate eating, and idleness, and uncharitableness, and in lying and vain jestings, and particularly in such evils which the laws do not punish, and public customs do not shame, but which are countenanced by potent sinners, or evil customs, or good nature, and mistaken civilities.

Instruments, by Way of Consideration, to awaken a careless Person and a stupid Conscience.

In these and the like cases, the spiritual man must awaken the lethargy, and prick the conscience, by representing to him, 1. That christianity is a holy and strict religion. 2. That many are called, but few are chosen. That the number of them that are to be saved, is but a very few in respect of those that are to descend into sorrow and everlasting darkness. That we have covenanted with God in baptism to live a holy life. That the measures of holiness in the christian religion are not to be taken by the evil proportions of the multitude, and common fame of looser and less severe persons; because the multitude is that, which does not enter into heaven, but the few, the elect, the holy servants of Jesus. That every habitual sin does amount to a very great guilt in the whole, though it be but in a small instance. That if the righteous scarcely be saved, then there will be no place for the unrighteous and the sinner to appear in, but places of horror and amazement. That confidence hath destroyed many souls, and many have had a sad portion, who have reckoned themselves in the calendar of saints. That the promises of heaven are so great, that it is not reasonable to think that every man, and every life, and an easy religion, shall possess such infinite glories. That although heaven is a gift, yet there is a great severity and strict exacting of the conditions on our part to receive that gift. That some persons, who have lived strictly for forty years together, yet have miscarried by some one crime at last, or some secret hypocrisy, or a latent pride, or a creeping ambition, or a fantastic spirit; and therefore much less can they hope to receive so great portions of felicities, when their life hath been a continual declination from those severities, which might have created confidence of pardon and acceptation, through the mercies of God and the merits of Jesus. That every good man ought to be suspicious of himself, and in his judgment concerning his own condition to fear the worst, that he may provide for the better. That we are commanded to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. That this precept was given with great reason, considering the thousand thousand ways of miscarrying. That St. Paul himself, and St. Arsenius, and St. Elzearius, and divers other remarkable saints, had, at some times, great apprehensions of the dangers of failing of the mighty price of their high calling.[k] That the stake that is to be secured, is of so great an interest, that all our industry and all the violences we can suffer in the prosecution of it, are not considerable. That this affair is to be done but once, and then never any more unto eternal ages. That they who profess themselves servants of the institution and servants of the law and discipline of Jesus, will find, that they must judge themselves by the proportions of that law, by which they were to rule themselves. That the laws of society and civility, and the voices of my company, are as ill judges as they are guides; but we are to stand or fall by his sentence, who will not consider or value the talk of idle men, or the persuasion of wilfully

[h] Qui homo culpam admisit in se, nullus est tam parvi pretii quin pudeat, quin purget sese.—PLAUT. Aulul. Act. 4. Sc. 10. 60.

[i] —— Verùm hoc se amplectitur uno,
Hoc amat, hoc laudat, Matronam nullam ego tango.
HORAT. Ser. l. 1. Sat. 2.

[k] Apud Surium, die 27 Sept.

abused consciences, but of him who hath felt our infirmity in all things but sin, and knows where our failings are unavoidable, and where, and in what degree, they are excusable; but never will endure a sin should seize upon any part of our love, and deliberate choice, or careless cohabitation. That if our conscience accuse us not,[l] yet are we not hereby justified; for God is greater than our consciences.[m] That they who are most innocent have their consciences most tender and sensible. That scrupulous persons are always most religious; and that to feel nothing is not a sign of life, but of death. That nothing can be hid from the eyes of the Lord, to whom the day and the night, public and private, words and thoughts, actions and designs, are equally discernible. That a lukewarm person is only secured in his own thoughts, but very unsafe in the event, and despised by God. That we live in an age, in which that which is called and esteemed a holy life, in the days of the apostles and holy primitives would have been esteemed indifferent, sometimes scandalous, and always cold. That what was a truth of God then, is so now: and to what severities they were tied, for the same also we are to be accountable; and heaven is not now an easier purchase than it was then. That if he will cast up his accounts, even with a superficial eye, let him consider how few good works he hath done; how inconsiderable is the relief which he gave to the poor; how little are the extraordinaries of his religion; and how inactive and lame, how polluted and disordered, how unchosen and unpleasant, were the ordinary parts and periods of it; and how many and great sins have stained his course of life: and till he enters into a particular scrutiny, let him only revolve in his mind what his general course hath been; and in the way of prudence, let him say whether it was laudable and holy, or only indifferent and excusable; and if he can think it only excusable, and so as to hope for pardon by such suppletories of faith, and arts of persuasion, which he and others used to take in for auxiliaries to their unreasonable confidence; then he cannot but think it very fit, that he search into his own state, and take a guide, and erect a tribunal, or appear before that which Christ hath erected for him on earth, that he may make his access fairer, when he shall be called before the dreadful tribunal of Christ in the clouds.[n] For if he can be confident upon the stock of an unpraised or a looser life, and should dare to venture upon wild accounts, without order, without abatements, without consideration, without conduct, without fear, without scrutinies and confessions, and instruments of amends or pardon, he either knows not his danger, or cares not for it, and little understands how great a horror that is, that a man should rest his head for ever upon a cradle of flames, and lie in a bed of sorrows, and never sleep, and never end his groans or the gnashing of his teeth.

This is that, which some spiritual persons call a wakening of the sinner by the terrors of the law; which is a good analogy or tropical expression to represent the threatenings of the gospel, and the dangers of an incurious and a sinning person; but we have nothing else to do with the terrors of the law; for blessed be God, they concern us not. The terrors of the law were the intermination of curses upon all those that ever broke any of the least commandments, once, or in any instance; and to it the righteousness of faith is opposed. The terrors of the law admitted no repentance, no pardon, no abatement; and were so severe, that God never inflicted them at all according to the letter, because he admitted all to repentance that desired it with a timely prayer, unless in very few cases, as of Achan, or Korah, the gatherer of sticks upon the sabbath day, or the like; but the state of threatenings in the gospel is very fearful, because the conditions of avoiding them are easy and ready, and they happen to evil persons after many warnings, second thoughts, frequent invitations to pardon and repentance, and after one entire pardon consigned in baptism. And in this sense it is necessary, that such persons, as we now deal withal, should be instructed concerning their danger.

4. When the sick man is, either of himself, or by these considerations, set forward with purposes of repentance, and confession of his sins, in order to all its holy purposes and effects, then the minister is to assist him in the understanding the number of his sins, that is, the several kinds of them, and the various manners of prevaricating the Divine commandments; for as for the number of the particulars in every kind, he will need less help; and if he did, he can have it no where but in his own conscience, and from the witnesses of his conversation. Let this be done by prudent insinuation, by arts of remembrance, and secret notices, and propounding occasions and instruments of recalling such things to his mind, which, either by public fame he is accused of, or by the temptations of his condition, it is likely, he might have contracted.

5. If the person be truly penitent, and forward to confess all, that are set before him or offered to his sight at a half face, then he may be complied withal in all his innocent circumstances, and his conscience made placid and willing, and he be drawn forward by good nature and civility, that his repentance, in all the parts of it, and in every step of its progress and emanation, may be as voluntary and chosen as it can. For by that means if the sick person can be invited to do the work of religion, it enters by the door of his will and choice, and will pass on toward consummation by the instrument of delight.

6. If the sick man be backward and without apprehension of the good-natured and civil way, let the minister take care, that by some way or other the work of God be secured; and if he will not understand, when he is secretly prompted, he must be hallooed to, and asked in plain interrogatives, concerning the crime of his life. He must be told of the evil things that are spoken of him in markets

[l] 1 John iii. 20.
[m] 1 Cor. iv. 4.

[n] Illi mors gravis incubat, qui notus nimis omnibus, ignotus moritur sibi.—THYEST. 401.

and exchanges, the proper temptations and accustomed evils of his calling and condition, of the actions of scandal; and in all those actions which are public, or of which any notice is come abroad, let care be taken, that the right side of the case of conscience be turned toward him, and the error truly represented to him by which he was abused; as the injustice of his contracts, his oppressive bargains, his rapine and violence; and if he hath persuaded himself to think well of a scandalous action, let him be instructed and advertised of his folly and his danger.

7. And this advice concerns the minister of religion to follow without partiality, or fear, or interest, in much simplicity, and prudence, and hearty sincerity; having no other consideration, but that the interest of the man's soul be preserved, and no caution used, but that the matter be represented with just circumstances, and civilities fitted to the person with prefaces of honour and regard; but so that nothing of the duty be diminished by it, that the introduction do not spoil the sermon, and both together ruin two souls, of the speaker, and the hearer. For it may soon be considered, if the sick man be a poor or an indifferent person in secular account, yet his soul is equally dear to God, and was redeemed with the same highest price, and therefore to be highly regarded; and there is no temptation, but that the spiritual man may speak freely without the allays of interest, or fear, or mistaken civilities. But if the sick man be a prince, or a person of eminence or wealth, let it be remembered, it is an ill expression of reverence to his authority, or of regard to his person, to let him perish for the want of an honest, and just, and a free homily.

8. Let the sick man, in the scrutiny of his conscience and confession of his sins, be carefully reminded to consider those sins, which are only condemned in the court of conscience, and no where else. For there are certain secrecies and retirements, places of darkness and artificial veils, with which the devil uses to hide our sins from us, and to incorporate them into our affections by a constant, uninterrupted practice, before they be prejudiced or discovered. 1. There are many sins which have reputation, and are accounted honour; as fighting a duel, answering a blow with a blow, carrying armies into a neighbour-country, robbing with a navy, violently seizing upon a kingdom. 2. Others are permitted by law; as usury in all countries: and because every excess of it is a certain sin, the permission of so suspected a matter makes it ready for us, and instructs the temptation. 3. Some things are not forbidden by laws; as lying in ordinary discourse, jeering, scoffing, intemperate eating, ingratitude, selling too dear, circumventing another in contracts, importunate entreaties, and temptation of persons to many instances of sin, pride, and ambition. 4. Some others do not reckon they sin against God, if the laws have seized upon the person; and many that are imprisoned for debt, think themselves disobliged from payment; and when they pay the penalty, think they owe nothing for the scandal and disobedience. 5. Some sins are thought not considerable, but go under the title of sins of infirmity, or inseparable accidents of mortality; such as idle thoughts, foolish talking, looser revellings, impatience, anger, and all the events of evil company. 6. Lastly, many things are thought to be no sins; such as mispending of their time, whole days and months of useless and impertinent employment, long gaming, winning men's money in greater portions, censuring men's actions, curiosity, equivocating in the prices and secrets of buying and selling, rudeness, speaking truths enviously, doing good to evil purposes, and the like. Under the dark shadow of these unhappy and fruitless yew-trees the enemy of mankind makes very many to lie hid from themselves, sewing before their nakedness the fig-leaves of popular and idle reputation, and impunity, public permission, a temporal penalty, infirmity, prejudice, and direct error in judgment, and ignorance. Now, in all these cases, the ministers are to be inquisitive and observant, lest the fallacy prevail upon the penitent to evil purposes of death or diminution of his good; and that those things, which in his life passed without observation, may now be brought forth, and pass under saws and harrows, that is, the severity and censure of sorrow and condemnation.

9. To which I add, for the likeness of the thing, that the matter of omission be considered; for in them lies the bigger half of our failings; and yet, in many instances, they are undiscerned, because they very often sit down by the conscience, but never upon it; and they are usually looked upon as poor men do upon their not having coach and horses, or as that knowledge is missed by boys and hinds which they never had: it will be hard to make them understand their ignorance: it requires knowledge to perceive it; and therefore he that can perceive it hath it not. But by this pressing the conscience with omissions, I do not mean recessions, or distances from states of eminency or perfection; for although they may be used by the ministers as an instrument of humility, and a chastiser of too big a confidence; yet that, which is to be confessed and repented of, is omission of duty in direct instances and matters of commandment, or collateral and personal obligations, and is especially to be considered by kings and prelates, by governors and rich persons, by guides of souls and presidents of learning in public charge, and by all other in their proportions.

10. The ministers of religion must take care, that the sick man's confession be as minute and particular as it can, and that as few sins as may be be intrusted to the general prayer of pardon for all sins; for by being particular and enumerative of the variety of evils which have disordered his life, his repentance is disposed to be more pungent and afflictive, and therefore more salutary and medicinal: it hath in it more sincerity, and makes a better judgment of the final condition of the man; and from thence it is certain, the hopes of the sick man can be more confident and reasonable.

11. The spiritual man, that assists at the repentance of the sick, must not be inquisitive into all the

circumstances of the particular sins, but be content with those, that are direct parts of the crime, and aggravations of the sorrow; such as frequency, long abode, and earnest choice in acting them; violent desires, great expense, scandal of others; dishonour to the religion, days of devotion, religious solemnities, and holy places; and the degrees of boldness and impudence, perfect resolution and the habit. If the sick person be reminded or inquired into concerning these, it may prove a good instrument to increase his contrition, and perfect his penitential sorrows, and facilitate his absolution, and the means of his amendment. But the other circumstances, as of the relative person in the participation of the crime, the measures or circumstances of the impure action, the name of the injured man or woman, the quality or accidental condition; these, and all the like, are but questions springing from curiosity, and producing scruple, and apt to turn into many inconveniences.

12. The minister in this duty of repentance, must be diligent to observe concerning the person that repents, that he be not imposed upon by some one excellent thing, that was remarkable in the sick man's former life.[o] For there are some people of one good thing. Some are charitable to the poor out of kind-heartedness, and the same good nature makes them easy and compliant with drinking persons, and they die with drink, but cannot live with charity: and their alms, it may be, shall deck their monument, or give them the reward of loving persons, and the poor man's thanks for alms, and procure many temporal blessings; but it is very sad, that the reward should be soon spent in this world. Some are rarely just persons, and punctual observers of their word with men, but break their promises with God, and make no scruple of that. In these and all the like cases, the spiritual man must be careful to remark, that good proceeds from an entire and integral cause, and evil from every part: that one sickness can make a man die; but he cannot live and be called a sound man without an entire health; and therefore, if any confidence arises upon that stock, so as that it hinders the strictness of the repentance, it must be allayed with the representment of this sad truth, "that he who reserves one evil in his choice, hath chosen an evil portion," and coloquintida and death is in the pot: and he that worships the God of Israel with a frequent sacrifice, and yet upon the anniversary will bow in the house of Venus, and loves to see the follies and the nakedness of Rimmon, may eat part of the flesh of the sacrifice, and fill his belly, but shall not be refreshed by the holy cloud arising from the altar, or the dew of heaven descending upon the mysteries.

13. And yet the minister is to estimate, that one or more good things is to be an ingredient into his judgment concerning the state of his soul, and the capacities of his restitution, and admission to the peace of the church: and according as the excellency and usefulness of the grace hath been, and according to the degrees and the reasons of its prosecution, so abatements are to be made in the injunctions and impositions upon the penitent. For every virtue is one degree of approach to God: and though, in respect of the acceptation, it is equally none at all, that is, it is as certain a death if a man dies with one mortal wound, as if he had twenty; yet in such persons, who have some one or more excellencies, though not an entire piety, there is naturally a nearer approach to the estate of grace, than in persons who have done evils, and are eminent for nothing that is good. But in making judgment of such persons, it is to be inquired into, and noted accordingly, why the sick person was so eminent in that one good thing; whether by choice and apprehension of his duty, or whether it was a virtue from which his state of life ministered nothing to dehort or discourage him, or whether it was only a consequent of his natural temper and constitution. If the first, then it supposes him in the neighbourhood of the state of grace, and that in other things he was strongly tempted. The second is a felicity of his education, and an effect of Providence. The third is a felicity of his nature, and a gift of God in order to spiritual purposes. But yet of every one of these advantage is to be made. If the conscience of his duty was the principle, then he is ready formed to entertain all other graces upon the same reason, and his repentance must be made more sharp and penal; because he is convinced to have done against his conscience in all the other parts of his life; but the judgment concerning his final state ought to be more gentle, because it was a huge temptation, that hindered the man and abused his infirmity. But if either his calling or his nature were the parents of the grace, he is in the state of a moral man, (in the just and proper meaning of the word,) and to be handled accordingly: that virtue disposed him rarely well to many other good things, but was no part of the grace of sanctification; and therefore the man's repentance is to begin anew, for all that, and is to be finished in the returns of health, if God grants it; but if he denies it, it is much, very much the worse for all that sweet-natured virtue.

14. When the confession is made, the spiritual man is to execute the office of a restorer and a judge, in the following particulars and manner.

SECTION IV.

Of the Ministering to the Restitution and Pardon, or Reconciliation of the Sick Person, by administering the holy Sacrament.

"IF any man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness;"[p] that is the commission: and, "Let the elders of the church pray over the sick man; and if he have committed sins, they shall be for-

[o] Nunc si depositum non inficiatur amicus,
Si reddat veterem cum totâ ærugine follem,
Prodigiosa fides et Thuscis digna libellis.
JUVEN. Sat. xiii. 62.

[p] Gal. vi. 1.

given him;"[q] that is the effect of his power and his ministry. But concerning this some few things are to be considered.

1. It is the office of the presbyters and ministers of religion to declare public criminals and scandalous persons to be such, that, when the leprosy is declared, the flock may avoid the infection; and then the man is excommunicate, when the people are warned to avoid the danger of the man, or the reproach of the crime, to withdraw from his society, and not to bid him God speed, not to eat and celebrate synaxes and church-meetings with such, who are declared criminal and dangerous. And therefore excommunication is, in a very great part, the act of the congregation and communities of the faithful; and St. Paul said to the church of the Corinthians,[r] that they had inflicted the evil upon the incestuous person, that is, by excommunicating him: all the acts of which are, as they are subjected in the people, acts of caution and liberty; but no more acts of direct proper power, or jurisdiction, than it was when the scholars of Simon Magus left his chair, and went to hear St. Peter: but as they are actions of the rulers of the church, so they are declarative, ministerial, and effective too by moral causality, that is, by persuasion and discourse, by argument and prayer, by homily and material representment, by reasonableness of order and the superinduced necessities of men; though not by any real change of state as to the person, nor by diminution of his right, or violence to his condition.

2. He that baptizes, and he that ministers the holy sacrament, and he that prays, does holy offices of great advantage; but in these also, just as in the former, he exercises no jurisdiction or pre-eminence after the manner of secular authority;[s] and the same is also true, if he should deny them. He that refuseth to baptize an indisposed person, hath, by the consent of all men, no power or jurisdiction over the unbaptized man: and he that, for the like reason, refuseth to give him the communion, preserves the sacredness of the mysteries, and does charity to the undisposed man, to deny that to him which will do him mischief: and this is an act of separation, just as it is for a friend or physician to deny water to an hydropic person, or Italian wines to a hectic fever, or as if Cato should deny to salute Bibulus, or the censor of manners to do countenance to a wanton and a vicious person. And though this thing was expressed by words of power, such as separation, abstention, excommunication, deposition; yet these words we understand by the thing itself, which was notorious and evident to be matter of prudence, security, and a free, unconstrained discipline: and they passed into power by consent and voluntary submission; having the same effect of constraint, fear, and authority, which we see in secular jurisdiction; not because ecclesiastical discipline hath a natural, proper coercion, as lay-tribunals have, but because men have submitted to it, and are bound to do so upon the interest of two or three christian graces.

3. In pursuance of this caution and provision, the church superinduced times and manners of abstention, and expressions of sorrow, and canonical punishments, which they tied the delinquent people to suffer, before they would admit them to the holy table of the Lord. For the criminal having obliged himself by his sin, and the church having declared it, when she should take notice of it, he is bound to repent, to make him capable of pardon with God; and to prove that he is penitent, he is to do such actions, which the church, in the virtue and pursuance of repentance, shall accept as a testimony of it, sufficient to inform her: for as she could not bind at all (in this sense) till the crime was public, though the man had bound himself in secret; so neither can she set him free, till the repentance be as public as the sin, or so as she can note it and approve it. Though the man be free, as to God, by his internal act; yet, as the publication of the sin was accidental to it, and the church-censure consequent to it, so is the publication of repentance and consequent absolution extrinsical to the pardon, but accidentally and in the present circumstances necessary. This was the same that the Jews did, (though in other instances and expressions,) and do to this day to their prevaricating people; and the Essenes in their assemblies, and private colleges of scholars, and public universities. For all these being assemblies of voluntary persons, and such as seek for advantage, are bound to make an artificial authority in their superiors, and so to secure order and government by their own obedience and voluntary subordination, which is not essential and of proper jurisdiction in the superior; and the band of it is not any coercitive power, but the denying to communicate such benefits, which they seek in that communion and fellowship.

4. These, I say, were introduced in the special manners and instances by positive authority, and have not a divine authority commanding them; but there is a divine power, that verifies them, and makes these separations effectual and formidable: for because they are declarative and ministerial in the spiritual man, and suppose a delinquency and demerit in the other, and a sin against God, our blessed Saviour hath declared, that "what they bind on earth shall be bound in heaven;" that is, in plain signification, the same sins and sinners, which the clergy condemn in the face of their assemblies, the same are condemned in heaven before the face of God, and for the same reason too. God's law hath sentenced it, and these are the preachers and publishers of his law, by which they stand condemned; and these laws are they that condemn the sin, or acquit the penitent, there and here; whatsoever they bind here, shall be bound there, that is, the sentence of God at the day of judgment shall sentence the same men,[t] whom the

[q] James v. 14, 15.

[r] 1 Cor. v. 5, 12, 13. 2 Cor. ii. 6.

[s] Homines in remissione peccatorum ministerium suum exhibent, non jus alicujus potestatis exercent: Neque enim in suo, sed in nomine Patris, Filii, et Spiritûs Sancti, peccata dimittuntur: Isti rogant, Divinitas donat.—ST. AMB. de Spir. S. l. iii. c. 10.

[t] Summum futuri judicii præjudicium est, si quis ità

church does rightly sentence here. It is spoken in the future, *it shall be bound in heaven;* not but that the sinner is first bound there, or first absolved there; but because all binding and loosing in the interval is imperfect, and relative to the day of judgment, the day of the great sentence, therefore it is set down in the time to come, and says this only, the clergy are tied by the word and laws of God to condemn such sins and sinners; and that you may not think it ineffective, because after such sentence the man lives, and grows rich, or remains in health and power, therefore be sure it shall be verified in the day of judgment. This is hugely agreeable with the words of our Lord, and certain in reason: for that the minister does nothing to the final alteration of the state of the man's soul by way of sentence, is demonstratively certain, because he cannot bind a man, but such as hath bound himself, and who is bound in heaven by his sin before his sentence in the church: as also because the binding of the church is merely accidental, and upon publication only; and when the man repents, he is absolved before God, before the sentence of the church, upon his contrition and dereliction only; and if he were not, the church could not absolve him. The consequent of which evident truth is this, that whatsoever impositions the church-officers impose upon the criminal, they are to avoid scandal, to testify repentance, and to exercise it, to instruct the people, to make them fear, to represent the act of God, and the secret and the true state of the sinner: and although they are not essentially necessary to our pardon, yet they are become necessary, when the church hath seized upon the sinner by public notice of the crime; necessary (I say) for the removing the scandal, and giving testimony of our contrition, and for the receiving all that comfort which he needs, and can derive from the promises of pardon as they are published by him, that is commanded to preach them to all them that repent. And, therefore, although it cannot be necessary as to the obtaining pardon, that the priest should, in private, absolve a sick man from his private sins, and there is no loosing where there was no precedent binding, and he that was only bound before God can before him only be loosed: yet as to confess sins to any christian in private may have many good ends, and to confess them to a clergyman may have many more; so to hear God's sentence at the mouth of the minister, pardon pronounced by God's ambassador, is of huge comfort to them that cannot otherwise be comforted, and whose infirmity needs it; and therefore it were very fit it were not neglected in the days of our fear and danger, of our infirmities and sorrow.

5. The execution of this ministry being an act of prudence and charity, and therefore relative to changing circumstances, it hath been, and in many cases may, and in some must be, rescinded and altered. The time of separation may be lengthened and shortened, the condition made lighter or heavier, and for the same offence the clergyman is deposed, but yet admitted to the communion, for which one of the people, who hath no office to lose, is denied the benefit of communicating; and this sometimes when he might lawfully receive it: and a private man is separate, when a multitude or a prince is not, cannot, ought not: and at last, when the case of sickness and danger of death did occur, they admitted all men that desired it; sometimes without scruple or difficulty, sometimes with some little restraint in great or insolent cases, (as in the case of apostacy, in which the council of Arles denied absolution,[u] unless they received and gave public satisfaction by acts of repentance; and some other councils denied, at any time, to do it to such persons,) according as seemed fitting to the present necessities of the church. All which particulars declare it to be no part of a divine commandment, that any man should be denied to receive the communion, if he desires it, and if he be in any probable capacity of receiving it.

6. Since the separation was an act of liberty and a direct negative,[v] it follows that the restitution was a mere doing that, which they refused formerly, and to give the holy communion was the formality of absolution, and all the instrument and the whole matter of reconcilement; the taking off the punishment is the pardoning of the sin: for this without the other is but a word; and if this be done, I care not whether any thing be said or no. *Vinum Dominicum ministratoris gratia est*, is also true in this sense; to give the chalice and cup is the grace and indulgence of the minister: and when that is done, the man hath obtained the peace of the church; and to do that is all the absolution the church can give. And they were vain disputes, which were commenced, some few ages since, concerning the forms of absolution, whether they were indicative or optative, by way of declaration or by way of sentence: for at first they had no forms at all, but they said a prayer, and after the manner of the Jews, laid hands upon the penitent, when they prayed over him, and so admitted him to the holy communion: for since the church had no power over her children, but of excommunicating and denying them to attend upon holy offices and ministries respectively, neither could they have any absolution, but to admit them thither from whence formerly they were forbidden: whatsoever ceremony or forms did signify, this was superinduced and arbitrary, alterable and accidental; it had variety, but no necessity.

7. The practice consequent to this is, that if the penitent be bound by the positive censures of the church, he is to be reconciled upon those conditions which the laws of the church tie him to, in case he can perform them: if he cannot, he can no longer

deliquerit ut à communicatione orationis et conventûs et omnis sancti commercii relegetur.—TERT. Ap. c. 39.

Atque hoc idem innuitur per summam Apostoli censuram in reos maximi criminis: sit *ανάθεμα μαρανάθα*, id est, excommunicatus majori excommunicatione; Dominus veniet, scil. ad judicandum eum: ad quod judicium hæc censura ecclesiæ est relativa et in ordine. Tum demum pœnas dabit: ad quas, nisi resipiscat, hîc consignatur.

[u] Arelat. cap. 3.

[v] Vide 2 Cor. ii. 10. et S. Cyprian. ep. 73.

be prejudiced by the censure of the church,[w] which had no relation but to the people, with whom the dying man is no longer to converse: for whatsoever relates to God is to be transacted in spiritual ways, by contrition and internal graces; and the mercy of the church is such, as to give him her peace and her blessing, upon his undertaking to obey her injunctions if he shall be able; which injunctions, if they be declared by public sentence, he minister hath nothing to do in the affairs, but to remind him of his obligation, and reconcile him, that is, give him the holy sacrament.

8. If the penitent be not bound by public sentence, the minister is to make his repentance as great, and his heart as contrite, as he can; to dispose him by the repetition of acts of grace in the way of prayer, and in real and exterior instances, where he can; and then to give him the holy communion in all the same cases, in which he ought not to have denied it to him in his health; that is, even in the beginnings of such a repentance, which, by human signs, he believes to be real and holy; and after this, the event must be left to God. The reason of the rule depends upon this; because there is no divine commandment directly forbidding the rulers of the church to give the communion to any christian that desires it, and professes repentance of his sins. And all church-discipline in every instance, and to every single person, was imposed upon him by men, who did it according to the necessities of this state and constitution of our affairs below: but we, who are but ministers and delegates of pardon and condemnation, must resign and give up our judgment, when the man is no more to be judged by the sentences of man, and by the proportions of this world, but of the other: to which if our reconciliation does advantage, we ought in charity to send him forth with all the advantages he can receive; for he will need them all. And therefore the Nicene council commands,[x] that no man be deprived of this necessary passport in the article of his death, and calls this the ancient and canonical law of the church; and to minister it, only supposes the man in the communion of the church, not always in the state, but ever in the possibilities of sanctification. They who in the article and danger of death were admitted to the communion, and tied to penance if they recovered, (which was ever the custom of the ancient church, unless in very few cases,) were but in the threshold of repentance, in the commencement and first introductions to a devout life: and indeed then it is a fit ministry, that it be given in all the periods of time, in which the pardon of sins is working, since it is the sacrament of that great mystery,[y] and the exhibition of that blood, which is shed for the remission of sins.

9. The minister of religion ought not to give the communion to a sick person, if he retains the affection to any sin, and refuses to disavow it, or profess repentance of all sins whatsoever, if he be required to do it. The reason is, because it is a certain death to him,[z] and an increase of his misery, if he shall so profane the body and blood of Christ, as to take it into so unholy a breast, where Satan reigns, and sin is principal, and the Spirit is extinguished, and Christ loves not to enter, because he is not suffered to inhabit. But when he professes repentance,[a] and does such acts of it as his present condition permits, he is to be presumed to intend heartily what he professes solemnly; and the minister is only the judge of outward act, and by that only he is to take information concerning the inward. But whether he be so or no, or if he be, whether that be timely, and effectual and sufficient toward the pardon of sins before God, is another consideration, of which we may conjecture here, but we shall know it at doomsday. The spiritual man is to do his ministry by the rules of Christ, and as the customs of the church appoint him, and after the manner of men: the event is in the hands of God, and is to be expected, not directly and wholly according to his ministry, but to the former life, or the timely internal repentance and amendment,[b] of which I have already given accounts. These ministries are acts of order and great assistances, but the sum of affairs does not rely upon them. And if any man puts his whole repentance upon this time, or all his hopes upon these ministries, he will find them and himself to fail.

10. It is the minister's office to invite sick and dying persons to the holy sacrament; such, whose lives were fair and laudable, and yet their sickness sad and violent, making them listless and of slow desires, and slower apprehensions: that such persons, who are in the state of grace, may lose no accidental advantages of spiritual improvement, but may receive into their dying bodies the symbols and great consignations of the resurrection, and into their souls the pledges of immortality; and may appear before God their Father in the union and with the impresses and likeness of their elder Brother. But if the persons be of ill report, and have lived wickedly, they are not to be invited; because their case is hugely suspicious, though they then repent and call for mercy: but if they demand it, they are not to be denied: only let the minister, in general, represent the evil consequence of an unworthy participation; and if the penitent will judge himself unworthy, let him stand candidate for pardon at the hands of God, and stand or fall by that unerring and merciful sentence; to which his severity of condemning himself before men will make

[w] Caus. 26. Q. 6. et q. 7.

[x] Can. 13. Vide etiam Con. Ancyr. cap. 6. Aurel. 2. cap. 12.

[y] O sacrum convivium in quo Christus sumitur, recolitur memoria passionis ejus, mens impletur gratiâ, et futuræ gloriæ nobis pignus datur!

[z] Ita vide, ut prosit, illis ignosci, quos ad pœnam ipse Deus deduxit: quod ad me attinet, non sum crudelis, sed vereor, ne, quod remisero, patiar. Tryphæna dixit apud Petronium, 106. 3.

[a] Sævi quoque et implacabiles domini crudelitatem suam impediunt, si, quando pœnitentia fugitivos reduxit, dedititiis hostibus parcimus.

[b] Quæcunque ergò de pœnitentiâ jubendo dicta sunt, non ad exteriorem, sed ad interiorem referenda sunt, sine quâ nullus unquam Deo reconciliari poterit.—GRATIAN. De Pœnit. d. I. Quis aliquando.

the easier and more hopeful address. And the strictest among the christians, who denied to reconcile lapsed persons after baptism, yet acknowledged, that there were hopes reserved in the court of heaven for them, though not here: since we, who are easily deceived by the pretences of a real return, are tied to dispense God's graces as he hath given us commission, with fear and trembling,[c] and without too forward confidences; and God has mercies which we know not of; and therefore, because we know them not, such persons were referred to God's tribunal, where he would find them, if they were to be had at all.

11. When the holy sacrament is to be administered, let the exhortation be made proper to the mystery, but fitted to the man; that is, that it be used for the advantages of faith, or love, or contrition: let all the circumstances and parts of the Divine love be represented, all the mysterious advantages of the blessed sacrament be declared; that it is the bread which came from heaven, that it is the representation of Christ's death to all the purposes and capacities of faith, and the real exhibition of Christ's body and blood to all the purposes of the Spirit: that it is the earnest of the resurrection, and the seed of a glorious immortality; that as, by our cognation to the body of the first Adam, we took in death, so, by our union with the body of the second Adam, we shall have the inheritance of life; (for as by Adam came death, so by Christ cometh the resurrection of the dead;[d]) that if we, being worthy communicants of these sacred pledges, be presented to God with Christ within us, our being accepted of God is certain, even for the sake of his Well-beloved, that dwells within us; that this is the sacrament of that body, which was broken for our sins, of that blood, which purifies our souls, by which we are presented to God pure and holy in the Beloved; that now we may ascertain our hopes, and make our faith confident; "for he that hath given us his Son, how should not he, with him, give us all things else?"[e] Upon these or the like considerations, the sick may be assisted in his address, and his faith strengthened, and his hope confirmed, and his charity be enlarged.

12. The manner of the sick man's reception of the holy sacrament, hath in it nothing differing from the ordinary solemnities of the sacrament,[f] save only that abatement is to be made of such accidental circumstances, as by the laws and customs of the church healthful persons are obliged to; such as fasting, kneeling, &c. Though I remember, that it was noted for great devotion in the legate that died at Trent, that he caused himself to be sustained upon his knees, when he received the *viaticum* or the holy sacrament before his death; and it was greater in Huniades, that he caused himself to be carried to the church, that there he might receive his Lord, in his Lord's house; and it was recorded for honour, that William, the pious archbishop of Bourges, a small time before his last agony, sprang out of his bed at the presence of the holy sacrament, and, upon his knees and his face, recommended his soul to his Saviour. But in these things, no man is to be prejudiced or censured.

13. Let not the holy sacrament be administered to dying persons, when they have no use of reason to make that duty acceptable, and the mysteries effective to the purposes of the soul. For the sacraments and ceremonies of the gospel operate not without the concurrent actions and moral influences of the suscipient. To infuse the chalice into the cold lips of the clinic may disturb his agony; but cannot relieve the soul, which only receives improvement by acts of grace and choice, to which the external rites are apt and appointed to minister in a capable person. All other persons, as fools, children, distracted persons, lethargical, apoplectical, or any way senseless and incapable of human and reasonable acts, are to be assisted only by prayers: for they may prevail even for the absent, and for enemies, and for all those who join not in the office.

SECTION V.

Of ministering to the sick Person by the spiritual Man, as he is the Physician of Souls.

1. IN all cases of receiving confessions of sick men, and the assisting to the advancement of repentance, the minister is to apportion to every kind of sin such spiritual remedies which are apt to mortify and cure the sin; such as abstinence from their occasions and opportunities, to avoid temptations, to resist their beginnings, to punish the crime by acts of indignation against the person, fastings and prayer, alms and all the instances of charity, asking forgiveness, restitution of wrongs, satisfaction of injuries, acts of virtue contrary to the crimes. And although, in great and dangerous sicknesses, they are not directly to be imposed, unless they are direct matters of duty; yet where they are medicinal, they are to be insinuated, and in general signification remarked to him, and undertaken accordingly: concerning which, when he returns to health, he is to receive particular advices. And this advice was inserted into the Penitential of England, in the time of Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury, and afterwards adopted into the canon of the western churches.[g]

2. The proper temptations of sick men, for which a remedy is not yet provided, are unreasonable fears and unreasonable confidences, which the minister is to cure by the following considerations.

Considerations against unreasonable Fears of not having our Sins pardoned.

Many good men, especially such who have tender consciences, impatient of the least sin, to which they are arrived by a long grace, and a continual observation of their actions, and the parts of a last-

[c] 1 Cor. ii. 3.
[d] 1 Cor. xv. 22.
[e] Rom. viii. 32.
[f] Vide Rule of Holy Living, chap. iv. sect. 10; and Hist. of the Life of Jesus, Part 3. Disc 18.
[g] Caus. 26. Q. 7. ab infirmis.

ing repentance, many times overact their tenderness, and turn their caution into scruple, and care of their duty into inquiries after the event, and askings after the counsels of God, and the sentences of doomsday.

He that asks of the standers-by, or of the minister, whether they think he shall be saved or damned, is to be answered with the words of pity and reproof. Seek not after new light for the searching into the private records of God: look as much as you list into the pages of revelation, for they concern your duty: but the event is registered in heaven, and we can expect no other certain notices of it, but that it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared by the Father of mercies. We have light enough to tell our duty; and if we do that, we need not fear what the issue will be; and if we do not, let us never look for more light, or inquire after God's pleasure concerning our souls, since we so little serve his ends in those things, where he hath given us light. But yet this I add, that as pardon of sins, in the Old Testament,[h] was nothing but removing the punishment, which then was temporal, and therefore many times they could tell if their sins were pardoned; and concerning pardon of sins they then had no fears of conscience, but while the punishment was on them, for so long indeed it was unpardoned, and how long it would so remain, it was matter of fear, and of present sorrow: besides this, in the gospel, pardon of sins is another thing; pardon of sins is a sanctification; Christ came to take away our sins, by turning every one of us from our iniquities;[i] and there is not in the nature of the thing any expectation of pardon, or sign or signification of it, but so far as the thing itself discovers itself. As we hate sin, and grow in grace, and arrive at the state of holiness, which is also a state of repentance and imperfection, but yet of sincerity of heart and diligent endeavour; in the same degree we are to judge concerning the forgiveness of sins: for indeed that is the evangelical forgiveness, and it signifies our pardon, because it effects it, or rather it is in the nature of the thing; so that we are to inquire into no hidden records: forgiveness of sins is not a secret sentence, a word or a record; but it is a state of change, and effected upon us; and upon ourselves we are to look for it, to read it, and understand it. We are only to be curious of our duty, and confident of the article of remission of sins;[k] and the conclusion of these premises will be, that we shall be full of hopes of a prosperous resurrection; and our fear and trembling are no instances of our calamity, but parts of duty; we shall sure enough be wafted to the shore, although we be tossed with the winds of our sighs, and the unevenness of our fears, and the ebbings and flowings of our passions, if we sail in a right channel, and steer by a perfect compass, and look up to God, and call for his help, and do our own endeavour. There are very many reasons why men ought not to despair; and there are not very many men, that ever go beyond a hope, till they pass into possession. If our fears have any mixture of hope, that is enough to enable and to excite our duty; and if we have a strong hope, when we cast about we shall find reason enough to have many fears. Let not this fear weaken our hands;[l] and if it allay our gaieties and our confidences, it is no harm. In this uncertainty we must abide, if we have committed sins after baptism: and those confidences, which some men glory in, are not real supports or good foundations. The fearing man is the safest; and if he fears on his death-bed, it is but what happens to most considering men, and what was to be looked for all his life-time: he talked of the terrors of death, and death is the king of terrors; and therefore it is no strange thing, if then he be hugely afraid: if he be not, it is either a great felicity, or a great presumption. But if he wants some degree of comfort, or a greater degree of hope, let him be refreshed by considering,

1. That Christ came into the world to save sinners.[m] 2. That God delights not in the confusion and death of sinners.[n] 3. That in heaven there is great joy at the conversion of a sinner.[o] 4. That Christ is a perpetual advocate, daily interceding with his Father for our pardon.[p] 5. That God uses infinite arts, instruments, and devices, to reconcile us to himself. 6. That he prays us to be in charity with him, and to be forgiven.[q] 7. That he sends angels to keep us from violence and evil company, from temptations and surprises, and his Holy Spirit to guide us in holy ways, and his servants to warn us and remind us perpetually: and therefore since certainly he is so desirous to save us, as appears by his word, by his oaths, by his very nature, and his daily artifices of mercy; it is not likely that he will condemn us without great provocations of his majesty, and perseverance in them. 8. That the covenant of the gospel is a covenant of grace and of repentance, and being established with so many great solemnities and miracles from heaven, must signify a huge favour and a mighty change of things; and therefore that repentance, which is the great condition of it, is a grace, that does not expire in little accents and minutes, but hath a great latitude of signification and large extension of parts, under the protection of all which persons are safe, even when they fear exceedingly. 9. That there are great degrees and differences of glory in heaven; and therefore, if we estimate our piety by proportions to the more eminent persons and devouter people, we are not to conclude we shall not enter into the same state of glory, but that we shall not go into the same degrees. 10. That although forgiveness of sins is consigned to us in baptism, and that this baptism is but once, and cannot be repeated; yet forgiveness of sins is the grace of the gospel, which is perpetually remanent upon us, and secured unto us so long as we have not renounced

[h] Matt. ix. 6. [i] Acts iii. 26.
[k] Est modus gloriandi in conscientia, ut noveris fidem tuam esse sinceram, spem tuam esse certam.—AUGUST. Psal. cxlix.

[l] Una est nobilitas, argumentúmque coloris
Ingenui, timidas non habuisse manus.
[m] 1 Tim. i. 15. [n] Ezek. xxxiii. 11.
[o] Luke xv. 7. [p] 1 John ii. 1. [q] 2 Cor. v. 20.

our baptism: for then we enter into the condition of repentance; and repentance is not an indivisible grace, or a thing performed at once, but it is working all our lives; and therefore so is our pardon, which ebbs and flows, according as we discompose or renew the decency of our baptismal promises; and therefore it ought to be certain, that no man despair of pardon, but he that hath voluntarily renounced his baptism, or willingly estranged himself from that covenant. He that sticks to it, and still professes the religion, and approves the faith, and endeavours to obey and to do his duty, this man hath all the veracity of God to assure him and give him confidence, that he is not in an impossible state of salvation, unless God cuts him off before he can work, or that he begins to work when he can no longer choose. 11. And then let him consider, the more he fears, the more he hates his sin, that is the cause of it, and the less he can be tempted to it, and the more desirous he is of heaven; and therefore such fears are good instruments of grace, and good signs of a future pardon. 12. That God, in the old law, although he made a covenant of perfect obedience, and did not promise pardon at all after great sins, yet he did give pardon, and declared it so to them for their own and for our sakes too. So he did to David, to Manasses, to the whole nation of the Israelites, ten times in the wilderness, even after their apostasies and idolatries. And in the prophets,[r] the mercies of God and his remissions of sin were largely preached, though, in the law, God put on the robes of an angry judge and a severe lord. But therefore in the gospel, where he hath established the whole sum of affairs upon faith and repentance, if God should not pardon great sinners, that repent after baptism with a free dispensation, the gospel were far harder than the intolerable covenant of the law. 13. That if a proselyte went into the Jewish communion, and were circumcised and baptized, he entered into all the hopes of good things, which God had promised, or would give, to his people; and yet that was but the covenant of works. If then the gentile proselytes, by their circumcision and legal baptism, were admitted to a state of pardon, to last so long as they were in the covenant, even after their admission, for sins committed against Moses's law, which they then undertook to observe exactly: in the gospel, which is the covenant of faith, it must needs be certain, that there is a greater grace given, and an easier condition entered into, than was that of the Jewish law: and that is nothing else, but that abatement is made for our infirmities, and our single evils, and our timely-repented and forsaken habits of sin, and our violent passions, when they are contested withal, and fought with, and under discipline, and in the beginnings and progresses of mortification. 14. That God hath erected in his church a whole order of men, the main part and dignity of whose work it is to remit and retain sins by a perpetual and daily ministry: and this they do, not only in baptism, but in all their offices to be administered afterwards; in the holy sacrament of the eucharist, which exhibits the symbols of that blood which was shed for pardon of our sins, and therefore by its continued mystery and repetition declares, that *all that while* we are within the ordinary powers and usual dispensations of pardon, even so long as we are in any probable dispositions to receive that holy sacrament. And the same effect is also signified and exhibited in the whole power of the keys, which, if it extends to private sins, sins done in secret, it is certain it does also to public. But this is a greater testimony of the certainty of the remissibility of our greatest sins: for public sins, as they always have a sting and a superadded formality of scandal and ill example, so they are most commonly the greatest; such as murder, sacrilege, and others of unconcealed nature and unprivate action; and if God, for these worst of evils, hath appointed an office of ease and pardon, which is, and may, daily be administered, that will be an uneasy pusillanimity and fond suspicion of God's goodness, to fear, that our repentance shall be rejected, even although we have committed the greatest or the most of evils. 15. And it was concerning baptized christians that St. John said, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, and he is the propitiation for our sins;" and concerning lapsed christians St. Paul gave instruction, that "If any man be overtaken in a fault, ye, which are spiritual, restore such a man in the spirit of meekness; considering, lest ye also be tempted." The Corinthian christian committed incest, and was pardoned: and Simon Magus, after he was baptized, offered to commit his own sin of simony; and yet St. Peter bid him pray for pardon: and St. James tells, that "if the sick man sends for the elders of the church, and they pray over him, and he confess his sins, they shall be forgiven him." 16. That only one sin is declared to be irremissible, "the sin against the Holy Ghost, the sin unto death," as St. John calls it, for which we are not bound to pray; for all others we are: and certain it is, no man commits a sin against the Holy Ghost, if he be afraid he hath, and desires that he had not; for such penitential passions are against the definition of that sin. 17. That all the sermons in the Scripture written to christians and disciples of Jesus, exhorting men to repentance, to be afflicted, to mourn and to weep, to confession of sins, are sure testimonies of God's purpose and desire to forgive us, even when we fall after baptism: and if our fall after baptism were irrecoverable, then all preaching were in vain, and our faith were also vain, and we could not with comfort rehearse the creed, in which, as soon as ever we profess Jesus to have died for our sins, we also are condemned by our own conscience of a sin that shall not be forgiven; and then all exhortations, and comforts, and fasts, and disciplines were useless and too late, if they were not given us before we can understand them; for most commonly, as soon as we can, we enter into the regions of sin; for we commit evil actions before we understand, and together with our understanding they begin to be imputed. 18. That if it could be otherwise, infants were very ill provided for in the church, who were baptized, when

[r] Ezek. xviii. Joel ii.

they have no stain upon their brows, but the misery they contracted from Adam: and they are left to be angels for ever after, and live innocently in the midst of their ignorances, and weaknesses, and temptations, and the heat and follies of youth; or else to perish in an eternal ruin. We cannot think or speak good things of God, if we entertain such evil suspicions of the mercies of the Father of our Lord Jesus. 19. That the long-sufferance and patience of God is indeed wonderful; but therefore it leaves us in certainties of pardon, so long as there is a possibility to return, if we reduce the power to act. 20. That God calls upon us to forgive our brother seventy times seven times; and yet all that is but like the forgiving a hundred pence for his sake, who forgives us ten thousand talents; for so the Lord professed, that he had done to him that was his servant and his domestic. 21. That if we can forgive a hundred thousand times, it is certain God will do so to us; our blessed Lord having commanded us to pray for pardon, as we pardon our offending and penitent brother. 22. That even in the case of very great sins, and great judgments inflicted upon the sinners, wise and good men and presidents of religion have declared their sense to be, that God spent all his anger, and made it expire in that temporal misery; and so it was supposed to have been done in the case of Ananias; but that the hopes of any penitent man may not rely upon any uncertainty, we find in holy Scripture, that those christians, who had, for their scandalous crimes, deserved to be given over to Satan to be buffeted, yet had hopes to be saved in the day of the Lord. 23. That God glories in the titles of mercy and forgiveness, and will not have his appellatives so finite and limited as to expire in one act, or in a seldom pardon. 24. That man's condition were desperate, and like that of the fallen angels, equally desperate, but unequally oppressed, considering our infinite weaknesses and ignorances, (in respect of their excellent understanding and perfect choice,) if he could be admitted to no repentance after his infant-baptism: and if he may be admitted to one, there is nothing in the covenant of the gospel, but he may also to a second, and so for ever, as long as he can repent, and return and live to God in a timely religion. 25. That every man is a sinner: "In many things we offend all;"[t] and, "if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves:"[u] and therefore either all must perish, or else there is mercy for all; and so there is upon this very stock, because "Christ died for sinners,"[x] and, "God hath comprehended all under sin, that he might have mercy upon all."[y] 26. That if ever God sends temporal punishments into the world with purposes of amendment, and if they be not, all of them, certain consignations to hell, and unless every man, that breaks his leg, or in punishment loses a child or wife, be certainly damned, it is certain, that God, in these cases, is angry and loving, chastises the sin to amend the person, and smites, that he may cure, and judges, that he may absolve. 27. That he, that will not quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed, will not tie us to perfection, and the laws and measures of heaven upon earth: and if, in every period of our repentance, he is pleased with our duty, and the voice of our heart and the hand of our desires, he hath told us plainly, that he will not only pardon all the sins of the days of our folly, but the returns and surprises of sins in the days of repentance, if we give no way, and allow no affection, and give no place to any thing that is God's enemy; all the past sins, and all the seldom-returning and ever-repented evils being put upon the accounts of the cross.

[t] James iii. 2. [u] 1 John i. 8.

An Exercise against Despair in the Day of our Death.

To which may be added this short exercise, to be used for the curing the temptation to direct despair, in case that the hope and faith of good men be assaulted in the day of their calamity.

I consider that the ground of my trouble is my sin; and if it were not for that, I should not need to be troubled: but the help, that all the world looks for, is such, as supposes a man to be a sinner. Indeed if from myself I were to derive my title to heaven, then my sins were a just argument of despair; but now that they bring me to Christ, that they drive me to an appeal to God's mercies, and to take sanctuary in the cross, they ought not, they cannot infer a just cause of despair. I am sure it is a stranger thing, that God should take upon him hands and feet, and those hands and feet should be nailed upon a cross, than that a man should be partaker of the felicities of pardon and life eternal: and it were stranger yet that God should do so much for man, and that a man that desires it, that labours for it, that is in life and possibilities of working his salvation, should inevitably miss that end, for which that God suffered so much. For what is the meaning, and what is the extent, and what are the significations of the Divine mercy in pardoning sinners? If it be thought a great matter, that I am charged with original sin, I confess I feel the weight of it in loads of temporal infelicities, and proclivities to sin: but I fear not the guilt of it, since I am baptized; and it cannot do honour to the reputation of God's mercy, that it should be all spent in remissions of what I never chose, never acted, never knew of, could not help, concerning which I received no commandment, no prohibition. But, blessed be God, it is ordered in just measures, that that original evil, which I contracted without my will, should be taken away without my knowledge; and what I suffered before I had a being, was cleansed before I had a useful understanding. But I am taught to believe God's mercies to be infinite, not only in himself, but to us: for mercy is a relative term, and we are its correspondent: of all the creatures which God made, we only, in a proper sense, are the subjects of mercy and remission. Angels have more of God's bounty than we have, but not so much of his mercy: and beasts have little rays of his kindness, and effects of his wisdom and graciousness in petty donatives, but nothing of mercy; for they

[x] Rom. v. 8. [y] Rom. xi. 32.

have no laws, and therefore no sins, and need no mercy, nor are capable of any. Since therefore man alone is the correlative or proper object and vessel of reception of an infinite mercy, and that mercy is in giving and forgiving, I have reason to hope, that he will so forgive me, that my sins shall not hinder me of heaven: or because it is a gift, I may also, upon the stock of the same infinite mercy, hope he will give heaven to me; and if I have it either upon the title of giving or forgiving, it is alike to me, and will alike magnify the glories of the Divine mercy. And because eternal life is the gift of God,[z] I have less reason to despair: for if my sins were fewer, and my disproportions towards such a glory were less, and my evenness more; yet it is still a gift, and I could not receive it but as a free and a gracious donative; and so I may still: God can still give it me; and it is not an impossible expectation to wait and look for such a gift at the hands of the God of mercy: the best men deserve it not; and I, who am the worst, may have it given me. And I consider, that God hath set no measures of his mercy, but that we be within the covenant, that is, repenting persons, endeavouring to serve him with an honest single heart; and that, within this covenant, there is a very great latitude, and variety of persons, and degrees, and capacities; and therefore, that it cannot stand with the proportions of so infinite a mercy, that obedience be exacted to such a point, which he never expressed unless it should be the least, and that to which all capacities, though otherwise unequal, are fitted and sufficiently enabled. But, however, I find, that the Spirit of God taught the writers of the New Testament to apply to us all, in general, and to every single person in particular, some gracious words, which God in the Old Testament spake to one man, upon a special occasion, in a single and temporal instance. Such are the words which God spake to Joshua: "I will never fail thee, nor forsake thee:" and, upon the stock of that promise, St. Paul forbids covetousness, and persuades contentedness,[a] because those words were spoken by God to Joshua in another case. If the gracious words of God have so great extension of parts, and intention of kind purposes, then how many comforts have we, upon the stock of all the excellent words which are spoken in the Prophets and in the Psalms! and I will never more question, whether they be spoken concerning me, having such an authentic precedent so to expound the excellent words of God: all the treasures of God, which are in the Psalms, are my own riches, and the wealth of my hope: there will I look; and whatsoever I can need, that I will depend upon. For certainly, if we could understand it, that which is infinite (as God is) must needs be some such kind of thing: it must go whither it was never sent, and signify what was not first intended, and it must warm with its light, and shine with its heat, and refresh when it strikes, and heal when it wounds, and ascertain where it makes afraid, and intend all when it warns one, and mean a great deal in a small word. And as the sun, passing to its southern tropic, looks with an open eye upon his sun-burnt Ethiopians, but at the same time sends light from its posterns, and collateral influences from the backside of his beams, and sees the corners of the east, when his face tends towards the west, because he is a round body of fire, and hath some little images and resemblances of the Infinite; so is God's mercy: when it looked upon Moses, it relieved St. Paul, and it pardoned David, and gave hope to Manasses, and might have restored Judas, if he would have had hope, and used himself accordingly. But as to my own case, I have sinned grievously and frequently;[b] but I have repented it; but I have begged pardon: I have confessed it and forsaken it. I cannot undo what was done, and I perish if God hath appointed no remedy, if there be no remission; but then my religion falls together with my hope, and God's word fails, as well as I. But I believe the article of forgiveness of sins; and if there be any such thing, I may do well, for I have, and do, and will do that, which all good men call repentance; that is, I will be humbled before God, and mourn for my sin, and for ever ask forgiveness, and judge myself, and leave it with haste, and mortify it with diligence, and watch against it carefully. And this I can do but in the manner of a man: I can but mourn for my sins, as I apprehend grief in other instances; but I will rather choose to suffer all evils, than to do one deliberate act of sin. I know my sins are greater than my sorrow, and too many for my memory, and too insinuating to be prevented by all my care: but I know also, that God knows and pities my infirmities; and how far that will extend I know not, but that will reach so far as to satisfy my needs, is the matter of my hope. But this I am sure of, that I have, in my great necessity, prayed humbly and with great desire, and sometimes I have been heard in kind, and sometimes have had a bigger mercy instead of it; and I have the hope of prayers, and the hope of my confession, and the hope of my endeavour, and the hope of many promises, and of God's essential goodness; and I am sure, that God hath heard my prayers, and verified his promises in temporal instances, for he ever gave me sufficient for my life; and although he promised such supplies, and grounded the confidences of them upon our first seeking the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness, yet he hath verified it to me, who have not sought it as I ought; but therefore I hope he accepted my endeavour, or will give his great gifts and our great expectation even to the weakest endeavour, to the least, so it be a hearty, piety. And sometimes I have had some cheerful visitations of God's Spirit, and my cup hath been crowned with comfort, and the wine, that made my heart glad, danced in the chalice, and I was glad that God would have me so; and therefore, I hope, this cloud may pass: for that which was then a real cause of comfort, is so still, if I could discern it; and I shall discern it when the veil is taken from mine eyes. And blessed be God, I can still remember, that there are temptations to despair; and they could not be temptations, if they were not apt to

[z] Rom. vi. 23. [a] Heb. xiii. 5.

[b] Vixi, peccavi, pœnitui, naturæ cessi.

persuade, and had seeming probability on their side; and they that despair, think they do it with greatest reason: for if they were not confident of the reason, but that it were such an argument as might be opposed or suspected, then they could not despair. Despair assents as firmly and strongly as faith itself; but because it is a temptation, and despair is a horrid sin, therefore it is certain, those persons are unreasonably abused, and they have no reason to despair, for all their confidence: and therefore, although I have strong reasons to condemn myself, yet I have more reason to condemn my despair, which therefore is unreasonable because it is a sin, and a dishonour to God, and a ruin to my condition, and verifies itself, if I do not look to it. For as the hypochondriac person, that thought himself dead, made his dream true, when he starved himself, because dead people eat not; so do despairing sinners lose God's mercies, by refusing to use and to believe them. And I hope it is a disease of judgment, not an intolerable condition, that I am falling into; because I have been told so concerning others, who therefore have been afflicted, because they see not their pardon sealed after the manner of this world, and the affairs of the Spirit are transacted by immaterial notices, by propositions and spiritual discourses, by promises, which are to be verified hereafter; and here we must live in a cloud, in darkness under a veil, in fear and uncertainties, and our very living by faith and hope is a life of mystery and secrecy, the only part of the manner of that life in which we shall live in the state of separation. And when a distemper of body or an infirmity of mind happens in the instances of such secret and reserved affairs, we may easily mistake the manner of our notices for the uncertainty of the thing; and therefore it is but reason I should stay till the state and manner of my abode be changed, before I despair: there it can be no sin, nor error; here it may be both; and if it be that, it is also this; and then a man may perish for being miserable, and be undone for being a fool. In conclusion, my hope is in God, and I will trust him with the event, which I am sure will be just, and I hope full of mercy. However, now I will use all the spiritual arts of reason and religion to make me more and more to love God, that if I miscarry, charity also shall fail, and something that loves God shall perish and be damned; which if it be possible, then I may do well.

These considerations may be useful to men of little hearts and of great piety; or if they be persons who have lived without infamy, or begun their repentance so late, that it is very imperfect, and yet so early, that it was before the arrest of death. But if the man be a vicious person, and hath persevered in a vicious life till his death-bed, these considerations are not proper. Let him inquire, in the words of the first disciples after Pentecost, "Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved?" and if they can but entertain so much hope as to enable them to do so much of their duty as they can for the present, it is all that can be provided for them; an inquiry, in their case, can have no other purposes of religion or prudence. And the minister must be infinitely careful, that he do not go about to comfort vicious persons with the comforts belonging to God's elect, lest he prostitute holy things, and make them common, and his sermons deceitful, and vices be encouraged in others, and the man himself find that he was deceived when he descends into his house of sorrow.

But because very few men are tempted with too great fears of failing, but very many are tempted by confidence and presumption; the ministers of religion had need be instructed with spiritual armour to resist this fiery dart of the devil, when it operates to evil purposes.

SECTION VI.

Considerations against Presumption.

I HAVE already enumerated many particulars to provoke a drowsy conscience to a scrutiny and to a suspicion of himself, that by seeing cause to suspect his condition, he might more freely accuse himself, and attend to the necessities and duties of repentance; but if either before or in his repentance he grow too big in his spirit, so as either he does some little violences to the modesties of humility, or abate his care and zeal of his repentance, the spiritual man must allay his forwardness by representing to him, 1. That the growths in grace are long, difficult, uncertain, hindered, of many parts and great variety. 2. That an infant grace is soon dashed and discountenanced, often running into an inconvenience and the evils of an imprudent conduct, being zealous, and forward, and therefore confident, but always with the least reason and the greatest danger; like children and young fellows, whose confidence hath no other reason but that they understand not their danger and their follies. 3. That he that puts on his armour, ought not to boast as he that puts it off; and the apostle chides the Galatians for ending in the flesh after they had begun in the spirit. 4. That a man cannot think too meanly of himself, but very easily he may think too high. 5. That a wise man will always in a matter of great concernment think the worst, and a good man will condemn himself with hearty sentence. 6. That humility and modesty of judgment and of hope are very good instruments to procure a mercy and a fair reception at the day of our death; but presumption or bold opinions serve no end of God or man, and is always imprudent, ever fatal, and of all things in the world is its own greatest enemy; for the more any man presumes, the greater reason he hath to fear. 7. That a man's heart is infinitely deceitful, unknown to itself, not certain in his own acts, praying one way and desiring another, wandering and imperfect, loose and various, worshipping God and entertaining sin, following what it hates and running from what it flatters, loving to be tempted and betrayed; petulant like a wanton girl, running from, that, it might invite the fondness and enrage the appetite of the foolish

young man, or the evil temptation that follows it; cold and indifferent one while, and presently zealous and passionate, furious and indiscreet; not understood of itself or any one else, and deceitful beyond all the arts and numbers of observation. 8. That it is certain we have highly sinned against God, but we are not so certain that our repentance is real and effective, integral and sufficient. 9. That it is not revealed to us, whether or no the time of our repentance be not past; or if it be not, yet how far God will give us pardon, and upon what condition, or after what sufferings or duties, is still under a cloud. 10. That virtue and vice are oftentimes so near neighbours, that we pass into each other's borders without observation, and think we do justice when we are cruel; or call ourselves liberal, when we are loose and foolish in expenses; and are amorous, when we commend our own civilities and good nature. 11. That we allow to ourselves so many little irregularities, that insensibly they swell to so great a heap, that from thence we have reason to fear an evil: for an army of frogs and flies may destroy all the hopes of our harvest. 12. That when we do that which is lawful, and do all that we can in those bounds, we commonly and easily run out of our proportions. 13. That it is not easy to distinguish the virtues of our nature from the virtues of our choice; and we may expect the reward of temperance when it is against our nature to be drunk; or we hope to have the coronet of virgins for our morose disposition, or our abstinence from marriage upon secular ends. 14. That, it may be, we call every little sigh, or the keeping a fish-day, the duty of repentance, or have entertained false principles in the estimate and measures of virtues; and contrary to the steward in that gospel, we write down fourscore when we should set down but fifty. 15. That it is better to trust the goodness and justice of God with our accounts, than to offer him large bills. 16. That we are commanded by Christ to sit down in the lowest place, till the master of the house bids us sit up higher. 17. That "when we have done all that we can, we are unprofitable servants:" and yet no man does all that he can do; and therefore is more to be despised and undervalued. 18. That the self-accusing publican was justified rather than the thanksgiving and confident Pharisee. 19. That if Adam in paradise, and David in his house, and Solomon in the temple, and Peter in Christ's family, and Judas in the college of apostles, and Nicolas among the deacons, and the angels in heaven itself, did fall so foully and dishonestly; then it is prudent advice, that we be not high-minded, but fear; and, when we stand most confidently, take heed lest we fall: and yet there is nothing so likely to make us fall as pride and great opinions, which ruined the angels, which God resists, which all men despise, and which betrays us into carelessness, and a reckless, undiscerning, and an unwary spirit.

4. Now the main parts of the ecclesiastical ministry are done; and that which remains is, that the minister pray over him, and remind him to do good actions as he is capable; to call upon God for pardon; to put his whole trust in him; to resign himself to God's disposing; to be patient and even; to renounce every ill word, or thought, or indecent action, which the violence of his sickness may cause in him; to beg of God to give him his Holy Spirit to guide him in his agony, and his holy angels to guard him in his passage.

5. Whatsoever is besides this concerns the standers-by: that they do all their ministries diligently and temperately; that they join with much charity and devotion in the prayer of the minister; that they make no outcries or exclamations in the departure of the soul; and that they make no judgment concerning the dying person, by his dying quietly or violently, with comfort or without, with great fears or a cheerful confidence, with sense or without, like a lamb or like a lion, with convulsions or semblances of great pain, or like an expiring and a spent candle: for these happen to all men, without rule, without any known reason, but according as God pleases to dispense the grace or the punishment, for reasons only known to himself. Let us lay our hands upon our mouth, and adore the mysteries of the Divine wisdom and providence, and pray to God to give the dying man rest and pardon, and to ourselves grace to live well, and the blessing of a holy and a happy death.

SECTION VII.

Offices to be said by the Minister, in his Visitation of the Sick.

In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

"Our Father, which art in heaven," &c.

Let the Priest say this Prayer secretly.

O eternal Jesus, thou great lover of souls, who hast constituted a ministry in the church to glorify thy name, and to serve in the assistance of those that come to thee, professing thy discipline and service, give grace to me, the unworthiest of thy servants, that I, in this my ministry, may purely and zealously intend thy glory, and effectually may minister comfort and advantages to this sick person (whom God assoil from all his offences); and grant that nothing of thy grace may perish to him by the unworthiness of the minister; but let thy Spirit speak by me, and give me prudence and charity, wisdom and diligence, good observation and apt discourses, a certain judgment and merciful dispensation, that the soul of thy servant may pass from this state of imperfection to the perfections of the state of glory, through thy mercies, O eternal Jesus. Amen.

The Psalm.

Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice: let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications. Psal. cxxx.

If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who should stand?

But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.

I wait for the Lord; my soul doth wait; and in his word do I hope.

My soul waiteth for the Lord, more than they that watch for the morning.

Let Israel hope in the Lord; for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption.

And he shall redeem his servants from all their iniquities. Psal. cxxx.

Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, when the wickedness of my heels shall compass me about? Psal. xlix. 5.

No man can, by any means, redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him. Ver. 7.

For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever. Ver. 8.

That he should still live for ever, and not see corruption. Ver. 9.

But wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others. Ver. 10.

But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Ver. 15.

As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake in thy likeness. Psal. xvii. 15.

Thou shalt show me the path of life: in thy presence is the fulness of joy: at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore. Psal. xvi. 11.

Glory be to the Father, &c.

As it was in the beginning, &c.

Let us pray.

Almighty God, Father of mercies, the God of peace and comfort, of rest and pardon, we, thy servants, though unworthy to pray to thee, yet, in duty to thee and charity to our brother, humbly beg mercy of thee for him to descend upon his body and his soul; one sinner, O Lord, for another, the miserable for the afflicted, the poor for him that is in need: but thou givest thy graces and thy favours by the measures of thy own mercies, and in proportion to our necessities. We humbly come to thee in the name of Jesus, for the merit of our Saviour, and the mercies of our God, praying thee to pardon the sins of this thy servant, and to put them all upon the accounts of the cross, and to bury them in the grave of Jesus; that they may never rise up in judgment against thy servant, nor bring him to shame and confusion of face in the day of final inquiry and sentence. Amen.

II.

Give thy servant patience in his sorrows, comfort in this his sickness, and restore him to health, if it seem good to thee, in order to thy great ends, and his greatest interest. And however thou shalt determine concerning him in this affair, yet make his repentance perfect, and his passage safe, and his faith strong, and his hope modest and confident; that, when thou shalt call his soul from the prison of the body, it may enter into the securities and rest of the sons of God, in the bosom of blessedness, and the custodies of Jesus. Amen.

III.

Thou, O Lord, knowest all the necessities and all the infirmities of thy servant: fortify his spirit with spiritual joys and perfect resignation, and take from him all degrees of inordinate or insecure affections to this world, and enlarge his heart with desires of being with thee, and of freedom from sins, and fruition of God.

IV.

Lord, let not any pain or passion discompose the order and decency of his thoughts and duty; and lay no more upon thy servant, than thou wilt make him able to bear; and together with the temptation do thou provide a way to escape; even by the mercies of a longer and a more holy life, or by the mercies of a blessed death: even as it pleaseth thee, O Lord, so let it be.

V.

Let the tenderness of his conscience and the Spirit of God call to mind his sins, that they may be confessed and repented of: because thou hast promised, that if we confess our sins we shall have mercy. Let thy mighty grace draw out from his soul every root of bitterness, lest the remains of the old man be accursed with the reserves of thy wrath: but in the union of the holy Jesus, and in the charities of God and of the world, and the communion of all the saints, let this soul be presented to thee blameless, and entirely pardoned, and thoroughly washed, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Here also may be inserted the Prayers set down after the Holy Communion is administered.

The prayer of St. Eustatius the Martyr, to be used by the sick or dying man, or by the priests or assistants in his behalf, which he said, when he was going to martyrdom.

I will praise thee, O Lord, that thou hast considered my low estate, and hast not shut me up in the hands of mine enemies, nor made my foes to rejoice over me; and now let thy right hand protect me, and let thy mercy come upon me; for my soul is in trouble and anguish because of its departure from the body. O let not the assemblies of its wicked and cruel enemies meet it in the passing forth, nor hinder me by reason of the sins of my past life. O Lord, be favourable unto me, that my soul may not behold the hellish countenance of the spirits of darkness, but let thy bright and joyful angels entertain it. Give glory to thy holy name and to thy majesty; place me by thy merciful arm before thy seat of judgment, and let not the hand of the prince of this world snatch me from thy presence, or bear me into hell. Mercy, sweet Jesu. Amen.

A prayer taken out of the Euchologion of the Greek church, to be said by, or in behalf of, people in their danger, or near their death.

Βεβορβορωμένος ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις, &c.

I.

Bemired with sins and naked of good deeds, I, that am the meat of worms, cry vehemently in spirit; cast not me a wretch away from thy face; place me not on the left hand, who with thy hands didst fashion me; but give rest unto my soul, for thy great mercy's sake, O Lord.

II.

Supplicate with tears unto Christ, who is to judge my poor soul, that he will deliver me from the fire that is unquenchable. I pray you all, my friends and acquaintance, make mention of me in your prayers, that in the day of judgment I may find mercy at that dreadful tribunal.

III.

Then may the Standers-by pray.

When, in unspeakable glory, thou dost come dreadfully to judge the whole world, vouchsafe, O gracious Redeemer, that this thy faithful servant may in the clouds meet thee cheerfully. They, who have been dead from the beginning, with terrible and fearful trembling stand at thy tribunal, waiting thy just sentence. O blessed Saviour Jesus! none shall there avoid thy formidable and most righteous judgment. All kings and princes with servants stand together, and hear the dreadful voice of the Judge condemning the people, which have sinned, into hell: from which sad sentence, O Christ, deliver thy servant. Amen.

Then let the sick man be called upon to rehearse the articles of his faith; or, if he be so weak he cannot, let him (if he have not before done it) be called to say, Amen, when they are recited, or to give some testimony of his faith and confident assent to them.

After which it is proper (if the person be in capacity) that the minister examine him, and invite him to confession, and all the parts of repentance, according to the foregoing rules: after which, he may pray the prayer of absolution.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath given commission to his church, in his name to pronounce pardon to all that are truly penitent, he, of his mercy, pardon and forgive thee all thy sins, deliver thee from all evils past, present, and future, preserve thee in the faith and fear of his holy name to thy life's end, and bring thee to his everlasting kingdom, to live with him for ever and ever. Amen.

Then let the sick man renounce all heresies, and whatsoever is against the truth of God or the peace of the church, and pray for pardon for all his ignorances and errors, known and unknown.

After which let him (if all other circumstances be fitted) be disposed to receive the blessed sacrament, in which the curate is to minister according to the form prescribed by the church.

When the rites are finished, let the sick man in the days of his sickness be employed with the former offices and exercises before described; and when the time draws near of his dissolution, the minister may assist by the following order of recommendation of the soul.

I.

O holy and most gracious Saviour Jesus, we humbly recommend the soul of thy servant into thy hands, thy most merciful hands; let thy blessed angels stand in ministry about thy servant, and defend him from the violence and malice of all his ghostly enemies, and drive far from hence all the spirits of darkness. Amen.

II.

Lord, receive the soul of this thy servant: enter not into judgment with thy servant: spare him whom thou hast redeemed with thy most precious blood: deliver him from all evil, for whose sake thou didst suffer all evil and mischief; from the crafts and assaults of the devil, from the fear of death, and from everlasting death, good Lord, deliver him. Amen.

III.

Impute not unto him the follies of his youth, nor any of the errors and miscarriages of his life; but strengthen him in his agony, let not his faith waver, nor his hope fail, nor his charity be disordered; let none of his enemies imprint upon him any afflictive or evil fantasm; let him die in peace, and rest in hope, and rise in glory. Amen.

IV.

Lord, we know and believe assuredly, that whatsoever is under thy custody cannot be taken out of thy hands, nor by all the violences of hell robbed of thy protection: preserve the work of thy hands, rescue him from all evil; take into the participation of thy glories him, to whom thou hast given the seal of adoption, the earnest of the inheritance of the saints. Amen.

V.

Let his portion be with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; with Job and David, with the prophets and apostles, with martyrs and all thy holy saints, in the arms of Christ, in the bosom of felicity, in the kingdom of God to eternal ages. Amen.

[These following prayers are fit also to be added to the foregoing offices, in case there be no communion or intercourse, but prayer.]

Let us pray.

O almighty and eternal God, there is no number of thy days or of thy mercies: thou hast sent us into this world to serve thee, and to live according to thy laws; but we by our sins have provoked thee

to wrath, and we have planted thorns and sorrows round about our dwellings: and our life is but a span long, and yet very tedious, because of the calamities that enclose us in on every side; the days of our pilgrimage are few and evil; we have frail and sickly bodies, violent and distempered passions, long designs and but a short stay, weak understandings and strong enemies, abused fancies, perverse wills. O dear God, look upon us in mercy and pity: let not our weaknesses make us to sin against thee, nor our fear cause us to betray our duty, nor our former follies provoke thy eternal anger, nor the calamities of this world vex us into tediousness of spirit and impatience: but let thy Holy Spirit lead us through this valley of misery with safety and peace, with holiness and religion, with spiritual comforts and joy in the Holy Ghost: that, when we have served thee in our generations, we may be gathered unto our fathers, having the testimony of a holy conscience, in the communion of the catholic church, in the confidence of a certain faith, and the comforts of a reasonable, religious, and holy hope, and perfect charity with thee our God and all the world; that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, may be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

II.

O holy and most gracious Saviour Jesus, in whose hands the souls of all faithful people are laid up till the day of recompence, have mercy upon the body and soul of this thy servant, and upon all thy elect people, who love the Lord Jesus, and long for his coming; Lord, refresh the imperfection of their condition with the aids of the Spirit of grace and comfort, and with the visitation and guard of angels, and supply to them all their necessities known only unto thee; let them dwell in peace, and feel thy mercies pitying their infirmities and the follies of their flesh, and speedily satisfying the desires of their spirits; and when thou shalt bring us all forth in the day of judgment, O then show thyself to be our Saviour Jesus, our advocate and our judge. Lord, then remember, that thou hast, for so many ages, prayed for the pardon of those sins, which thou art then to sentence. Let not the accusations of our consciences, nor the calumnies and aggravation of devils, nor the effects of thy wrath, press those souls, which thou lovest, which thou didst redeem, which thou dost pray for; but enable us all, by the supporting hand of thy mercy, to stand upright in judgment. O Lord, have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us: O Lord, let thy mercy lighten upon us, as our trust is in thee. O Lord, in thee have we trusted, let us never be confounded. Let us meet with joy, and for ever dwell with thee, feeling thy pardon, supported with thy graciousness, absolved by thy sentence, saved by thy mercy, that we may sing to the glory of thy name eternal hallelujahs. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[c] Heb. xiii. 20, 21.

Then may be added in the behalf of all, that are present, these ejaculations.

O spare us a little, that we may recover our strength, before we go hence, and be no more seen. Amen.

Cast us not away in the time of age; O forsake us not when strength faileth. Amen.

Grant, that we may never sleep in sin or death eternal, but that we may have our part of the first resurrection, and that the second death may not prevail over us. Amen.

Grant, that our souls may be bound up in the bundle of life; and in the day when thou bindest up thy jewels, remember thy servants for good, and not for evil, that our souls may be numbered amongst the righteous. Amen.

Grant unto all sick and dying christians mercy and aids from heaven; and receive the souls returning unto thee, whom thou hast redeemed with thy most precious blood. Amen.

Grant unto thy servants to have faith in the Lord Jesus, a daily meditation of death, a contempt of the world; a longing desire after heaven; patience in our sorrows; comfort in our sicknesses; joy in God; a holy life and a blessed death; that our souls may rest in hope, and my body may rise in glory, and both may be beatified in the communion of saints, in the kingdom of God, and the glories of the Lord Jesus. Amen.

The Blessing.

Now the God of peace,[c] that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work, to do his will, working in you that which is pleasing in his sight; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

The Doxology.

To the blessed and only potentate, the King of kings,[d] and the Lord of lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen nor can see, be honour and power everlasting. Amen.

After the sick man is departed, the minister, if he be present, or the major-domo, or any other fit person, may use the following prayers in behalf of themselves.

I.

Almighty God, with whom do live the spirits of them that depart hence in the Lord, we adore thy majesty, and submit to thy providence, and revere thy justice, and magnify thy mercies, thy infinite mercies, that it hath pleased thee to deliver this our brother out of the miseries of this sinful world. Thy counsels are secret, and thy wisdom is infinite: with the same hand thou hast crowned him and smitten us; thou hast taken him into regions of felicity, and placed him amongst saints and angels, and

[d] 1 Tim. vi. 15, 16.

left us to mourn for our sins, and thy displeasure, which thou hast signified to us by removing him from us to a better, a far better place. Lord, turn thy anger into mercy, thy chastisements into virtues, thy rod into comforts, and do thou give to all his nearest relatives comforts from heaven, and a restitution of blessings equal to those which thou hast taken from them. And we humbly beseech thee, of thy gracious goodness, shortly to satisfy the longing desires of those holy souls who pray, and wait, and long for thy second coming. Accomplish thou the number of thine elect, and fill up the mansions in heaven, which are prepared for all them that love the coming of the Lord Jesus, that we, with this our brother, and all others departed this life in the obedience and faith of the Lord Jesus, may have our perfect consummation and bliss in thy eternal glory, which never shall have ending. Grant this for Jesus Christ's sake, our Lord and only Saviour. Amen.

II.

O merciful God, Father of our Lord Jesus, who art the first-fruits of the resurrection, and by entering into glory hath opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers, we humbly beseech thee to raise us up from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, that being partakers of the death of Christ, and followers of his holy life, we may be partakers of his Spirit and of his promises; that when we shall depart this life, we may rest in his arms, and lie in his bosom, as our hope is this our brother doth. O suffer us not for any temptation of the world, or any snares of the devil, or any pains of death, to fall from thee. Lord, let thy Holy Spirit enable us with his grace to fight a good fight with perseverance, to finish our course with holiness, and to keep the faith with constancy unto the end, that, at the day of judgment, we may stand at the right hand of the throne of God, and hear the blessed sentence of, "Come, ye blessed children of my Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world." O blessed Jesus, thou art our judge, and thou art our advocate; even because thou art good and gracious, never suffer us to fall into the intolerable pains of hell, never to lie down in sin, and to have our portion in the everlasting burning. Mercy, sweet Jesu, mercy. Amen.

A Prayer to be said in the Case of a sudden Surprise by Death, as by a mortal Wound, or evil Accidents in Childbirth, when the Forms and Solemnities of Preparation cannot be used.

O most gracious Father, Lord of heaven and earth, Judge of the living and the dead, behold thy servants running to thee for pity and mercy, in behalf of ourselves, and this thy servant, whom thou hast smitten with thy hasty rod, and a swift angel; if it be thy will, preserve his life, that there may be place for his repentance and restitution: O spare him a little, that he may recover his strength, before he go hence and be no more seen. But if thou hast otherwise decreed, let the miracles of thy compassion and thy wonderful mercy supply to him the want of the usual measures of time, and the periods of repentance, and the trimming of his lamp; and let the greatness of the calamity be accepted by thee as an instrument to procure pardon for those defects and degrees of unreadiness, which may have caused this accident upon thy servant. Lord, stir up in him a great and effectual contrition; that the greatness of the sorrow, and hatred against sin, and the zeal of his love to thee, may, in a short time, do the work of many days. And thou, who regardest the heart and the measures of the mind more than the delay and the measures of time, let it be thy pleasure to rescue the soul of thy servant from all the evils he hath deserved, and all the evils that he fears; that in the glorifications of eternity, and the songs, which to eternal ages thy saints and holy angels shall sing to the honour of thy mighty name and invaluable mercies, it may be reckoned among thy glories, that thou had redeemed this soul from the dangers of an eternal death, and made him partaker of the gift of God, eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

[If there be time, the prayers in the foregoing offices may be added, according as they can be fitted to the present circumstances.]

SECTION VIII.

A Peroration concerning the Contingencies and Treatings of our departed Friends after Death, in Order to their Burial, &c.

When we have received the last breath of our friend,[e] and closed his eyes, and composed his body for the grave, then seasonable is the counsel of the son of Sirach; "Weep bitterly, and make great moan, and use lamentation, as he is worthy; and that a day or two; lest thou be evil spoken of; and then comfort thyself for thy heaviness. But take no grief to heart; for there is no turning again: thou shalt not do him good, but hurt thyself."[f] Solemn and appointed mournings are good expressions of our dearness to the departed soul, and of his worth, and our value of him; and it hath its praise in nature, and in manners,[g] and in public customs: but the praise of it is not in the gospel, that is, it hath no direct and proper uses in religion. For if the dead did die in the Lord, then there is joy to him, and it is an ill expression of our affection and our charity, to weep uncomfortably at a change, that hath carried my friend to the state of a huge felicity. But if the man did perish in his folly and his sins,

[e] Τάδε δ' ἀμφιπονησόμεθ' οἵσι μάλιστα
Κήδεός ἐστι νέκυς– Iliad. ψ'.

[f] Ecclus. xxxviii. 17, 20.

[g] Ὡς γενναίως ἀποδεδάκρυκέ με; dixit Socrates de Ergastulario lugente.

Nemo me lacrymis decoret, nec funera fletu
Faxit: cur? volito vivu' per ora virûm.–Ennius.

Πέρσας μέντοι πάντας ἐπὶ τὸ μνῆμα τοὐμὸν παρακαλεῖτε συνησθησομένους ἐμοὶ, ὅτι ἐν τῷ ἀσφαλεῖ ἤδη ἔσομαι, ὡς μηδὲν ἄν ἔτι κακὸν παθεῖν, μήτε ἦν μετὰ τοῦ θείου γένωμαι μήτε ἦν μηδὲν ἔτι ὤ.–Cyrus apud Xenoph. viii. 7. 27.

there is indeed cause to mourn, but no hopes of being comforted; for he shall never return to light, or to hopes of restitution: therefore beware, lest thou also come into the same place of torment; and let thy grief sit down and rest upon thy own turf, and weep till a shower springs from thy eyes to heal the wounds of thy spirit; turn thy sorrow into caution, thy grief for him that is dead, to thy care for thyself who art alive, lest thou die and fall like one of the fools, whose life is worse than death, and their death is the consummation of all felicities. The church in her funerals of the dead used to sing psalms,[h] and to give thanks for the redemption and delivery of the soul from the evils and dangers of mortality. And therefore we have no reason to be angry, when God hears our prayers, who call upon him to hasten his coming, and to fill up his numbers, and to do that which we pretend to give him thanks for. And St. Chrysostom asks, "To what purpose is that thou singest 'Return unto thy rest, O my soul,' &c. if thou dost not believe thy friend to be in rest? and if thou dost, why dost thou weep impertinently and unreasonably?" Nothing but our own loss can justly be deplored:[i] and him, that is passionate for the loss of his money or his advantages, we esteem foolish and imperfect; and therefore have no reason to love the immoderate sorrows of those who too earnestly mourn for their dead, when, in the last resolution of the inquiry, it is their own evil and present or feared inconveniences they deplore: the best, that can be said of such a grief, is, that those mourners love themselves too well. Something is to be given to custom, something to fame, to nature, and to civilities, and to the honour of the deceased friends; for that man is esteemed to die miserable, for whom no friend or relative sheds a tear,[k] or pays a solemn sigh. I desire to die a *dry death*, but am not very desirous to have a *dry funeral:* some flowers sprinkled upon my grave would do well and comely; and a soft shower to turn those flowers into a springing memory or a fair rehearsal, that I may not go forth of my doors, as my servants carry the entrails of beasts.

But that which is to be faulted in this particular is, when the grief is immoderate and unreasonable: and Paula Romana deserved to have felt the weight of St. Jerome's severe reproof, when at the death of every of her children she almost wept herself into her grave. But it is worse yet, when people, by an ambitious and a pompous sorrow, and by ceremonies invented for the ostentation of their grief,[l] fill heaven and earth with exclamations,[m] and grow troublesome, because their friend is happy, or themselves want his company. It is certainly a sad thing in nature to see a friend trembling with a palsy, or scorched with fevers, or dried up like a potsherd with immoderate heats, and rolling upon his uneasy bed without sleep, which cannot be invited with music,[n] or pleasant murmurs, or a decent stillness; nothing but the servants of cold death, Poppy and Weariness, can tempt the eyes to let their curtains down; and then they sleep only to taste of death, and make an essay of the shades below: and yet we weep not here: the period and opportunity for tears we choose, when our friend is fallen asleep, when he hath laid his neck upon the lap of his mother; and let his head down,[o] to be raised up to heaven. This grief is ill placed and indecent. But many times it is worse: and it hath been observed, that those greater and stormy passions do so spend the whole stock of grief, that they presently admit a comfort and contrary affection, while a sorrow that is even and temperate, goes on to its period with expectation and the distances of a just time. The Ephesian woman, that the soldier told of in Petronius, was the talk of all the town, and the rarest example of a dear affection to her husband; she descended with the corpse into the vault, and there being attended with her maiden, resolved to weep to death, or die with famine or a distempered sorrow: from which resolution nor his nor her friends, nor the reverence of the principal citizens, who used the entreaties of their charity and their power, could persuade her. But a soldier that watched seven dead bodies hanging upon trees just over against this monument, crept in, and awhile stared upon the silent and comely disorders of the sorrow: and having let the wonder awhile breathe out at each other's eyes, at last he fetched his supper and a bottle of wine, with purpose to eat and drink, and still to feed himself with that sad prettiness. His pity and first draught of wine, made him bold and curious to try if the maid would drink; who having, many hours since, felt her resolution faint as her wearied body, took his kindness, and the light returned into her eyes, and danced like boys in a festival: and fearing lest the pertinaciousness of her mistress's sorrows should cause her evil to revert, or her shame to approach, assayed whether she would endure to hear an argument to persuade her to drink and live. The violent passion had laid all her spirits in wildness and dissolution, and the maid found them willing to be gathered into order at the arrest of any new object, being weary of the first, of which, like leeches, they had sucked their fill, till they fell down and burst. The weeping woman took her cordial, and was not angry with her maid, and heard the soldier talk; and he was so pleased with the change, that he who first loved the silence of the sorrow, was more in love with the music of her returning voice, especially which himself had strung and put in tune; and the man began to talk amorously, and the woman's weak head and heart were soon possessed with a little wine, and grew

[h] St. Chrysost. Hom. 4. Heb.

[i] Πάτροκλον κλαίωμεν, ὁ γὰρ γέρας ἐστὶ θανόντων.—Il. ψ'.

[k] Mors optima est, perire dum lacrymant sui.—SEN. Hippol.
Μηδέ μοι ἄκλαυστος θάνατος μόλοι, ἀλλὰ φίλοισι
Καλλείποιμι θανὼν ἄλγεα καὶ στοναχάς.

[l] Expectavimus lacrymas ad ostentationem doloris paratas: ut ergò ambitiosus detonuit, texit superbum pallio caput, et manibus inter se usque ad articulorum strepitum contritis, &c. —PETRON. 17. 3.

[m] Ὡς δὲ πατὴρ οὗ παιδὸς ὀδύρεται ὀστέα καίων
Νυπφίου, ὅς τε θανὼν δειλοὺς ἀκάχησε τοκῆας·
Ὡς, Ἀχιλεὺς ἑτάροιο ὀδύρετο ὀστέα καίων,
Ἑρπύζων παρὰ πυρκαϊήν, ἀδινὰ στεναχίζων.

[n] Non siculæ dapes dulcem elaborabunt saporem,
Non avium citharæque cantus somnum reducent.
Od. 3. 1. 18.

[o] —Aremulumque caput descendere jussit
In cœlum, et longam manantia labra salivam.

gay, and talked, and fell in love; and that very night, in the morning of her passion, in the grave of her husband, in the pomps of mourning, and in her funeral garments, married her new and stranger guest. For so the wild foragers of Libya being spent with heat, and dissolved by the too fond kisses of the sun, do melt with their common fires, and die with faintness, and descend with motions slow and unable to the little brooks, that descend from heaven in the wilderness; and when they drink, they return into the vigour of a new life, and contract strange marriages; and the lioness is courted by a panther, and she listens to his love, and conceives a monster that all men call unnatural, and the daughter of an equivocal passion and of a sudden refreshment. And so also was it in the cave at Ephesus; for by this time the soldier began to think it was fit he should return to his watch, and observe the dead bodies he had in charge: but when he ascended from his mourning bridal-chamber, he found that one of the bodies was stolen by the friends of the dead, and that he was fallen into an evil condition, because by the laws of Ephesus his body was to be fixed in the place of it. The poor man returns to his woman, cries out bitterly, and in her presence resolves to die to prevent his death, and in secret, to prevent his shame; but now the woman's love was raging like her former sadness, and grew witty, and she comforted her soldier, and persuaded him to live, lest by losing him, who had brought her from death and a more grievous sorrow, she should return to her old solemnities of dying, and lose her honour for a dream, or the reputation of her constancy without the change and satisfaction of an enjoyed love. The man would fain have lived, if it had been possible, and she found out this way for him; that he should take the body of her first husband, whose funeral she had so strangely mourned, and put it upon the gallows in the place of the stolen thief; he did so, and escaped the present danger, to possess a love which might change as violently as her grief had done. But so have I seen a crowd of disordered people rush violently and in heaps, till their utmost border was restrained by a wall, or had spent the fury of the first fluctuation and watery progress, and by and by it returned to the contrary with the same earnestness, only because it was violent and ungoverned. A raging passion is this crowd, which when it is not under discipline and the conduct of reason, and the proportions of temperate humanity, runs passionately the way it happens, and by and by as greedily to another side, being swayed by its own weight, and driven any whither by chance, in all its pursuits having no rule, but to do all it can, and spend itself in haste, and expire with some shame and much indecency.

When thou hast wept awhile, compose the body to burial; which that it be done gravely, decently, and charitably, we have the example of all nations to engage us, and of all ages of the world to warrant; so that it is against common honesty, and public fame and reputation, not to do this office.

It is good that the body be kept veiled and secret, and not exposed to curious eyes, or the dishonours wrought by the changes of death discerned and stared upon by impertinent persons. When Cyrus was dying, he called his sons and friends to take their leave, to touch his hand, to see him the last time, and gave in charge, that when he had put his veil over his face no man should uncover it; and Epiphanius's body was rescued from inquisitive eyes by a miracle. Let it be interred after the manner of the country, and the laws of the place,[p] and the dignity of the person. For so Jacob was buried with great solemnity, and Joseph's bones were carried into Canaan, after they had been embalmed and kept four hundred years; and devout men carried St. Stephen to his burial, making great lamentation over him. And Ælian tells that those who were the most excellent persons were buried in purple; and men of an ordinary courage and fortune, had their graves only trimmed with branches of olive, and mourning flowers. But when Mark Antony gave the body of Brutus to his freed-man to be buried honestly, he gave also his own mantle to be thrown into his funeral pile; and the magnificence of the old funeral we may see largely described by Virgil in the obsequies of Misenas,[q] and by Homer in the funeral of Patroclus. It was noted for piety in the men of Jabesh-Gilead, that they showed kindness to their lord Saul and buried him; and they did it honourably. And our blessed Saviour, who was temperate in his expense, and grave in all the parts of his life and death, as age and sobriety itself, yet was pleased to admit the cost of Mary's ointment upon his head and feet, because she did it against his burial; and though she little thought it had been so nigh, yet because he accepted it for that end, he knew he had made her apology sufficient; by which he remarked it to be a great act of piety, and honourable, to inter our friends and relatives according to the proportions of their condition, and so to give a testimony of our hope of their resurrection.[r] So far is piety; beyond it may be the ostentation and bragging of a grief, or a design to serve worse ends. Such was that of Herod, when he made too studied and elaborate a funeral for Aristobulus, whom he had murdered; and of Regulus for his boy,[s] at whose pile he killed dogs, nightingales, parrots, and little horses; and such also was the expense of some of the Romans, who hating their left wealth, gave order by their testament to have huge portions of it thrown into their fires, bathing their locks, which were presently to pass through the fire, with Arabian and Egyptian

[p] Νόμοις ἑπεσθαι τοῖσιν ἐγχώροις καλῶς.
Τύμβον δ' οὐ μάλα πολλὸν ἐγὼ πονέεσθαι ἄνωγα,
Ἀλλ' ἐπιεικέα τοῖον——— Iliad. ψ'.

[q] Lib. vi. Var. Histor. cap. 6. Τοὺς τελέως ἀριστεύσαντας ἐν φοινικίδι ταφῆναι.

[r] Nam quid sibi saxa cavata,
Quid pulchra volunt monumenta,
Nisi quòd res creditur illis
Non mortua, sed data somno?
Prud. Hymn. in Exeq. defunct

[s] ——— Cupit omnia ferre
Prodigus, et totos melior succendere census,
Desertas exosus opes———
Statius, lib. ii. Sylvar.

liquors, and balsam of Judea. In this, as in every thing else, as our piety must not pass into superstition or vain expense, so neither must the excess be turned into parsimony, and chastised by negligence and impiety to the memory of their dead.

But nothing of this concerns the dead in real and effective purposes; nor is it with care to be provided for by themselves: but it is the duty of the living.[t] For to them it is all one,[u] whether they be carried forth upon a chariot or a wooden bier; whether they rot in the air or in the earth; whether they be devoured by fishes or by worms, by birds or by sepulchral dogs, by water or by fire, or by delay. When Criton asked Socrates how he would be buried, he told him, I think I shall escape from you, and that you cannot catch me: but so much of me as you can apprehend, use it as you see cause for and bury it; but however do it according to the laws.[x] There is nothing in this but opinion and the decency of fame to be served. When it is esteemed an honour and the manner of blessed people to descend into the graves of their fathers, there also it is reckoned as a curse to be buried in a strange land, or that the birds of the air devour them.[y] Some nations used to eat the bodies of their friends, and esteemed that the most honoured sepulture; but they were barbarous. The magi never buried any but such as were torn of beasts. The Persians besmeared their dead with wax, and the Egyptians with gums, and with great art did condite the bodies, and laid them in charnel-houses. But Cyrus the elder would none of all this, but gave command, that his body should be interred, not laid in a coffin of gold or silver, but just into the earth,[z] from whence all living creatures receive birth and nourishment, and whither they must return. Among christians the honour which is valued in the behalf of the dead is, that they be buried in holy ground, that is, in appointed cemeteries, in places of religion, there where the field of God is sown with the seeds of the resurrection,[a] that their bodies also may be among the christians, with whom their hope and their portion is, and shall be for ever. "Quicquid feceris, omnia hæc eodem ventura sunt." That we are sure of; our bodies shall all be restored to our souls hereafter, and in the interval they shall all be turned into dust, by what way soever you or your chance shall dress them. Licinus the freed-man slept in a marble tomb;[b] but Cato in a little one, Pompey in none: and yet they had the best fate among the Romans, and a memory of the biggest honour. And it may happen, that to want a monument may best preserve their memories, while the succeeding ages shall, by their instances, remember the changes of the world, and the dishonours of death, and the equality of the dead: and James the Fourth,[c] king of the Scots, obtained an epitaph for wanting of a tomb;[d] and King Stephen is remembered with a sad story, because, four hundred years after his death, his bones were thrown into a river, that evil men might sell the leaden coffin. It is all one in the final event of things. Ninus the Assyrian had a monument erected, whose height was nine furlongs, and the breadth ten, saith Diodorus: but John the Baptist had more honour, when he was humbly laid in the earth between the bodies of Abdias and Elizeus. And St. Ignatius, who was buried in the bodies of lions, and St. Polycarp, who was burned to ashes, shall have their bones and their flesh again, with greater comfort than those violent persons who slept among kings, having usurped their thrones when they were alive, and their sepulchres when they were dead.

Concerning doing honour to the dead, the consideration is not long. Anciently the friends of the dead used to make their funeral orations,[e] and what they spake of greater commendation, was pardoned upon the accounts of friendship; but when christianity seized upon the possession of the world, this charge was devolved upon priests and bishops, and they first kept the custom of the world, and adorned it with the piety of truth and of religion; but they also so ordered it, that it should not be cheap; for they made funeral sermons only at the death of princes, or of such holy persons, "who shall judge the angels." The custom descended, and in the channels mingled with the veins of earth, through which it passed; and now-a-days men that die are commended at a price, and the measure of their legacy is the degree of their virtue. But these things ought not so to be: the reward of the greatest virtue ought not to be prostitute to the doles of common persons, but preserved like laurels and coronets, to remark and encourage the noblest things. Persons of an ordinary life should neither be praised publicly nor reproached in private: for it is an office and charge of humanity to speak no evil of the dead (which, I suppose, is meant concerning things not public and evident); but then neither should our charity to them teach us to tell a lie, or to make a great flame from a heap of rushes and mushrooms, and make orations crammed with the

[t] Totus hic locus contemnendus est in nobis, non negligendus in nostris.—CICERO.

[u] Id cinerem aut manes credis curare sepultos?

[x] Ὅπως ἄν σοι φίλον ᾖ, καὶ μάλιστα ἡγῇ νόμιμον εἶναι.

[y] Fugientibus Trojanis minatus est Hector,
Αὐτοῦ οἱ θάνατον μητίσσομαι, οὐδέ νυ τόν γε
Γνωτοί τε γνωταί τε πυρὸς λελάχωσι θανόντα,
Ἀλλὰ κύνες ἐρύουσι πρὸ ἄστεος ἠμετέροιο.—Iliad. ό.

[z] Τί γὰρ τούτου μακαριώτερον, τῇ γῇ μιχθῆναι, ἢ πάντα μὲν τὰ καλὰ πάντα τ' ἀναθὰ φύει τε καὶ τρέφει; XENOPH. περὶ παιδ.
Sit tibi terra levis, mollique tegaris arenâ,
Ut tua non possint eruere ossa canes.—MART.

[a] Nam quod requiescere corpus
Vacuum sine mente videmus,
Spatium breve restat, ut alti
Repetat collegia sensûs.
Hinc maxima cura sepulchris
Impenditur———
PRUD. Hym. in Exeq. defunct.

[b] Marmoreo Licinus tumulo jacet, at Cato parvo,
Pompeius nullo: credimus esse Deos?
VARRO ATACINUS.

[c] Fama orbem replet, mortem sors occulit, at tu
Desine scrutari quod tegit ossa solum.
Si mihi dent animo non impar fata sepulcrum,
Angusta es tumulo terra Britanna meo.

[d] Cernit ibi mœstos et mortis honore carentes
Leucaspim, et Lyciæ ductorem classis Orontem.—ÆN.

[e] Lustravitque viros, dixitque novissima verba.—ÆNEID.

narrative of little observances, and acts of civil, and necessary, and eternal religion.

But that which is most considerable is, that we should do something for the dead,[f] something that is real, and of proper advantage. That we perform their will, the laws oblige us, and will see to it; but that we do all those parts of personal duty, which our dead left unperformed, and to which the laws do not oblige us, is an act of great charity and perfect kindness: and it may redound to the advantage of our friends also, that their debts be paid even beyond the inventory of their movables.

Besides this, let us right their causes, and assert their honour. When Marcus Regulus had injured the memory of Herennius Senecio, Metius Carus asked him, what he had to do with his dead; and became his advocate after death, of whose cause he was patron when he was alive. And David added this also, that he did kindness to Mephibosheth for Jonathan's sake: and Solomon pleaded his father's cause by the sword against Joab and Shimei. And certainly it is the noblest thing in the world to do an act of kindness to him whom we shall never see,[g] but yet hath deserved it of us, and to whom we would do it if he were present; and unless we do so, our charity is mercenary, and our friendships are direct merchandise, and our gifts are brocage: but what we do to the dead, or to the living for their sakes, is gratitude, and virtue for virtue's sake, and the noblest portion of humanity.

And yet I remember, that the most excellent prince Cyrus, in his last exhortation to his sons, upon his death-bed, charms them into peace and union of hearts and designs, by telling them, that his soul would be still alive, and therefore fit to be revered and accounted as awful and venerable, as when he was alive: and what we do to our dead friends, is not done to persons undiscerning as a fallen tree, but to such, who better attend to their relatives, and to greater purposes, though in other manner than they did here below. And therefore those wise persons, who in their funeral orations made their doubt, with an *εἴ τις αἰσθησις τοῖς τετελευτηκόσι περὶ τῶν ἐνθάδε γιγνομένων*, "If the dead have any perception of what is done below," which are the words of Isocrates, in the funeral encomium of Evagoras, did it upon the uncertain opinion of the soul's immortality; but made no question, if they were living, they did also understand what could concern them. The same words Nazianzen uses at the exequies of his sister Gorgonia, and in the former invective against Julian: but this was upon another reason; even because it was uncertain what the state of separation was, and whether our dead perceive any thing of us till we shall meet in the day of judgment. If it was uncertain then, it is certain since that time we have had no new revelation concerning it; but it is ten to one but, when we die, we shall find the state of affairs wholly differing from all our opinions here, and that no man or sect hath guessed any thing at all of it as it is. Here I intend not to dispute, but to persuade; and therefore in the general, if it be probable, that they know or feel the benefits done to them, though but by a reflex revelation from God, or some under-communication from an angel, or the stock of acquired notices here below, it may the rather endear us to our charities or duties to them respectively; since our virtues use not to live upon abstractions, and metaphysical perfections, or inducements, but then thrive when they have material arguments, such which are not too far from sense. However it be, it is certain they are not dead;[h] and though we no more see the souls of our dead friends than we did when they were alive, yet we have reason to believe them to know more things and better: and if our sleep be an image of death, we may also observe concerning it, that it is a state of life so separate from communications with the body, that it is one of the ways of oracle and prophecy[i] by which the soul best declares her immortality, and the nobleness of her actions and powers, if she could get free from the body, (as in the state of separation, or a clear dominion over it,) as in the resurrection. To which also this consideration may be added, that men a long time live the life of sense, before they use their reason; and till they have furnished their head with experiments and notices of many things, they cannot at all discourse of any thing; but when they come to use their reason, all their knowledge is nothing but remembrance;[k] and we know by proportions, by similitudes and dissimilitudes, by relations and oppositions, by causes and effects, by comparing things with things; all which are nothing but operations of understanding upon the stock of former notices, of something we knew before, nothing but remembrances: all the heads of topics, which are the stock of all arguments and sciences in the world, are a certain demonstration of this; and he is the wisest man, that remembers most, and joins those remembrances together to the best purposes of discourse. From whence it may not be improbably gathered, that in the state of separation, if there be any act of understanding, that is, if the understanding be alive, it must be relative to the notices it had in this world; and therefore the acts of it must be discourses upon all the parts and persons of their conversation and relation, excepting only such new revelation, which may be communicated to it; concerning which we know nothing. But if by seeing Socrates I think upon Plato, and by seeing a pic-

[f] Χαῖρέ μοι, ὦ Πάτροκλε, καὶ εἰν ἀΐδαο δόμοισι
Πάντα γὰρ ἤδη τοι τελέω τὰ πάροιθεν ὑπέστην.—Iliad. ψ'.

[g] Χρὴ δὲ καὶ τῶν προγόνων ποιήσασθαί τινα πρόνοιαν, καὶ μὴ παραμελῆσαι, μηδὲ τῆς περὶ ἐκείνους εὐσεβείας.—Isoc. Plataic. c. 24. Lange, p. 534.

——Misenum in littore Teucri
Flebant, et cineri ingrato suprema ferebant.—Æneid. 6.

[h] Ἦλθε δ' ἐπὶ ψυχὴ Πατροκλῆος δειλοῖο,
—— καὶ μιν πρὸς μῦθον ἔειπεν,
Εὕδεις, αὐτὰρ ἐμεῖο λελασμένος ἔπλευ, Ἀχιλλεῦ;
Οὐ μέν μευ ζώοντος ἀκήδεις, ἀλλὰ θανόντος.—Iliad. ψ'.

[i] Ἡ δὲ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ψυχὴ τότε δήπου θειοτάτη καταφαίνεται, καὶ τότε τι τῶν μελλόντων προορᾷ, τότε γὰρ ὡς ἔοικε μάλιστα ἐλευθεροῦται.—Cyrus apud Xenoph. lib. viii. Institut.

[k] —Τίς ἐστι καὶ εἰν αἰδάο δόμοισι Ψυχὴ καὶ εἴδωλον, ἀτὰρ φρένες οὐκ ἔνι πάμπαν.—Iliad. ψ'.

ture I remember a man, and by beholding two friends, I remember my own and my friend's need; (and he is wisest that draws most lines from the same centre, and most discourses from the same notices;) it cannot but be very probable to believe, since the separate souls understand better, if they understand at all, that from the notices they carried from hence, and what they find there equal or unequal to those notices, they can better discover the things of their friends, than we can here by our conjectures and craftiest imaginations; and yet many men here can guess shrewdly at the thoughts and designs of such men with whom they discourse, or of whom they have heard, or whose characters they prudently have perceived. I have no other end in this discourse, but that we may be engaged to do our duty to our dead; lest peradventure they should perceive or neglect, and be witnesses of our transient affections and forgetfulness. Dead persons have religion passed upon them, and a solemn reverence: and if we think a ghost beholds us, it may be, we may have upon us the impressions likely to be made by love, and fear, and religion. However, we are sure that God sees us, and the world sees us; and if it be matter of duty towards our dead, God will exact it; if it be matter of kindness, the world will; and as religion is the band of that, so fame and reputation are the endearment of this.

It remains, that we who are alive should so live, and by the actions of religion attend the coming of the day of the Lord, that we neither be surprised, nor leave our duties imperfect, nor our sins uncancelled, nor our persons unreconciled, nor God unappeased; but that, when we descend to our graves, we may rest in the bosom of the Lord, till the mansions be prepared, where we shall sing and feast eternally. Amen.

Te Deum laudamus.

TWENTY-FIVE SERMONS

PREACHED AT GOLDEN GROVE;

BEING

FOR THE WINTER HALF-YEAR,

BEGINNING ON ADVENT SUNDAY, AND ENDING ON THE SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE AND TRULY NOBLE

RICHARD LORD VAUGHAN,

EARL OF CARBERY, &c.

My Lord,

I have now, by the assistance of God, and the advantages of your many favours, finished a year of sermons; which if, like the first year of our Saviour's preaching, it may be "annus acceptabilis," "an acceptable year," to God, and his afflicted handmaid the church of England, a relief to some of her new necessities, and an institution or assistance to any soul; I shall esteem it among those honours and blessings, with which God uses to reward those good intentions, which himself first puts into our hearts, and then recompenses upon our heads. My Lord, they were first presented to God in the ministries of your family: for this is a blessing, for which your Lordship is to bless God, that your family is, like Gideon's fleece, irriguous with a dew from heaven, when much of the vicinage is dry; for we have cause to remember, that Isaac complained of the Philistines, who filled up his wells with stones and rubbish, and left no beverage for the flocks; and therefore they could give no milk to them that waited upon the flocks, and the flocks could not be gathered, nor fed, nor defended. It was a design of ruin, and had in it the greatest hostility, and so it hath been lately;

> ——————————undique totis
> Usque adeò turbatur agris. En! ipse capellas
> Protinus æger ago; hanc etiam vix, Tityre, duco.

But, my Lord, this is not all: I would fain also complain, that men feel not their greatest evil, and are not sensible of their danger, nor covetous of what they want, nor strive for that which is forbidden them; but that this complaint would suppose an unnatural evil to rule in the hearts of men; for who would have in him so little of a man, as not to be greedy of the word of God, and of holy ordinances, even therefore because they are so hard to have? and this evil, although it can have no excuse, yet it hath a great and a certain cause; for the word of God still creates new appetites, as it satisfies the old; and enlarges the capacity, as it fills the first propensities of the Spirit. For all spiritual blessings are seeds of immortality and of infinite felicities, they swell up to the comprehensions of eternity; and the desires of the soul can never be wearied, but when they are decayed; as the stomach will be craving every day, unless it be sick and abused. But every man's experience tells him now, that because men have not preaching, they less desire it; their long fasting makes them not to love their meat; and so we have cause to fear, the people will fall to an atrophy, then to a loathing of holy food; and then God's anger will follow the method of our sin, and send a famine of the word and sacraments. This we have the

greatest reason to fear, and this fear can be relieved by nothing but by notices and experience of the greatness of the Divine mercies and goodness.

Against this danger in future, and evil in present, as you and all good men interpose their prayers, so have I added this little instance of my care and services; being willing to minister in all offices and varieties of employment, that so I may by all means save some, and confirm others; or at least that myself may be accepted of God in my desiring it. And I think I have some reasons to expect a special mercy in this, because I find, by the constitution of the Divine providence, and ecclesiastical affairs, that all the great necessities of the church have been served by the zeal of preaching in public, and other holy ministries in public or private, as they could be had. By this the apostles planted the church, and the primitive bishops supported the faith of martyrs, and the hardiness of confessors, and the austerity of the retired. By this they confounded heretics, and evil livers, and taught them the ways of the Spirit, and them without pertinacy, or without excuse. It was preaching that restored the splendour of the church, when barbarism, and wars, and ignorance, either sat in, or broke, the doctor's chair in pieces: for then it was that divers orders of religious, and especially of preachers, were erected; God inspiring into whole companies of men a zeal of preaching. And by the same instrument God restored the beauty of the church, when it was necessary she should be reformed; it was the assiduous and learned preaching of those whom God chose for his ministers in that work, that wrought the advantages and persuaded those truths, which are the enamel and beauty of our churches. And because, by the same means, all things are preserved by which they are produced, it cannot but be certain, that the present state of the church requires a greater care and prudence in this ministry than ever; especially since, by preaching, some endeavour to supplant preaching, and by intercepting the fruits of the flocks, to dishearten the shepherds from their attendances.

My Lord, your great nobleness and religious charity have taken from me some portions of that glory, which I designed to myself in imitation of St. Paul towards the Corinthian church; who esteemed it his honour to preach to them without a revenue; and though also, like him, I have a trade, by which, as I can be more useful to others, and less burdensome to you: yet to you also, under God, I owe the quiet, and the opportunities, and circumstances of that, as if God had so interweaved the support of my affairs with your charity, that he would have no advantages pass upon me, but by your interest; and that I should expect no reward of the issues of my calling, unless your Lordship have a share in the blessing.

My Lord, I give God thanks that my lot is fallen so fairly, and that I can serve your Lordship in that ministry by which I am bound to serve God, and that my gratitude and my duty are bound up in the same bundle; but now, that which was yours by a right of propriety, I have made public, that it may still be more yours, and you derive to yourself a comfort, if you shall see the necessity of others served by that which you heard so diligently, and accepted with so much piety, and I am persuaded have entertained with that religion and obedience, which is the duty of all those who know, that sermons are arguments against us, unless they make us better, and that no sermon is received as it ought, unless it makes us quit a vice, or be in love with virtue; unless we suffer it, in some instance or degree, to do the work of God upon our souls.

My Lord, in these sermons I have meddled with no man's interest, that only excepted which is eternal; but if any man's vice was to be reproved, I have done it with as much severity as I ought. Some cases of conscience I have here determined; but the special design of the whole is, to describe the greater lines of duty, by special arguments: and if any witty censurer shall say, that I tell him nothing but what he knew before; I shall be contented with it, and rejoice that he was so well instructed, and wish also that he needed not a remembrancer: but if, either in the first, or in the second; in the institution of some, or the reminding of others, I can do God any service; no man ought to be offended, that sermons are not like curious inquiries after new nothings, but pursuances of old truths. However, I have already many fair earnests, that your Lordship will be pleased with this tender of my service, and expression of my great and dearest obligations, which you daily renew or continue upon, my noblest Lord,

Your Lordship's most affectionate

And most obliged Subject,

JEREMY TAYLOR.

PRAYERS.

A PRAYER BEFORE SERMON.

O LORD God, fountain of life, giver of all good things, who givest to men the blessed hope of eternal life by our Lord Jesus Christ, and hast promised thy Holy Spirit to them that ask him; be present with us in the dispensation of thy holy word [and sacraments[a]]: grant that we, being preserved from all evil by thy power, and, among the diversities of opinions and judgments in this world, from all errors and false doctrines, and led into all truth by the conduct of thy Holy Spirit, may for ever obey thy heavenly calling: that we may not be only hearers of the word of life, but doers also of good works, keeping faith and a good conscience, living an unblamable life, usefully and charitably, religiously and prudently, in all godliness and honesty before thee our God, and before all the world, that, at the end of our mortal life, we may enter into the light and life of God, to sing praises and eternal hymns to the glory of thy name in eternal ages, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

In whose Name let us pray, in the words which Himself commanded, saying,

OUR Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven: give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

A PRAYER AFTER SERMON.

LORD, pity and pardon, direct and bless, sanctify and save us all. Give repentance to all that live in sin, and perseverance to all thy sons and servants for his sake, who is thy beloved, and the foundation of all our hopes, our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus; to whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory, praise and adoration, love and obedience, now and for evermore. Amen.

SERMON I. ADVENT SUNDAY.

DOOMSDAY BOOK; OR, CHRIST'S ADVENT TO JUDGMENT.

For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. 2 Cor. v. 10.

VIRTUE and vice are so essentially distinguished, and the distinction is so necessary to be observed in order to the well-being of men in private and in societies, that to divide them in themselves, and to separate them by sufficient notices, and to distinguish them by rewards, hath been designed by all laws, by the sayings of wise men, by the order of things, by their proportions to good or evil; and the expectations of men have been framed accordingly: that virtue may have a proper seat in the will and in the affections, and may become amiable by its own excellencies and its appendant blessing; and that vice may be as natural an enemy to a man as a wolf to a lamb, and as darkness to light; destructive of its being, and a contradiction of its nature. But it is not enough that all the world hath armed itself against vice, and, by all that is wise and sober amongst men, hath taken the part of virtue, adorning it with glorious appellatives, encouraging it by rewards, entertaining it with sweetness, and commanding it by edicts, fortifying it with defensatives, and twining it in all artificial compliances: all this is short of man's necessity: for this will, in all modest men, secure their actions in theatres and highways, in markets and churches, before the eye of judges, and in the society of witnesses; but the actions of closets and chambers, the designs and thoughts of men, their discourses in dark places, and the actions of retirements and of the night, are left indifferent to virtue or to vice; and of these, as man can take no cognizance, so he can make no coercitive; and therefore above one half of human actions is, by the laws of man, left unregarded and unprovided for. And, besides this, there are some men who are bigger than laws, and some are bigger than judges, and some judges have lessened themselves by fear and cowardice, by bribery and flattery, by iniquity and compliance;

[a] This clause is to be omitted, if there be no sacrament that day.

and where they have not, yet they have notices but of few causes; and there are some sins so popular and universal, that to punish them is either impossible or intolerable; and to question such, would betray the weakness of the public rods and axes, and represent the sinner to be stronger than the power that is appointed to be his bridle. And, after all this, we find sinners so prosperous that they escape, so potent that they fear not; and sin is made safe when it grows great;

——Facere omnia sævè
Non impune licet, nisi dum facis——

and innocence is oppressed, and the poor cries, and he hath no helper; and he is oppressed, and he wants a patron. And for these and many other concurrent causes, if you reckon all the causes that come before all the judicatories of the world, though the litigious are too many, and the matters of instance are intricate and numerous, yet the personal and criminal are so few, that of two thousand sins that cry aloud to God for vengeance, scarce two are noted by the public eye, and chastised by the hand of justice. It must follow from hence, that it is but reasonable, for the interest of virtue and the necessities of the world, that the private should be judged, and virtue should be tied upon the spirit, and the poor should be relieved, and the oppressed should appeal, and the noise of widows should be heard, and the saints should stand upright, and the cause that was ill-judged should be judged over again, and tyrants should be called to account, and our thoughts should be examined, and our secret actions viewed on all sides, and the infinite number of sins which escape here, should not escape finally. And therefore God hath so ordained it, that there shall be a day of doom, wherein all that are let alone by men, shall be questioned by God, and every word and every action shall receive its just recompence of reward. "For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

Τὰ ἴδια τοῦ σώματος, so it is in the best copies, not τὰ διὰ, "the things done in the body," so we commonly read it; "the things proper or due to the body," so the expression is more apt and proper; for not only what is done διὰ σώματος, "by the body," but even the acts of abstracted understanding and volition, the acts of reflection and choice, acts of self-love and admiration, and whatever else can be supposed the proper and peculiar act of the soul or of the spirit, is to be accounted for at the day of judgment: and even these may be called ἴδια τοῦ σώματος, because these are the acts of the man in the state of conjunction with the body. The words have in them no other difficulty or variety, but contain a great truth of the biggest interest, and one of the most material constitutive articles of the whole religion, and the greatest endearment of our duty in the whole world. Things are so ordered by the great Lord of all the creatures, that whatsoever we do or suffer shall be called to account, and this account shall be exact, and the sentence shall be just, and the reward shall be great; all the evils of the world shall be amended, and the injustices shall be repaid, and the Divine Providence shall be vindicated, and virtue and vice shall for ever be remarked by their separate dwellings and rewards.

This is that which the apostle, in the next verse, calls "the terror of the Lord." It is *his* terror, because himself shall appear in his dress of majesty and robes of justice; and it is *his* terror, because it is, of all things in the world, the most formidable in itself, and it is most fearful to us, where shall be acted the interest and final sentence of eternity: and because it is so intended, I shall all the way represent it as "the Lord's terror," that we may be afraid of sin, for the destruction of which this terror is intended. 1. Therefore, we will consider the persons that are to be judged, with the circumstances of our advantages or our sorrows; "we must all appear." 2. The Judge and his judgment-seat; "before the judgment-seat of Christ." 3. The sentence that they are to receive; "the things due to the body, good or bad;" according as we now please, but then cannot alter. Every of these is dressed with circumstances of affliction and affrightment to those, to whom such terrors shall appertain as a portion of their inheritance.

1. The persons who are to be judged; even you, and I, and all the world; kings and priests, nobles and learned, the crafty and the easy, the wise and the foolish, the rich and the poor, the prevailing tyrant and the oppressed party, shall all appear to receive their symbol; and this is so far from abating any thing of its terror and our dear concernment, that it much increases it: for, although concerning precepts and discourses, we are apt to neglect in particular, what is recommended in general, and in incidences of mortality and sad events, the singularity of the chance heightens the apprehension of the evil; yet it is so by accident, and only in regard of our imperfection; it being an effect of self-love, or some little creeping envy, which adheres too often to the unfortunate and miserable; or else, because the sorrow is apt to increase by being apprehended to be a rare case, and a singular unworthiness in him who is afflicted, otherwise than is common to the sons of men, companions of his sin, and brethren of his nature, and partners of his usual accidents; yet in final and extreme events, the multitude of sufferers does not lessen but increase the sufferings; and when the first day of judgment happened, that (I mean) of the universal deluge of waters upon the old world, the calamity swelled like the flood, and every man saw his friend perish, and the neighbours of his dwelling, and the relatives of his house, and the sharers of his joys, and yesterday's bride, and the new-born heir, the priest of the family, and the honour of the kindred, all dying or dead, drenched in water and the Divine vengeance; and then they had no place to flee unto, no man cared for their souls; they had none to go unto for counsel, no sanctuary high enough to keep them from the vengeance that rained down from heaven: and so it shall be at the day of judgment, when that

world and this, and all that shall be born hereafter, shall pass through the same Red sea, and be all baptized with the same fire, and be involved in the same cloud, in which shall be thunderings and terrors infinite; every man's fear shall be increased by his neighbour's shrieks, and the amazement that all the world shall be in, shall unite as the sparks of a raging furnace into a globe of fire, and roll upon its own principle, and increase by direct appearances and intolerable reflections. He that stands in a church-yard in the time of a great plague, and hears the passing-bell perpetually telling the sad stories of death, and sees crowds of infected bodies pressing to their graves, and others sick and tremulous, and death, dressed up in all the images of sorrow, round about him, is not supported in his spirit by the variety of his sorrow: and at doomsday, when the terrors are universal, besides that it is itself so much greater, because it can affright the whole world, it is also made greater by communication and a sorrowful influence; grief being then strongly infectious, when there is no variety of state, but an entire kingdom of fear; and amazement is the king of all our passions, and all the world its subjects: and that shriek must needs be terrible, when millions of men and women, at the same instant, shall fearfully cry out, and the noise shall mingle with the trumpet of the archangel, with the thunders of the dying and groaning heavens, and the crack of the dissolving world, when the whole fabric of nature shall shake into dissolution and eternal ashes. But this general consideration may be heightened with four or five circumstances.

1. Consider what an infinite multitude of angels, and men, and women, shall then appear; it is a huge assembly, when the men of one kingdom, the men of one age in a single province, are gathered together into heaps and confusion of disorder; but then, all kingdoms of all ages, all the armies that ever mustered, all the world that Augustus Cæsar taxed, all those hundreds of millions that were slain in all the Roman wars, from Numa's time till Italy was broken into principalities and small exarchates; all these, and all that can come into numbers, and that did descend from the loins of Adam, shall at once be represented; to which account if we add the armies of heaven, the nine orders of blessed spirits, and the infinite numbers in every order, we may suppose the numbers fit to express the majesty of that God, and the terror of that Judge, who is the Lord and Father of all that unimaginable multitude. "Erit terror ingens tot simul tantorumque populorum." [a]

2. In this great multitude we shall meet all those, who, by their example and their holy precepts, have, like tapers, enkindled with a beam of the Sun of righteousness, enlightened us, and taught us to walk in the paths of justice. There we shall see all those good men, whom God sent to preach to us, and recall us from human follies and inhuman practices: and when we espy the good man, that chid us for our last drunkenness or adulteries, it shall then also be remembered how we mocked at counsel, and were civilly modest at the reproof, but laughed when the man was gone, and accepted it for a religious compliment, and took our leaves, and went and did the same again. But then things shall put on another face; and that we smiled at here and slighted fondly, shall then be the greatest terror in the world; men shall feel that they once laughed at their own destruction, and rejected health when it was offered by a man of God upon no other condition, but that they would be wise, and not be in love with death. Then they shall perceive, that if they had obeyed an easy and a sober counsel, they had been partners of the same felicity, which they see so illustrious upon the heads of those preachers, "whose work is with the Lord," and who, by their life and doctrine, endeavoured to snatch the soul of their friend or relatives from an intolerable misery. But he that sees a crown put upon their heads, that give good counsel, and preach holy and severe sermons with designs of charity and piety, will also then perceive that God did not send preachers for nothing, on trifling errands and without regard: but that work, which he crowns in them, he purposed should be effective to us, persuasive to the understanding, and active upon our consciences. Good preachers, by their doctrine, and all good men, by their lives, are the accusers of the disobedient; and they shall rise up from their seats, and judge and condemn the follies of those who thought their piety to be want of courage, and their discourses pedantical, and their reproofs the priest's trade, but of no signification, because they preferred moments before eternity.

3. There in that great assembly shall be seen all those converts, who, upon easier terms, and fewer miracles, and a less experience, and a younger grace, and a seldomer preaching, and more unlikely circumstances, have suffered the work of God to prosper upon their spirits, and have been obedient to the heavenly calling. There shall stand the men of Nineveh, and they "shall stand upright in judgment," for they, at the preaching of one man, in a less space than forty days, returned unto the Lord their God; but we have heard him call all our lives, and, like the deaf adder, stopped our ears against the voice of God's servants, "charm they never so wisely." There shall appear the men of Capernaum, and the queen of the South, and the men of Berea, and the first-fruits of the christian church, and the holy martyrs, and shall proclaim to all the world, that it was not impossible to do the work of grace in the midst of all our weaknesses, and accidental disadvantages: and that "the obedience of faith," and the "labour of love," and the contentions of chastity, and the severities of temperance and self-denial, are not such insuperable mountains, but that an honest and sober person may perform them in acceptable degrees, if he have but a ready ear, and a willing mind, and an honest heart: and this scene of honest persons shall make the Divine judgment upon sinners more reasonable, and apparently just, in passing upon them the horrible sentence; for why cannot we as well serve God in peace, as others served him in war? why cannot

[a] Florus

we love him as well when he treats us sweetly, and gives us health and plenty, honours or fair fortunes, reputation or contentedness, quietness and peace, as others did upon gibbets and under axes, in the hands of tormentors and in hard wildernesses, in nakedness and poverty, in the midst of all evil things, and all sad discomforts? Concerning this no answer can be made.

4. But there is a worse sight than this yet, which, in that great assembly, shall distract our sight, and amaze our spirits. There men shall meet the partners of their sins, and them that drank the round, when they crowned their heads with folly and forgetfulness, and their cups with wine and noises. There shall ye see that poor, perishing soul, whom thou didst tempt to adultery and wantonness, to drunkenness or perjury, to rebellion or an evil interest, by power or craft, by witty discourses or deep dissembling, by scandal or a snare, by evil example or pernicious counsel, by malice or unwariness; and when all this is summed up, and from the variety of its particulars is drawn into an uneasy load and a formidable sum, possibly we may find sights enough to scare all our confidences, and arguments enough to press our evil souls into the sorrows of a most intolerable death. For, however we make now but light accounts and evil proportions concerning it, yet it will be a fearful circumstance of appearing, to see one, or two, or ten, or twenty accursed souls, despairing, miserable, infinitely miserable, roaring and blaspheming, and fearfully cursing thee as the cause of its eternal sorrows. Thy lust betrayed and rifled her weak and unguarded innocence; thy example made thy servant confident to lie, or to be perjured; thy society brought a third into intemperance and the disguises of a beast: and when thou seest that soul, with whom thou didst sin, dragged into hell, well mayest thou fear to drink the dregs of thy intolerable potion. And most certainly, it is the greatest of evils to destroy a soul, for whom the Lord Jesus died, and to undo that grace which our Lord purchased with so much sweat and blood, pains and a mighty charity. And because very many sins of society and confederation; such are fornication, drunkenness, bribery, simony, rebellion, schism, and many others; it is a hard and a weighty consideration, what shall become of any one of us, who have tempted our brother or sister to sin and death: for though God hath spared our life, and they are dead, and their debt-books are sealed up till the day of account; yet the mischief of our sin is gone before us, and it is like a murder, but more execrable: the soul is dead in trespasses and sins, and sealed up to an eternal sorrow; and thou shalt see, at doomsday, what damnable uncharitableness thou hast done. That soul that cries to those rocks to cover her, if it had not been for thy perpetual temptations, might have followed the Lamb in a white robe; and that poor man, that is clothed with shame and flames of fire, would have shined in glory, but that thou didst force him to be partner of thy baseness. And who shall pay for this loss? a soul is lost by thy means; thou hast defeated the holy purposes of the Lord's bitter passion by thy impurities; and what shall happen to thee, by whom thy brother dies eternally? Of all the considerations that concern this part of the horrors of doomsday, nothing can be more formidable than this, to such whom it does concern: and truly it concerns so many, and amongst so many, perhaps some persons are so tender, that it might affright their hopes, and discompose their industries and spriteful labours of repentance; but that our most merciful Lord hath, in the midst of all the fearful circumstances of his second coming, interwoven this one comfort relating to this, which, to my sense, seems the most fearful and killing circumstance: "Two shall be grinding at one mill; the one shall be taken and the other left. Two shall be in a bed; the one shall be taken and the other left;" that is, those who are confederate in the same fortunes, and interests, and actions, may yet have a different sentence: for an early and an active repentance will wash off this account, and put it upon the tables of the cross; and though it ought to make us diligent and careful, charitable and penitent, hugely penitent, even so long as we live, yet when we shall appear together, there is a mercy that shall there separate us, who sometimes had blended each other in a common crime. Blessed be the mercies of God, who hath so carefully provided a fruitful shower of grace, to refresh the miseries and dangers of the greatest part of mankind. Thomas Aquinas was used to beg of God, that he might never be tempted, from his low fortune, to prelacies and dignities ecclesiastical; and that his mind might never be discomposed or polluted with the love of any creature; and that he might, by some instrument or other, understand the state of his deceased brother; and the story says, that he was heard in all. In him it was a great curiosity, or the passion and impertinences of a useless charity, to search after him, unless he had some other personal concernment than his relation of kindred. But truly, it would concern very many to be solicitous concerning the event of those souls, with whom we have mingled death and sin; for many of those sentences, which have passed and decreed concerning our departed relatives, will concern us dearly, and we are bound in the same bundles, and shall be thrown into the same fires, unless we repent for our own sins, and double our sorrows for their damnation.

5. We may consider that this infinite multitude of men, women, angels, and devils, is not ineffective as a number in Pythagoras's tables, but must needs have influence upon every spirit that shall there appear. For the transactions of that court are not like orations spoken by a Grecian orator in the circles of his people, heard by them that crowd nearest him, or that sound limited by the circles of air, or the enclosure of a wall; but every thing is represented to every person, and then, let it be considered, when thy shame and secret turpitude, thy midnight revels and secret hypocrisies, thy lustful thoughts and treacherous designs, thy falsehood to God and startings from thy holy promises, thy follies and impieties, shall be laid open before all the world, and that then shall be spoken by the

trumpet of an archangel upon the housetop, the highest battlements of heaven, all those filthy words and lewd circumstances, which thou didst act secretly; thou wilt find, that thou wilt have reason strangely to be ashamed. All the wise men in the world shall know how vile thou hast been: and then consider, with what confusion of face wouldst thou stand in the presence of a good man and a severe, if peradventure he should suddenly draw thy curtain, and find thee in the sins of shame and lust; it must be infinitely more, when God and all the angels of heaven and earth, all his holy myriads, and all his redeemed saints, shall stare and wonder at thy impurities and follies. I have read a story, that a young gentleman, being passionately by his mother dissuaded from entering into the severe courses of a religious and single life, broke from her importunity by saying, "Volo servare animam meam;" "I am resolved by all means to save my soul." But when he had undertaken a rule with passion, he performed it carelessly and remissly, and was but lukewarm in his religion, and quickly proceeded to a melancholy and wearied spirit, and from thence to a sickness and the neighbourhood of death: but falling into an agony and a fantastic vision, dreamed that he saw himself summoned before God's angry throne, and from thence hurried into a place of torments, where espying his mother, full of scorn she upbraided him with his former answer, and asked him why he did not save his soul by all means, according as he undertook. But when the sick man awaked and recovered, he made his words good indeed, and prayed frequently, and fasted severely, and laboured humbly, and conversed charitably, and mortified himself severely, and refused such secular solaces which other good men received to refresh and sustain their infirmities, and gave no other account to them that asked him but this: If I could not in my ecstasy or dream endure my mother's upbraiding my follies and weak religion, how shall I be able to suffer, that God should redargue me at doomsday, and the angels reproach my lukewarmness, and the devils aggravate my sins, and all the saints of God deride my follies and hypocrisies? The effect of that man's consideration may serve to actuate a meditation in every one of us; for we shall all be at that pass, that unless our shame and sorrows be cleansed by a timely repentance, and covered by the robe of Christ, we shall suffer the anger of God, the scorn of saints and angels, and our own shame in the general assembly of all mankind. This argument is most considerable to them, who are tender of their precious name and sensible of honour; if they rather would choose death than a disgrace, poverty rather than shame, let them remember that a sinful life will bring them to an intolerable shame at that day, when all that is excellent in heaven and earth shall be summoned as witnesses and parties in a fearful scrutiny. The sum is this, all that are born of Adam shall appear before God and his Christ, and all the innumerable companies of angels and devils shall be there: and the wicked shall be affrighted with every thing they see; and there they shall see those good men that taught them the ways of life; and all those evil persons, whom themselves have tempted into the ways of death; and those who were converted upon easier terms; and some of these shall shame the wicked, and some shall curse them, and some shall upbraid them, and all shall amaze them; and yet this is but the ἀρχὴ ὠδίνων, the beginning of those evils which shall never end, till eternity hath a period; but concerning this they must first be judged; and that is the second general consideration, "we must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ," and that is a new state of terrors and affrightments. Christ, who is our Saviour and is our advocate, shall then be our judge; and that will strangely change our confidences and all the face of things.

2. That is then the place and state of our appearance, "before the judgment-seat of Christ:" for Christ shall rise from the right hand of his Father; he shall descend towards us, and ride upon a cloud, and shall make himself illustrious by a glorious majesty, and an innumerable retinue, and circumstances of terror and a mighty power: and this is that which Origen affirms to be the sign of the Son of man. Remalcus de Vaux, in Harpocrate Divino, affirms, that all the Greek and Latin fathers "consentientibus animis asseverant, hoc signo crucem Christi significari," do unanimously affirm, that the representment of the cross is the sign of the Son of man spoken of, Matt. xxiv. 50. And indeed they affirm it very generally, but Origen after this manner is singular, "hoc signum crucis erit, cum Dominus adjudicandum venerit," so the church used to sing, and so it is in the Sibyl's verses:

> O lignum felix, in quo Deus ipse pependit;
> Nec te terra capit, sed cœli tecta videbis,
> Cum renovata Dei facies ignita micabit.

The sign of that cross is the sign of the Son of man, when the Lord shall come to judgment: and from those words of Scripture, "they shall look on him whom they have pierced," it hath been freely entertained, that at the day of judgment Christ shall signify his person by something that related to his passion, his cross, or his wounds, or both. I list not to spin this curious cobweb; but Origen's opinion seems to me more reasonable; and it is more agreeable to the majesty and power of Christ to signify himself with proportions of his glory, rather than of his humility; with effects of his being exalted into heaven, rather than of his poverty and sorrows upon earth: and this is countenanced better by some Greek copies; τότε φανήσεται σημεῖον τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, so it is commonly read, "the sign of the Son of man in heaven;" that is, (say they,) the sign of the Son of man imprinted upon a cloud; but it is in others τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς, "the sign of the Son of man who is in the heavens;" not that the sign shall be imprinted on a cloud, or in any part of the heavens, but that he who is now in the heavens, shall, when he comes down, have a sign and signification of his own, that is proper to him who is there glorified, and shall return in glory. And he disparages the beauty of the sun, who in-

quires for a rule to know when the sun shines, or the light breaks forth from its chambers of the east; and the Son of man shall need no other signification, but his infinite retinue, and all the angels of God worshipping him, and sitting upon a cloud, and leading the heavenly host, and bringing his elect with him, and being clothed with the robes of majesty, and trampling upon devils, and confounding the wicked, and destroying death: but all these great things shall be invested with such strange circumstances, and annexes of mightiness and divinity, that all the world shall confess the glories of the Lord; and this is sufficiently signified by St. Paul, "We shall all be set before the throne or place of Christ's judicature; for it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God:"[a] that is, at the day of judgment, when we are placed ready to receive our sentence, all knees shall bow to the holy Jesus, and confess him to be God the Lord; meaning that our Lord's presence shall be such, as to force obeisance from angels and men and devils; and his address to judgment shall sufficiently declare his person and his office, and his proper glories. This is the greatest scene of majesty that shall be in that day, till the sentence be pronounced; but there goes much before this, which prepares all the world to the expectation and consequent reception of this mighty Judge of men and angels.

The majesty of the Judge, and the terrors of the judgment, shall be spoken aloud by the immediate forerunning accidents, which shall be so great violences to the old constitutions of nature, that it shall break her very bones, and disorder her till she be destroyed. Saint Jerome relates out of the Jews' books, that their doctors used to account fifteen days of prodigy immediately before Christ's coming, and to every day assign a wonder, any one of which if we should chance to see in the days of our flesh, it would affright us into the like thoughts which the old world had, when they saw the countries round about them covered with water and the Divine vengeance; or as those poor people near Adria, and the Mediterranean sea, when their houses and cities are entering into graves, and the bowels of the earth rent with convulsions and horrid tremblings. The sea (they say) shall rise fifteen cubits above the highest mountains, and thence descend into hollowness and a prodigious drought; and when they are reduced again to their usual proportions, then all the beasts and creeping things, the monsters and the usual inhabitants of the sea, shall be gathered together, and make fearful noises to distract mankind; the birds shall mourn, and change their songs into threnes and sad accents; rivers of fire shall rise from the east to west, and the stars shall be rent into threads of light, and scatter like the beards of comets; then shall be fearful earthquakes, and the rocks shall rend in pieces, the trees shall distil blood, and the mountains and fairest structures shall return unto their primitive dust; the wild beasts shall leave their dens, and come into the companies of men, so that you shall hardly tell how to call them, herds of men, or congregations of beasts; then shall the graves open and give up their dead, and those which are alive in nature and dead in fear, shall be forced from the rocks whither they went to hide them, and from caverns of the earth, where they would fain have been concealed; because their retirements are dismantled, and their rocks are broken into wider ruptures, and admit a strange light into their secret bowels; and the men being forced abroad into the theatre of mighty horrors, shall run up and down distracted and at their wits' end; and then some shall die, and some shall be changed, and by this time the elect shall be gathered together from the four quarters of the world, and Christ shall come along with them to judgment.

These signs, although the Jewish doctors reckon them by order and a method, concerning which they had no other revelation (that appears) nor sufficiently credible tradition, yet for the main parts of the things themselves, the Holy Scripture records Christ's own words, and concerning the most terrible of them; the sum of which, as Christ related them, and his apostles recorded and explicated, is this, "the earth shall tremble, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken; the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood;" that is, there shall be strange eclipses of the sun, and fearful aspects in the moon, who when she is troubled looks red like blood; "the rocks shall rend, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. The heavens shall be rolled up like a parchment, the earth shall be burned with fire, the hills shall be like wax, for there shall go a fire before him, and a mighty tempest shall be stirred round about him:"

> Dies iræ, Dies illa
> Solvet sec'lum in favillâ;
> Teste David, cum Sibyllâ.

The trumpet of God shall sound, and the voice of the archangel, that is, of him who is the prince of all that great army of spirits, which shall then attend their Lord, and wait upon and illustrate his glory; and this also is part of that which is called the sign of the Son of man; for the fulfilling of all these predictions, and the preaching of the gospel to all nations, and the conversion of the Jews, and these prodigies, and the address of majesty, make up that sign. The notice of which things some way or other came to the very heathen themselves, who were alarmed into caution and sobriety by these dead remembrancers:

> ——Sic cùm, compage solutâ,
> Sæcula tot mundi suprema coëgerit hora,
> Antiquum repetens iterum chaos, omnia mistis
> Sidera sideribus concurrent: ignea pontum
> Astra petent, tellus extendere littora nolit,
> Excutietque fretum; fratri contraria Phœbe
> Ibit, ——————Totaque discors
> Machina divulsi turbabit fœdera mundi.

Which things when they are come to pass, it will be no wonder if men's hearts shall fail them for fear, and their wits be lost with guilt, and their fond hopes destroyed by prodigy and amazement; but it will be an extreme wonder, if the consideration and certain expectation of these things shall

[a] Rom. xiv. 10, 11.

not awake our sleeping spirits, and raise us from the death of sin, and the baseness of vice and dishonourable actions, to live soberly and temperately, chastely and justly, humbly and obediently, that is, like persons that believe all this; and such who are not madmen or fools will order their actions according to these notices. For if they do not believe these things, where is their faith? If they do believe them, and sin on, and do as if there were no such thing to come to pass, where is their prudence, and what is their hopes, and where their charity? how do they differ from beasts, save that they are more foolish? for beasts go on and consider not, because they cannot; but we can consider, and will not: we know that strange terrors shall affright us all, and strange deaths and torments shall seize upon the wicked, and that we cannot escape, and the rocks themselves will not be able to hide us from the fears of those prodigies, which shall come before the day of judgment; and that the mountains, though, when they are broken in pieces, we call upon them to fall upon us, shall not be able to secure us one minute from the present vengeance; and yet we proceed with confidence or carelessness, and consider not, that there is no greater folly in the world than for a man to neglect his greatest interest, and to die for trifles and little regards, and to become miserable for such interests, which are not excusable in a child. He that is youngest, hath not long to live; he that is thirty, forty, or fifty years old, hath spent most of his life, and his dream is almost done, and in a very few months he must be cast into his eternal portion; that is, he must be in an unalterable condition; his final sentence shall pass, according as he shall then be found; and that will be an intolerable condition, when he shall have reason to cry out in the bitterness of his soul, "Eternal woe is to me, who refused to consider, when I might have been saved and secured from this intolerable calamity." But I must descend to consider the particulars and circumstances of the great consideration, "Christ shall be our judge at doomsday."

SERMON II.

PART II.

1. IF we consider the person of the Judge, we first perceive, that he is interested in the injury of the crimes he is to sentence. "Videbunt quem crucifixerunt," "they shall look on him whom they have pierced." It was for thy sins that the Judge did suffer unspeakable pains, as were enough to reconcile all the world to God: the sum and spirit of which pains could not be better understood than by the consequence of his own words, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" meaning that he felt such horrible pure unmingled sorrows, that although his human nature was personally united to the Godhead, yet at that instant he felt no comfortable emanations by sensible perception from the Divinity, but he was so drenched in sorrow, that the Godhead seemed to have forsaken him. Beyond this nothing can be added: but then, that thou hast for thy own particular made all this in vain and ineffective, that Christ thy Lord and Judge should be tormented for nothing, that thou wouldst not accept felicity and pardon, when he purchased them at so dear a price, must needs be an infinite condemnation to such persons. How shalt thou look upon him that fainted and died for love of thee, and thou didst scorn his miraculous mercies? How shall we dare to behold that holy face that brought salvation to us, and we turned away and fell in love with death, and kissed deformity and sins? and yet in the beholding that face consists much of the glories of eternity. All the pains and passions, the sorrows and the groans, the humility and poverty, the labours and the watchings, the prayers and the sermons, the miracles and the prophecies, the whip and the nails, the death and the burial, the shame and the smart, the cross and the grave, of Jesus, shall be laid upon thy score, if thou hast refused the mercies and design of all their holy ends and purposes. And if we remember what a calamity that was, which broke the Jewish nation in pieces, when Christ came to judge them for their murdering him, who was their King and the Prince of life; and consider, that this was but a dark image of the terrors of the day of judgment; we may then apprehend, that there is some strange unspeakable evil that attends them that are guilty of this death and of so much evil to their Lord. Now it is certain, if thou wilt not be saved by his death, thou art guilty of his death; if thou wilt not suffer him to save thee, thou art guilty of destroying him: and then let it be considered, what is to be expected from that Judge, before whom you stand as his murderer and betrayer. But this is but half of that consideration.

2. Christ may be "crucified again," and upon a new account "put to an open shame." For after that Christ had done all this by the direct actions of his priestly office of sacrificing himself for us, he hath also done very many things for us, which are also the fruits of his first love and prosecution of our redemption. I will not instance in the strange arts of mercy that our Lord uses to bring us to live holy lives; but I consider that things are so ordered, and so great a value set upon our souls, since they are the images of God and redeemed by the blood of the holy Lamb, that the salvation of our souls is reckoned as a part of Christ's reward, a part of the glorification of his humanity. Every sinner that repents causes joy to Christ, and the joy is so great that it runs over and wets the fair brows and beauteous locks of cherubim and seraphim, and all the angels have a part of that banquet; then it is that our blessed Lord feels the fruits of his holy death, the acceptation of his holy sacrifice, the graciousness of his person, the return of his prayers. For all that Christ did or suffered, and all that he now does as a priest in heaven, is

to glorify his Father by bringing souls to God: for this it was that he was born and died, and that he descended from heaven to earth, from life to death, from the cross to the grave; this was the purpose of his resurrection and ascension, of the end and design of all the miracles and graces of God manifested to all the world by him. And now what man is so vile, such a malicious fool, that will refuse to bring joy to his Lord by doing himself the greatest good in the world? They who refuse to do this, are said to "crucify the Lord of life again, and put him to an open shame;" that is, they, as much as in them lies, bring Christ from his glorious joys to the labours of his life, and the shame of his death; they advance his enemies, and refuse to advance the kingdom of their Lord; they put themselves in that state, in which they were when Christ came to die for them; and now that he is in a state that he may rejoice over them, (for he hath done all his share towards it,) every wicked man takes his head from the blessing, and rather chooses that the devil should rejoice in his destruction, than that his Lord should triumph in his felicity. And now upon the supposition of these premises we may imagine, that it will be an infinite amazement to meet the Lord to be our judge, whose person we have murdered, whose honour we have disparaged, whose purposes we have destroyed, whose joys we have lessened, whose passion we have made ineffectual, and whose love we have trampled under our profane and impious feet.

3. But there is yet a third part of this consideration. As it will be inquired at the day of judgment concerning the dishonours to the person of Christ, so also concerning the profession and institution of Christ, and concerning his poor members; for by these also we make sad reflections upon our Lord. Every man that lives wickedly disgraces the religion and institution of Jesus, he discourages strangers from entering into it, he weakens the hands of them that are in already, and makes that the adversaries speak reproachfully of the name of Christ; but although it is certain our Lord and Judge will deeply resent all these things, yet there is one thing which he takes more tenderly, and that is, the uncharitableness of men towards his poor; it shall then be upbraided to them by the Judge, that himself was hungry, and they refused to give meat to him that gave them his body and heart-blood to feed them and quench their thirst; that they denied a robe to cover his nakedness, and yet he would have clothed their souls with the robe of his righteousness, lest their souls should be found naked in the day of the Lord's visitation; and all this unkindness is nothing but that evil men were uncharitable to their brethren, they would not feed the hungry, nor give drink to the thirsty, nor clothe the naked, nor relieve their brother's needs, nor forgive his follies, nor cover their shame, nor turn their eyes from delighting in their affronts and evil accidents; this is it which our Lord will take so tenderly, that his brethren, for whom he died, who sucked the paps of his mother, that fed on his body and are nourished with his blood, whom he hath lodged in his heart and entertains in his bosom, the partners of his spirit and co-heirs of his inheritance, that these should be denied relief and suffered to go away ashamed and unpitied; this our blessed Lord will take so ill, that all those who are guilty of this unkindness have no reason to expect the favour of the court.

4. To this if we add the almightiness of the Judge, his infinite wisdom and knowledge of all causes and all persons and all circumstances, that he is infinitely just, inflexibly angry, and impartial in his sentence, there can be nothing added either to the greatness or the requisites of a terrible and an almighty Judge. For who can resist him who is almighty? Who can evade his scrutiny that knows all things? Who can hope for pity of him that is inflexible? Who can think to be exempted when the judge is righteous and impartial? But in all these annexes of the great Judge, that which I shall now remark, is that indeed which hath terror in it, and that is the severity of our Lord. For then is the day of vengeance and recompences, and no mercy at all shall be showed but to them that are the sons of mercy; for the other, their portion is such as can be expected from these premises.

1. If we remember the instances of God's severity in this life, in the days of mercy and repentance, in those days when judgment waits upon mercy and receives laws by the rules and measures of pardon, and that for all the rare streams of loving-kindness issuing out of paradise and refreshing all our fields with a moisture more fruitful than the floods of Nilus, still there are mingled some storms and violences, some fearful instances of the Divine justice; we may more readily expect it will be worse, infinitely worse, at that day when judgment shall ride in triumph, and mercy shall be the accuser of the wicked. But so we read and are commanded to remember, because they are written for our example, that God destroyed at once five cities of the plain and all the country; and Sodom and her sisters are set forth for an example suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Fearful it was when God destroyed at once twenty-three thousand for fornication, and an exterminating angel in one night killed one hundred and eighty-five thousand of the Assyrians, and the first-born of all the families of Egypt, and for the sin of David in numbering the people, threescore and ten thousand of the people died, and God sent ten tribes into captivity and eternal oblivion and indistinction from a common people for their idolatry. Did not God strike Corah and his company with fire from heaven? and the earth opened and swallowed up the congregation of Abiram? And is not evil come upon all the world for one sin of Adam? Did not the anger of God break the nation of the Jews all in pieces with judgments so great, that no nation ever suffered the like, because none ever sinned so? And at once it was done that God in anger destroyed all the world, and eight persons only escaped the angry baptism of water, and yet this world is the time of mercy; God hath opened here his magazines, and sent his only Son as the great fountain of it too: here he delights in mercy,

and in judgment loves to remember it, and it triumphs over all his works, and God contrives instruments and accidents, chances and designs, occasions and opportunities, for mercy: if therefore now the anger of God make such terrible eruptions upon the wicked people that delight in sin, how great may we suppose that anger to be, how severe that judgment, how terrible that vengeance, how intolerable those inflictions, which God reserves for the full effusion of indignation on the great day of vengeance!

2. We may also guess at it by this; if God, upon all single instances, and in the midst of our sins, before they are come to the full, and sometimes in the beginning of an evil habit, be so fierce in his anger; what can we imagine it to be in that day, when the wicked are to drink the dregs of that horrid potion, and count over all the particulars of their whole treasure of wrath? "This is the day of wrath, and God shall reveal or bring forth his righteous judgments."[c] The expression is taken from Deut. xxxii. 34. "Is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasures? ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἐκδικήσεως ἀνταποδώσω, I will restore it in the day of vengeance, for the Lord shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants." For so did the Libyan lion that was brought up under discipline, and taught to endure blows, and eat the meat of order and regular provision, and to suffer gentle usages and the familiarities of societies; but once he brake out into his own wildness, "Dedidicit pacem subito feritate reversa," and killed two Roman boys: but those that forage in the Libyan mountains, tread down and devour all that they meet or master; and when they have fasted two days, lay up an anger great as is their appetite, and bring certain death to all that can be overcome. God is pleased to compare himself to a lion; and though in this life he hath confined himself with promises and gracious emanations of an infinite goodness, and limits himself by conditions and covenants, and suffers himself to be overcome by prayers, and himself hath invented ways of atonement and expiation; yet when he is provoked by our unhandsome and unworthy actions, he makes sudden breaches, and tears some of us in pieces; and of others he breaks their bones or affrights their hopes and secular gaieties, and fills their house with mourning and cypress and groans and death: but when this Lion of the tribe of Judah shall appear upon his own mountain, the mountain of the Lord, in his natural dress of majesty, and that justice shall have her chain and golden fetters taken off, then justice shall strike, and mercy shall not hold her hands; she shall strike sore strokes, and pity shall not break the blow; and God shall account with us by minutes, and for words, and for thoughts: and then he shall be severe to mark what is done amiss; and that justice may reign entirely, God shall open the wicked man's treasure, and tell the sums and weigh grains and scruples: εἰσὶ γὰρ ὥσπερ ἀγαθῶν, οὕτω κακῶν παρὰ τῷ θεῷ θησαυροί. ἐν ἡμέρᾳ γάρ (φησὶν) ἐκδικήσεως ἐσφραγίσθαι τοὺς τῶν κακῶν θησαυρούς, said Philo upon the place of Deuteronomy before quoted: as there are treasures of good things, and God hath crowns and sceptres in store for his saints and servants, and coronets for martyrs, and rosaries for virgins, and phials full of prayers, and bottles full of tears, and a register of sighs and penitential groans: so God hath a treasure of wrath and fury, and scourges and scorpions, and then shall be produced the shame of lust, and the malice of envy, and the groans of the oppressed, and the persecutions of the saints, and the cares of covetousness, and the troubles of ambition, and the insolences of traitors, and the violences of rebels, and the rage of anger, and the uneasiness of impatience, and the restlessness of unlawful desires; and by this time the monsters and diseases will be numerous and intolerable, when God's heavy hand shall press the *sanies* and the intolerableness, the obliquity and the unreasonableness, the amazement and the disorder, the smart and the sorrow, the guilt and the punishment, out from all our sins, and pour them into one chalice, and mingle them with an infinite wrath, and make the wicked drink off all the vengeance, and force it down their unwilling throats with the violence of devils and accursed spirits.

3. We may guess at the severity of the Judge by the lesser strokes of that judgment, which he is pleased to send upon sinners in this world to make them afraid of the horrible pains of doomsday: I mean the torments of an unquiet conscience, the amazement and confusions of some sins and some persons. For I have sometimes seen persons surprised in a base action, and taken in the circumstances of crafty theft and secret injustices, before their excuse was ready; they have changed their colour, their speech hath faltered, their tongue stammered, their eyes did wander and fix no where, till shame made them sink into their hollow eye-pits, to retreat from the images and circumstances of discovery; their wits are lost, their reason useless, the whole order of the soul is discomposed, and they neither see, nor feel, nor think, as they used to do, but they are broken into disorder by a stroke of damnation and a lesser stripe of hell; but then if you come to observe a guilty and a base murderer, a condemned traitor, and see him harassed, first by an evil conscience, and then pulled in pieces by the hangman's hooks, or broken upon sorrows and the wheel, we may then guess (as well as we can in this life) what the pains of that day shall be to accursed souls: but those we shall consider afterwards in their proper scene; now only we are to estimate the severity of our Judge by the intolerableness of an evil conscience: if guilt will make a man despair, and despair will make a man mad, confounded and dissolved in all the regions of his senses and more noble faculties, that he shall neither feel, nor hear, nor see, any thing but spectres and illusions, devils and frightful dreams, and hear noises, and shriek fearfully, and look pale and distracted, like a hopeless man, from the horrors and confusions of a lost battle upon which all his hopes did stand; then the wicked must at the day of judgment expect strange things and fearful, and

[c] Rom. ii. 5.

such which now no language can express, and then no patience can endure.

Πολλοὺς δ' ὀδυρμοὺς καὶ γοοὺς ἀνωφελεῖς
Φθέγξῃ. Διὸς γὰρ δυσπαραίτητοι φρένες.

Then only it can truly be said, that he is inflexible and inexorable. No prayers then can move him, no groans can cause him to pity thee; therefore pity thyself in time, that when the Judge comes thou mayest be one of the sons of everlasting mercy, to whom pity belongs as part of thine inheritance; for all these shall without any remorse (except his own) be condemned by the horrible sentence.

4. That all may think themselves concerned in this consideration, let us remember that even the righteous and most innocent shall pass through a severe trial. Many of the ancients explicated this severity by the fire of conflagration, which (say they) shall purify those souls at the day of judgment, which in this life have built upon the foundation hay and stubble, works of folly and false opinions, and states of imperfection. So Saint Austin's doctrine was,[d] "Hoc agit caminus, alios in sinistrâ separabit, alios in dextrâ quodam modo eliquabit: The great fire at doomsday shall throw some into the portion of the left hand, and others shall be purified and represented on the right;" and the same is affirmed by Origen and Lactantius;[e] and St. Hilary thus expostulates, "Since we are to give an account for every idle word, shall we long for the day of judgment," "in quo est nobis indefessus ille ignis obeundus in quo subeunda sunt gravia illa expiandæ a peccatis animæ supplicia: wherein we must every one of us pass that unwearied fire, in which those grievous punishments for expiating the soul from sins must be endured; for to such as have been baptized with the Holy Ghost, it remaineth that they be consummated with the fire of judgment." And St. Ambrose adds, that if any be as Peter or as John, they are baptized with this fire, and he that is purged here, had need to be purged there again: "Illic quoque nos purificet, quando dicat dominus, intrate in requiem meam; Let him also purify us, that every one of us being burned with that flaming sword, not burned up or consumed, we may enter into paradise, and give thanks unto the Lord, who hath brought us into a place of refreshment."[f] This opinion of theirs is in the main of it very uncertain, relying upon the sense of some obscure places of Scripture, is only apt to represent the great severity of the Judge at that day; and it hath in it this only certainty, that even the most innocent person hath great need of mercy, and he that hath the greatest cause of confidence, although he runs to no rocks to hide him, yet he runs to the protection of the cross, and hides himself under the shadow of Divine mercies; and he that shall receive the absolution of the blessed sentence, shall also suffer the terrors of the day, and the fearful circumstances of Christ's coming. The effect of this consideration is this, that "if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the wicked and the sinner appear?" "Quid faciet virgula deserti, ubi concutietur cedrus paradisi? Quid faciet agnus, cum tremit aries? Si cœlum fugiat, ubi manebit terra?" said St. Gregory. And if St. Paul, whose conscience accused him not, yet durst not be too confident because he was not hereby justified, but might be found faulty by the severer judgment of his Lord; how shall we appear with all our crimes and evil habits round about us? If there be need of much mercy to the servants and friends of the Judge, then his enemies shall not be able to stand upright in judgment.

5. But the matter is still of more concernment. The Pharisees believed that they were innocent, if they abstained from criminal actions, such as were punishable by the judge; and many christians think all is well with them, if they abstain from such sins as have a name in the tables of their laws; but because some sins are secret and not discernible to man, others are public but not punished, because they were frequent and perpetual, and without external mischiefs in some instances, and only provocations against God; men think that in their concernments they have no place: and such are jeering, and many instances of wantonness and revelling, doing petty spites, and rudeness, and churlishness, lying and pride: and beyond this, some are very like virtues; as too much gentleness and slackness in government, or too great severity and rigour of animadversion, bitterness in reproof of sinners, uncivil circumstances, imprudent handlings of some criminals, and zeal; nay, there are some vile things, which, through the evil discoursings and worse manners of men, are passed into an artificial and false reputation, and men are accounted wits for talking atheistically, and valiant for being murderers, and wise for deceiving and circumventing our brothers; and many irregularities more, for all which we are safe enough here. But when the day of judgment comes, these shall be called to a severe account, for the Judge is omniscient and knows all things, and his tribunal takes cognizance of all causes, and hath a coercive for all, "all things are naked and open to his eyes," saith St. Paul;[g] therefore nothing shall escape for being secret:

Ἅπανθ' ὁ μακρὸς καὶ ἀναρίθμητος Χρόνος
Φύει τ' ἄδηλα——

And all prejudices being laid aside, it shall be considered concerning our evil rules, and false principles; "cum cepero tempus, ego justitias judicabo; when I shall receive the people, I shall judge according unto right;"[h] so we read: "when we shall receive time, I will judge justices and judgments;" so the vulgar Latin reads it: that is, in the day of the Lord, when time is put into his hand and time shall be no more, he shall judge concerning those judgments which men here make of things below;

[d] In Psalm ciii.
[e] In Jerem. hom. 13. et in Luc. hom. 14. et Lactantius, lib. vii. Instit. c. xxi. Hilarius in Psal. cxviii. octen. 2. et in Mat. can. 2.
[f] In Psalm cxviii. serm. 3
[g] Heb. iv. 13.
[h] Psalm lxxiv.

and the fighting men shall perceive the noise of drunkards and fools that cried him up for daring to kill his brother, to have been evil principles; and then it will be declared by strange effects, that wealth is not the greatest fortune; and ambition was but an ill counsellor; and to lie for a good cause was no piety; and to do evil for the glory of God was but an ill worshipping him; and that good-nature was not well employed, when it spent itself in vicious company and evil compliances; and that piety was not softness and want of courage; and that poverty ought not to have been contemptible; and the cause that is unsuccessful, is not therefore evil: and what is folly here shall be wisdom there; then shall men curse their evil guides, and their accursed superinduced necessities and the evil guises of the world: and then when silence shall be found innocence, and eloquence in many instances condemned as criminal; when the poor shall reign, and generals and tyrants shall lie low in horrible regions; when he that lost all shall find a treasure, and he that spoiled him shall be found naked and spoiled by the destroyer; then we shall find it true, that we ought here to have done what our Judge, our blessed Lord, shall do there, that is, take our measures of good and evil by the severities of the word of God, by the sermons of Christ and the four gospels, and by the epistles of St. Paul, by justice and charity, by the laws of God and the laws of wise princes and republics, by the rules of nature and the just proportions of reason, by the examples of good men and the proverbs of wise men, by severity and the rules of discipline: for then it shall be, that truth shall ride in triumph, and the holiness of Christ's sermons shall be manifest to all the world; that the word of God shall be advanced over all the discourses of men, and "wisdom shall be justified by all her children." Then shall be heard those words of an evil and tardy repentance, and the just rewards of folly, "We fools thought their life madness;" but behold, they are justified before the throne of God, and we are miserable for ever. Here men think it strange if others will not run into the same excess of riot; but there they will wonder how themselves should be so mad and infinitely unsafe, by being strangely and inexcusably unreasonable. The sum is this, the Judge shall appear clothed with wisdom, and power, and justice, and knowledge, and an impartial spirit, making no separations by the proportions of this world, but by the measures of God; not giving sentence by the principles of our folly and evil customs, but by the severity of his own laws and measures of the Spirit. "Non est judicium Dei, hominum; God does not judge as man judges."

6. Now that the Judge is come thus arrayed, thus prepared, so instructed, let us next consider the circumstances of our appearing and his sentence; and first consider, that men at the day of judgment, that belong not to the portion of life, shall have three sorts of accusers. 1. Christ himself, who is their judge. 2. Their own consciences, whom they have injured and blotted with characters of death and foul dishonour. 3. The devil, their enemy, whom they served.

1. Christ shall be their accuser, not only upon the stock of those direct injuries (which I before reckoned) of crucifying the Lord of life, once and again, &c., but upon the titles of contempt and unworthiness, of unkindness and ingratitude; and the accusation will be nothing else but a plain representation of those artifices and assistances, those bonds and invitations, those constrainings and importunities, which our dear Lord used to us, to make it almost impossible to lie in sin, and necessary to be saved. For it will, it must needs be a fearful exprobration of our unworthiness, when the Judge himself shall bear witness against us, that the wisdom of God himself was strangely employed in bringing us safely to felicity. I shall draw a short scheme, which although it must needs be infinitely short of what God hath done for us, yet it will be enough to shame us. 1. God did not only give his Son for an example, and the Son gave himself for a price for us, but both gave the Holy Spirit to assist us in mighty graces, for the verifications of faith, and the entertainments of hope, and the increase and perseverance of charity. 2. God gave to us a new nature, he put another principle into us, a third part, a perfective constitution: we have the Spirit put into us to be a part of us, as properly to produce actions of holy life, as the soul of man in the body does produce the natural. 3. God hath exalted human nature, and made it in the person of Jesus Christ to sit above the highest seat of angels, and the angels are made ministering spirits, ever since their Lord became our brother. 4. Christ hath by a miraculous sacrament given us his body to eat, and his blood to drink; he made ways that we may become all one with him. 5. He hath given us an easy religion, and hath established our future felicity upon natural and pleasant conditions, and we are to be happy hereafter if we suffer God to make us happy here; and things are so ordered, that a man must take more pains to perish than to be happy. 6. God hath found out rare ways to make our prayers acceptable, our weak petitions, the desires of our imperfect souls, to prevail mightily with God; and to lay a holy violence, and an undeniable necessity upon himself: and God will deny us nothing but when we ask of him to do us ill offices, to give us poisons and dangers, and evil nourishment, and temptations; and he that hath given such mighty power to the prayers of his servants, yet will not be moved by those potent and mighty prayers to do any good man an evil turn, or to grant him one mischief; in that only God can deny us. 7. But in all things else, God hath made all the excellent things in heaven and earth to join towards holy and fortunate effects; for he hath appointed an angel to present the prayers of saints,[i] and Christ makes intercession for us, and the Holy Spirit makes intercession for us with groans unutterable;[k] and all the holy men in the world pray for all and for every one; and God hath instructed us with scriptures and precedents, and collateral and

[i] Rev. viii. 3.

[k] Rom. viii. 26.

direct assistances to pray; and he encourages us with divers excellent promises, and parables, and examples, and teaches us what to pray and how, and gives one promise to public prayer, and another to private prayer, and to both the blessing of being heard.

8. Add to this account, that God did heap blessings upon us without order, infinitely, perpetually, and in all instances, when we needed and when we needed not. 9. He heard us when we prayed, giving us all and giving us more than we desired. 10. He desired that we should ask, and yet he hath also prevented our desire. 11. He watched for us, and, at his own charge, sent a whole order of men, whose employment is to minister to our souls: and, if all this had not been enough, he had given us more also. 12. He promised heaven to our obedience, a province for a dish of water, a kingdom for a prayer, satisfaction for desiring it, grace for receiving, and more grace for accepting and using the first. 13. He invited us with gracious words and perfect entertainments. 14. He threatened horrible things to us, if we would not be happy. 15. He hath made strange necessities for us, making our very repentance to be a conjugation of holy actions, and holy times, and a long succession. 16. He hath taken away all excuses from us, he hath called us off from temptation, he bears our charges, he is always beforehand with us in every act of favour, and perpetually slow in striking; and his arrows are unfeathered, and he is so long, first in drawing his sword, and another long while in whetting it, and yet longer in lifting his hand to strike, that, before the blow comes, the man hath repented long, unless he be a fool and impudent; and then God is so glad of an excuse to lay his anger aside, that certainly if, after all this, we refuse life and glory, there is no more to be said; this plain story will condemn us: but the story is very much longer. And as our conscience will represent all our sins to us, so the Judge will represent all his Father's kindnesses, as Nathan did to David, when he was to make the justice of the Divine sentence appear against him. 17. Then it shall be remembered, that the joys of every day's piety would have been a greater pleasure every night, than the remembrance of every night's sin could have been in the morning: 18. That every night, the trouble and labour of the day's virtue would have been as much passed, and turned to as very a nothing, as the pleasure of that day's sin; but that they would be infinitely distinguished by the remanent effects. Ἂν τι πράξῃς καλὸν μετὰ πόνου, ὁ μὲν πόνος οἴχεται, τὸ δὲ καλὸν μένει· ἄν τι ποιήσῃς αἰσχρὸν μετὰ ἡδονῆς, τὸ μὲν ἡδὺ οἴχεται, τὸ δὲ αἰσχρὸν μένει; so Musonius expressed the sense of this inducement; and that this argument would have grown so great by that time we come to die, that the certain pleasures, and rare confidences, and holy hopes, of a deathbed, would be a strange felicity to the man, when he remembers he did obey, if they were compared to the fearful expectations of a dying sinner, who feels, by a formidable and affrighting remembrance, that of all his sins, nothing remains but the gains of a miserable eternity. The offering ourselves to God every morning, and the thanksgiving to God every night, hope and fear, shame and desire, the honour of leaving a fair name behind us, and the shame of dying like a fool, every thing indeed in the world, is made to be an argument and inducement to us to invite us to come to God and be saved; and therefore when this and infinitely more shall, by the Judge, be exhibited in sad remembrances, there needs no other sentence; we shall condemn ourselves with a hasty shame, and a fearful confusion, to see how good God hath been to us, and how base we have been to ourselves. Thus Moses is said to accuse the Jews; and thus also he that does accuse, is said to condemn; as Verres was by Cicero, and Claudia by Domitius, her accuser; and the world of impenitent persons by the men of Nineveh, and all by Christ, their judge. I represent the horror of this circumstance to consist in this: besides the reasonableness of the judgment and the certainty of the condemnation, it cannot but be an argument of an intolerable despair to perishing souls, when he that was our advocate all our life, shall, in the day of that appearing, be our accuser and our judge, a party against us, an injured person, in the day of his power and of his wrath, doing execution upon all his own foolish and malicious enemies.

2. Our conscience shall be our accuser: but this signifies but these two things; 1. That we shall be condemned for the evils that we have done, and shall then remember; God, by his power, wiping away the dust from the tables of our memory, and taking off the consideration and the voluntary neglect and rude shufflings of our cases of conscience. For then we shall see things as they are, the evil circumstances and the crooked intentions, the adherent unhandsomeness, and the direct crimes; for all things are laid up safely: and though we draw a curtain of a cobweb over them, and sew fig-leaves before our shame, yet God shall draw away the curtain, and forgetfulness shall be no more; because with a taper in the hand of God, all the corners of our nastiness shall be discovered. And, 2. It signifies this also; that not only the justice of God shall be confessed by us in our own shame and condemnation, but the evil of the sentence shall be received into us, to melt our bowels and to break our hearts in pieces within us, because we are the authors of our own death, and our own inhuman hands have torn our souls in pieces. Thus far the horrors are great, and when evil men consider it, it is certain they must be afraid to die. Even they that have lived well, have some sad considerations, and the tremblings of humility, and suspicion of themselves. I remember St. Cyprian tells of a good man who, in his agony of death, saw a phantasm of a noble angelical shape, who, frowning and angry, said to him, "Pati timetis, exire non vultis: quid faciam vobis? Ye cannot endure sickness, ye are troubled at the evils of the world, and yet you are loth to die and be quit of them: what shall I do to you?" Although this is apt to represent every man's condition more or less, yet concerning persons of wicked lives, it hath in it too many sad degrees of truth; they

are impatient of sorrow, and justly fearful of death, because they know not how to comfort themselves in the evil accidents of their lives; and their conscience is too polluted to take death for sanctuary, to hope to have amends made to their condition by the sentence of the day of judgment. Evil and sad is their condition, who cannot be contented here, nor blessed hereafter; whose life is their misery, and their conscience is their enemy, whose grave is their prison, and death their undoing, and the sentence of doomsday the beginning of an intolerable condition.

3. The third sort of accusers are the devils; and they will do it with malicious and evil purposes; the prince of the devils hath Διάβολος for one of his chiefest appellatives; "the accuser of the brethren" he is, by his professed malice and employment: and therefore God, who delights that his mercy should triumph, and his goodness prevail over all the malice of men and devils, hath appointed one whose office is ἐλέγχειν τὸν ἀντιλέγοντα to reprove the accuser, and to resist the enemy, to be a defender of their cause who belong to God. The Holy Spirit is Παράκλητος, a defender; the evil spirit is Διάβολος, the accuser; and they that in this life belong to one or the other, shall, in the same proportion, be treated at the day of judgment. The devil shall accuse the brethren, that is, the saints and servants of God, and shall tell concerning their follies and infirmities, the sins of their youth, and the weakness of their age, the imperfect grace and the long schedule of omissions of duty, their scruples and their fears, their diffidences and pusillanimity, and all those things which themselves, by strict examination, find themselves guilty of and have confessed, all their shame and the matter of their sorrows, their evil intentions and their little plots, their carnal confidences and too fond adherencies to the things of this world, their indulgence and easiness of government, their wild joys and freer meals, their loss of time and their too forward and apt compliances, their trifling arrests and little peevishnesses, the mixtures of the world with the things of the Spirit, and all the incidences of humanity, he will bring forth and aggravate them by the circumstance of ingratitude, and the breach of promise, and the evacuating of their holy purposes, and breaking their resolutions, and rifling their vows; and all these things being drawn into an entire representment, and the bills clogged by numbers, will make the best men in the world seem foul and unhandsome, and stained with the characters of death and evil dishonour. But for these there is appointed a defender; the Holy Spirit that maketh intercession for us, shall then also interpose, and against all these things shall oppose the passion of our blessed Lord, and upon all their defects shall cast the robe of his righteousness; and the sins of their youth shall not prevail so much as the repentance of their age; and their omissions be excused by probable intervening causes, and their little escapes shall appear single and in disunion, because they were always kept asunder by penitential prayers and sighings, and their seldom returns of sin by their daily watchfulness, and their often infirmities by the sincerity of their souls, and their scruples by their zeal, and their passions by their love, and all by the mercies of God and the sacrifice which their Judge offered, and the Holy Spirit made effective by daily graces and assistances. These, therefore, infallibly go to the portion of the right hand, because the Lord our God shall answer for them. "But as for the wicked, it is not so with them;" for although the plain story of their life be to them a sad condemnation, yet what will be answered when it shall be told concerning them, that they despised God's mercies, and feared not his angry judgments; that they regarded not his word, and loved not his excellencies; that they were not persuaded by his promises, nor affrighted by his threatenings; that they neither would accept his government nor his blessings; that all the sad stories that ever happened in both the worlds (in all which himself did escape till the day of his death, and was not concerned in them, save only that he was called upon by every one of them, which he ever heard, or saw, or was told of, to repentance, that all these) were sent to him in vain? But cannot the accuser truly say to the Judge concerning such persons, "They were thine by creation, but mine by their own choice; thou didst redeem them indeed, but they sold themselves to me for a trifle, or for an unsatisfying interest: thou diedst for them, but they obeyed my commandments: I gave them nothing, I promised them nothing but the filthy pleasure of a night, or the joys of madness, or the delights of a disease: I never hanged upon the cross three long hours for them, nor endured the labours of a poor life thirty-three years together for their interest: only when they were thine by the merit of thy death, they quickly became mine by the demerit of their ingratitude: and when thou hadst clothed their soul with thy robe, and adorned them by thy graces, we stripped them naked as their shame, and only put on a robe of darkness, and they thought themselves secure, and went dancing to their grave, like a drunkard to a fight, or a fly unto a candle; and, therefore, they that did partake with us in our faults, must divide with us in our portion and fearful interest?" This is a sad story, because it ends in death, and there is nothing to abate or lessen the calamity. It concerns us, therefore, to consider in time, that he that tempts us will accuse us, and what he calls pleasant now, he shall then say was nothing, and all the gains that now invite earthly souls and mean persons to vanity, were nothing but the seeds of folly, and the harvest is pain, and sorrow, and shame eternal. But then, since this horror proceeds upon the account of so many accusers, God hath put it into our power, by a timely accusation of ourselves in the tribunal of the court christian, to prevent all the arts of aggravation, which, at doomsday, shall load foolish and undiscerning souls. He that accuses himself of his crimes here, means to forsake them, and looks upon them on all sides, and spies out his deformity, and is taught to hate them; he is instructed and prayed for, he prevents the anger of God, and defeats the

devil's malice; and, by making shame the instrument of repentance, he takes away the sting, and makes that to be his medicine, which otherwise would be his death. And concerning this exercise, I shall only add what the patriarch of Alexandria told an old religious person in his hermitage. Having asked him what he found in that desert, he was answered only this, "Indesinenter culpare et judicare meipsum;—To judge and condemn myself perpetually, that is the employment of my solitude."—The patriarch answered, "Non est alia via; There is no other way."—By accusing ourselves we shall make the devil's malice useless, and our own consciences clear, and be reconciled to the Judge by the severities of an early repentance, and then we need to fear no accusers.

SERMON III.

PART III.

3. IT remains that we consider the sentence itself, "We must receive according to what we have done in the body, whether it be good or bad." "Judicaturo Domino lugubre mundus immugiet, et tribus ad tribum pectora ferient. Potentissimi quondam reges nudo latere palpitabunt:" so St. Jerome meditates concerning the terror of this consideration; "The whole world shall groan when the Judge comes to give his sentence, tribe and tribe shall knock their sides together; and through the naked breasts of the most mighty kings, you shall see their hearts beat with fearful tremblings."—"Tunc Aristotelis argumenta parum proderunt, cum venerit filius pauperculæ quæstuariæ judicare orbem terræ." Nothing shall then be worth owning, or the means of obtaining mercy, but a holy conscience; "all the human craft and trifling subtilties shall be useless, when the son of a poor maid shall sit Judge over all the world." When the prophet Joel was describing the formidable accidents in the day of the Lord's judgment, and the fearful sentence of an angry Judge, he was not able to express it, but stammered like a child, or an amazed, imperfect person, "A. A. A. diei, quia prope est dies Domini."[k] It is not sense at first; he was so amazed he knew not what to say; and the Spirit of God was pleased to let that sign remain, like Agamemnon's sorrow for the death of Iphigenia, nothing could describe it but a veil; it must be hidden and supposed; and the stammering tongue, that is full of fear, can best speak that terror, which will make all the world to cry, and shriek, and speak fearful accents, and significations of an infinite sorrow and amazement.

But so it is, there are two great days, in which the fate of all the world is transacted. This life is man's day, in which man does what he pleases, and God holds his peace. Man destroys his brother, and destroys himself, and confounds governments, and raises armies, and tempts to sin, and delights in it, and drinks drunk, and forgets his sorrow, and heaps up great estates, and raises a family, and a name in the annals, and makes others fear him, and introduces new religions, and confounds the old, and changeth articles as his interest requires, and all this while God is silent, save that he is loud and clamorous with his holy precepts, and over-rules the event; but leaves the desires of men to their own choice, and their course of life such as they generally choose. But then God shall have his day too; the day of the Lord shall come, in which he shall speak, and no man shall answer; he shall speak in the voice of thunder and fearful noises, and man shall do no more as he please, but must suffer as he hath deserved. When Zedekiah reigned in Jerusalem, and persecuted the prophets, and destroyed the interests of religion, and put Jeremy into the dungeon, God held his peace, save only that he warned him of the danger, and told him of the disorder; but it was Zedekiah's day, and he was permitted to his pleasure; but when he was led in chains to Babylon, and his eyes were put out with burning basins and horrible circles of reflected fires, then was God's day, and his voice was the accent of a fearful anger, that broke him all in pieces. It will be all our cases, unless we hear God speak now, and do his work, and serve his interest, and bear ourselves in our just proportions, that is, as such, the very end of whose being and all our faculties is, to serve God, and do justice and charities to our brother. For if we do the work of God in our own day, we shall receive an infinite mercy in the day of the Lord. But what that is, is now to be inquired.

"What we have done in the body." But certainly this is the greatest terror of all. The thunders and the fires, the earthquakes and the trumpets, the brightness of holy angels, and the horror of accursed spirits, the voice of the archangel (who is the prince of the heavenly host) and the majesty of the Judge, in whose service all that army stands girt with holiness and obedience, all those strange circumstances which have been already reckoned, and all those others which we cannot understand, are but little preparatories and umbrages of this fearful circumstance. All this amazing majesty and formidable preparatories, are for the passing of an eternal sentence upon us, according to what we have done in the body. Woe and alas! and God help us. All mankind is an enemy to God, his nature is accursed, and his manners are depraved. It is with the nature of man, and with all his manners, as Philemon said of the nature of foxes:

——'Αλώπηξ, ἡ μὲν εἴρων τῇ φύσει,
'Η δ' αὐθέκαστος. ἀλλ' ἐὰν τρισμυρίας
'Αλώπεκάς τις συναγάγοι, μίαν φύσιν
'Απαξ απάσαις ὄψεται—

"Every fox is crafty and mischievous, and if you gather a whole herd of them, there is not a good-natured beast amongst them all."—So it is with man; by nature he is the child of wrath, and by his manners he is the child of the devil; we call

[k] Joel i.

Christian, and we dishonour our Lord; and we are brethren, but we oppress and murder one another; it is a great degree of sanctity now-a-days, not to be so wicked as the worst of men; and we live at the rate, as if the best of men did design to themselves an easier condemnation; and as if the generality of men considered not concerning the degrees of death, but did believe that in hell no man shall perceive any ease or refreshment in being tormented with a slower fire. For consider what we do in the body; twelve or fourteen years pass, before we choose good or bad; and of that which remains, above half is spent in sleep and the needs of nature; for the other half, it is divided as the stag was when the beasts went a hunting, the lion hath five parts of six. The business of the world takes so much of our remaining portion, that religion and the service of God have not much time left that can be spared; and of that which can, if we consider how much is allowed to crafty arts of cozenage, to oppression and ambition, to greedy desires and avaricious prosecutions, to the vanities of our youth and the proper sins of every age, to the mere idleness of man and doing nothing, to his fantastic imaginations of greatness and pleasures, of great and little devices, of impertinent lawsuits, and uncharitable treatings of our brother; it will be intolerable when we consider that we are to stand or fall eternally according to what we have done in the body. Gather it all together, and set it before thy eyes; alms and prayers are the sum of all thy good. Were thy prayers made in fear and holiness, with passion and desire? Were they not made unwillingly, weakly, and wanderingly, and abated with sins in the greatest part of thy life? Didst thou pray with the same affection and labour as thou didst purchase thy estate? Have thine alms been more than thy oppressions, and according to thy power? and by what means didst thou judge concerning it? How much of our time was spent in that? and how much of our estate was spent in this? But let us go one step farther:—How many of us love our enemies? or pray for and do good to them that persecute and affront us? or overcome evil with good, or turn the face again to them that strike us, rather than be revenged? or suffer ourselves to be spoiled or robbed without contention and uncharitable courses? or lose our interest rather than lose our charity? And yet by these precepts we shall be judged. I instance but once more. Our blessed Saviour spake a hard saying: "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof at the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."[l] And upon this account may every one, weeping and trembling, say with Job, "Quid faciam, cum resurrexerit ad judicandum Deus? What shall I do, when the Lord shall come to judgment?"[m]—Of every idle word—O blessed God! what shall become of them who love to prate continually, to tell tales, to detract, to slander, to backbite, to praise themselves, to undervalue others, to compare, to raise divisions, to boast? Τίς δὲ φρουρήσει πέζαν ὀρθοστάδην, ἄϋπνος, οὐ κάμπτων γόνυ; "Who shall be able to stand upright, not bowing the knee, with the intolerable load of the sins of his tongue?" If of every idle word we must give account, what shall we do for those malicious words, that dishonour God or do despite to our brother? Remember how often we have tempted our brother or a silly woman to sin and death! How often we have pleaded for unjust interests, or by our wit have cozened an easy and a believing person, or given ill sentences, or disputed others into false persuasions! Did we never call good evil, or evil good? Did we never say to others, Thy cause is right, when nothing made it right but favour and money, a false advocate or a covetous judge? Πᾶν ῥῆμα ἀργὸν, so said Christ, "every idle word," that is, πᾶν ῥῆμα κενὸν, so St. Paul uses it, "every false word,"[n] every lie shall be called to judgment; or, as some copies read it, πᾶν ῥῆμα πονηρὸν, "every wicked word," shall be called to judgment. For by ἀργὸν, "idle words," are not meant words that are unprofitable or unwise, for fools and silly persons speak most of those, and have the least accounts to make; but by *vain* the Jews usually understood *false;* and to give their mind to vanity, or to speak vanity, is all one as to mind or speak falsehoods with malicious and evil purposes. But if every idle word, that is, every vain and lying word, shall be called to judgment, what shall become of men that blaspheme God, or their rulers, or princes of the people, or their parents? that dishonour the religion, and disgrace the ministers? that corrupt justice and pervert judgment? that preach evil doctrines, or declare perverse sentences? that take God's holy name in vain, or dishonour the name of God by trifling and frequent swearings; that holy name, by which we hope to be saved, and which all the angels of God fall down to and worship? These things are to be considered, for by our own words we stand or fall, that is, as in human judgments the confession of the party, and the contradiction of himself, or the failing in the circumstances of his story, are the confidences or presumptions of law, by which judges give sentence; so shall our words be, not only the means of declaring a secret sentence, but a certain instrument of being absolved or condemned. But upon these premises we see what reason we have to fear the sentence of that day, who have sinned with our tongues so often, so continually, that if there were no other actions to be accounted for, we have enough in this account to make us die; and yet have committed so many evil actions, that, if our words were wholly forgotten, we have infinite reason to fear concerning the event of that horrible sentence. The effect of which consideration is this, that we set a guard before our lips, and watch over our actions with a care, equal to that fear which shall be at doomsday, when we are to pass our sad accounts. But I have some considerations to interpose.

1. But (that the sadness of this may a little be relieved, and our endeavours be encouraged to a timely care and repentance) consider that this great

[l] Matt. xii. 36. [m] Job xxxi. 14. [n] Eph. v. 6.

sentence, although it shall pass concerning little things, yet it shall not pass by little portions, but by general measures; not by the little errors of one day, but by the great proportions of our life; for God takes not notice of the infirmities of honest persons that always endeavour to avoid every sin, but in little intervening instances are surprised; but he judges us by single actions, if they are great, and of evil effects; and by little small instances, if they be habitual. No man can take care concerning every minute; and therefore concerning it Christ will not pass sentence but by the discernible portions of our time, by human actions, by things of choice and deliberation, and by general precepts of care and watchfulness, this sentence shall be exacted. 2. The sentence of that day shall be passed, not by the proportions of an angel, but by the measures of a man; the first follies are not unpardonable, but may be recovered; and the second are dangerous, and the third are more fatal; but nothing is unpardonable but perseverance in evil courses. 3. The last judgment shall be transacted by the same principles by which we are guided here; not by strange and secret propositions, or by the fancies of men, or by the subtilties of useless distinctions, or evil persuasions; not by the scruples of the credulous, or the interest of sects, nor the proverbs of prejudice, nor the uncertain definitions of them that give laws to subjects by expounding the decrees of princes; but by the plain rules of justice, by the ten commandments, by the first apprehensions of conscience, by the plain rules of Scripture, and the rules of an honest mind, and a certain justice. So that by this restraint and limit of the final sentence, we are secured we shall not fall by scruple or by ignorance, by interest or by faction, by false persuasions of others, or invincible prejudice of our own, but we shall stand or fall by plain and easy propositions, by chastity or uncleanness, by justice or injustice, by robbery or restitution: and of this we have a great testimony by our Judge and Lord himself; "Whatsoever ye shall bind in earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye loose shall be loosed there;" that is, you shall stand or fall according to the sermons of the gospel; as the ministers of the word are commanded to preach, so ye must live here, and so ye must be judged hereafter; ye must not look for that sentence by secret decrees or obscure doctrines, but by plain precepts and certain rules. But there are yet some more degrees of mercy. 4. That sentence shall pass upon us not after the measures of nature, and possibilities, and utmost extents, but by the mercies of the covenant; we shall be judged as christians rather than as men, that is, as persons to whom much is pardoned, and much is pitied, and many things are (not accidentally, but consequently) indulged, and great helps are ministered, and many remedies supplied, and some mercies extra-regularly conveyed, and their hopes enlarged upon the stock of an infinite mercy, that hath no bounds but our needs, our capacities, and our proportions to glory. 5. The sentence is to be given by him that once died for us, and does now pray for us, and perpetually intercedes; and upon souls that he loves, and in the salvation of which himself hath a great interest and increase of joy. And now upon these premises we may dare to consider what the sentence itself shall be, that shall never be reversed, but shall last for ever and ever.

"Whether it be good or bad." I cannot discourse now the greatness of the good or bad, so far (I mean) as is revealed to us; the considerations are too long to be crowded into the end of a sermon; only in general: 1. If it be good it is greater than all the good of this world, and every man's share then, in every instant of his blessed eternity, is greater than all the pleasures of mankind in one heap.

Ἃ τοῖς θεοῖς ἄνθρωπος εὔχεται τυχεῖν,
Τῆς ἀθανασίας κρεῖττον οὐδὲν εὔχεται·

"A man can never wish for any thing greater than this immortality," said Posidippus. 2. To which I add this one consideration, that the portion of the good at the day of sentence shall be so great, that after all the labours of our life, and suffering persecutions, and enduring affronts, and the labour of love, and the continual fears and cares of the whole duration and abode, it rewards it all, and gives infinitely more; 'Non sunt condignæ passiones hujus sæculi;" all the torments and evils of this world are not to be estimated with the joys of the blessed; it is the gift of God; a donative beyond the ὀψώνιον, the military stipend, it is beyond our work and beyond our wages, and beyond the promise and beyond our thoughts, and above our understandings, and above the highest heavens, it is a participation of the joys of God, and of the inheritance of the Judge himself.

Οὐκ ἔστιν πελάσασθ', οὐδ' ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἐφικτὸν
Ἡμετέροις, ἢ χειρὶ λαβεῖν, ἥπέρτε μεγίστη
Πείθοῦς ἀνθρώποισιν ἀμάξιτος εἰς φρένα πίπτει.[o]

It is a day of recompences, in which all our sorrows shall be turned into joys, our persecutions into a crown, the cross into a throne, poverty into the riches of God; loss, and affronts, and inconveniences, and death, into sceptres, and hymns, and rejoicings, and hallelujahs, and such great things which are fit for us to hope, but too great for us to discourse of, while we see as in a glass darkly and imperfectly. And he that chooses to do an evil rather than suffer one, shall find it but an ill exchange that he deferred his little to change for a great one. I remember that a servant in the old comedy did choose to venture the lash rather than to feel a present inconvenience, "Quia illud aderat malum, istud aberat longius: illud erat præsens, huic erat diecula:" but this will be but an ill account, when the rods shall for the delay be turned into scorpions, and from easy shall become intolerable. Better it is to suffer here, and to stay till the day of restitution for the good and the holy portion; for it will recompense both for the suffering and the stay.

But how if the portion be bad? It shall be bad to the greatest part of mankind; that is a fearful

[o] Xenoph.

consideration; the greatest part of men and women shall dwell in the portion of devils to eternal ages. So that these portions are like the prophet's figs in the vision; the good are the best that ever were; and the worst are so bad, that worse cannot be imagined. For though in hell the accursed souls shall have no worse than they have deserved, and there are not there overrunning measures as there are in heaven, and therefore that the joys of heaven are infinitely greater joys than the pains of hell are great pains, yet even these are a full measure to a full iniquity, pain above patience, sorrows without ease, amazement without consideration, despair without the intervals of a little hope, indignation without the possession of any good; there dwells envy and confusion, disorder and sad remembrances, perpetual woes and continual shriekings, uneasiness and all the evils of the soul. But if we will represent it in some orderly circumstances, we may consider,

1. That here, all the trouble of our spirits are little participations of a disorderly passion; a man desires earnestly but he hath not, or he envies because another had something besides him, and he is troubled at the want of one when at the same time he hath a hundred good things; and yet ambition and envy, impatience and confusion, covetousness and lust, are all of them very great torments; but there these shall be in essence and abstracted beings; the spirit of envy, and the spirit of sorrow; devils, that shall inflict all the whole nature of the evil and pour it into the minds of accursed men, where it shall sit without abatement: for he that envies there, envies not for the eminence of another that sits a little above him, and excels him in some one good, but he shall envy for all; because the saints have all, and they have none; therefore all their passions are integral, abstracted, perfect passions: and all the sorrow in the world at this time, is but a portion of sorrow; every man hath his share, and yet besides that which all sad men have, there is a great deal of sorrow which they have not, and all the devils' portion besides that; but in hell, they shall have the whole passion of sorrow in every one, just as the whole body of the sun is seen by every one in the same horizon: and he that is in darkness enjoys it not by parts, but the whole darkness is the portion of one as well as of another. If this consideration be not too metaphysical, I am sure it is very sad, and it relies upon this; that as in heaven there are some holy spirits whose crown is all love; and some in which the brightest jewel is understanding; some are purity and some are holiness to the Lord: so in the regions of sorrow, evil and sorrow have an essence and proper being, and are set there to be suffered entirely by every undone man, that dies there for ever.

2. The evils of this world are material and bodily; the pressing of a shoulder, or the straining of a joint; the dislocation of a bone, or the extending of an artery; a bruise in the flesh, or the pinching of the skin; a hot liver, or a sickly stomach; and then the mind is troubled because its instrument is ill at ease: but all the proper troubles of this life are nothing but the effects of an uneasy body, or an abused fancy: and therefore can be no bigger than a blow or a cozenage, than a wound or a dream; only the trouble increases as the soul works it; and if it makes reflex acts, and begins the evil upon its own account, then it multiplies and doubles, because the proper scene of grief is opened, and sorrow peeps through the corners of the soul. But in those regions and days of sorrow, when the soul shall be no more depending upon the body, but the perfect principle of all its actions, the actions are quick and the perceptions brisk; the passions are extreme and the motions are spiritual; the pains are like the horrors of a devil and the groans of an evil spirit; not slow like the motions of a heavy foot, or a loaded arm, but quick as an angel's wing, active as lightning; and a grief *then*, is nothing like a grief *now*; and the words of a man's tongue which are fitted to the uses of this world, are as unfit to signify the evils of the next, as person, and nature, and hand, and motion, and passion, are to represent the effects of the Divine attributes, actions, and subsistence.

3. The evil portion of the next world is so great, that God did not create or design it in the first intention of things, and production of essences; he made the kingdom of heaven ἀπὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου, from the foundation of the world; for so it is observable that Christ shall say to the sheep at his right hand, "Receive the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world;"[p] but to the goats and accursed spirits, he speaks of no such primitive and original design; it was accidental and a consequent to horrid crimes, that God was forced to invent and to after-create that place of torments.

4. And when God did create and prepare that place, he did not at all intend it for man; it was prepared for the devil and his angels, so saith the Judge himself, "Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels,[q] ὃ ἡτοίμασεν ὁ πατήρ μου τῷ διαβόλῳ, which my Father prepared for the devil," so some copies read it: God intended it not for man, but man would imitate the devil's pride, and listen to the whispers of an evil spirit, and follow his temptations, and rebel against his Maker; and then God also, against his first design, resolved to throw such persons into that place that was prepared for the devil: for so great was the love of God to mankind, that he prepared joys infinite and never-ceasing for man, before he had created him; but he did not predetermine him to any evil; but when he was forced to it by man's malice, he doing what God forbad him, God cast him thither where he never intended him; but it was not man's portion: he designed it not at first, and at last also he invited him to repentance; and when nothing could do it, he threw man into another's portion, because he would not accept of what was designed to be his own.

5. The evil portion shall be continual without intermission of evil; no days of rest, no nights of sleep, no ease from labour, no periods of the stroke nor taking off the hand, no intervals between blow and blow; but a continued stroke, which neither

[p] Matt. xxv. 34. [q] Ver. 41.

shortens the life, nor introduces a brawny patience, or the toleration of an ox, but it is the same in every instant, and great as the first stroke of lightning; the smart is as great for ever as at the first change, from the rest of the grave to the flames of that horrible burning. The church of Rome amongst some other strange opinions hath inserted this one into her public offices; that the perishing souls in hell may have sometimes remission and refreshment, like the fits of an intermitting fever: for so it is in the Roman missal printed at Paris, 1626, in the mass for the dead; "Ut quia de ejus vitæ qualitate diffidimus, etsi plenam veniam anima ipsius obtinere non potest, saltem vel inter ipsa tormenta quæ forsan patitur, refrigerium de abundantiâ miserationum tuarum sentiat:" and something like this is that of Prudentius,[r]

Sunt et spiritibus sæpe nocentibus
Pœnarum celebres sub Styge feriæ, &c.

The evil spirits have ease of their pain, and he names their holiday, then when the resurrection of our Lord from the grave is celebrated:

Marcent suppliciis Tartara mitibus,
Exultatque sui carceris otio
Umbrarum populus liber ab ignibus:
Nec fervent solito flumina sulphure.

They then thought, that when the paschal taper burned, the flames of hell could not burn till the holy wax was spent: but because this is a fancy without ground or revelation, and is against the analogy of all those expressions of our Lord, "Where the worm dieth not, and the fire is never quenched," and divers others, it is sufficient to have noted it without further consideration; the pains of hell have no rest, no drop of water is allowed to cool the tongue, there is no advocate to plead for them, no mercy belongs to their portion, but fearful wrath and continual burnings.

6. And yet this is not the worst of it; for as it is continual during its abode, so its abode is for ever; it is continual and eternal. Tertullian speaks something otherwise, "Pro magnitudine cruciatus non diuturni, verum sempiterni;" not continual, or the pains of every day, but such which shall last for ever. But Lactantius is more plain in this affair: "the same Divine fire by the same power and force shall burn the wicked, and shall repair instantly whatsoever of the body it does consume:" "Ac sibi ipsi æternum pabulum subministrabit,—and shall make for itself an eternal fuel."

Vermibus et flammis et discruciatibus ævum
Immortale dedit, senio ne pœna periret
Non pereunte animâ————

So Prudentius, eternal worms, and unextinguished flames, and immortal punishment, are prepared for the ever-never dying souls of wicked men. Origen is charged by the ancient churches for saying, that after a long time the devils and the accursed souls shall be restored to the kingdom of God, and that after a long time again they shall be restored to their state, and so it was from their fall, and shall be for ever; and, it may be, that might be the meaning of Tertullian's expression, of "cruciatus non diuturni sed sempiterni." Epiphanius charges not the opinion upon Origen, and yet he was free enough in his animadversion and reproof of him; but St. Austin did, and confuted the opinion in his books De Civitate Dei. However, Origen was not the first that said, the pains of the damned should cease; Justin Martyr in his dialogue with Triphon expresses it thus: "Neither do I say that all the souls do die, for that indeed would be to the wicked again unlooked for: what then? The souls of the godly in a better place, of the wicked in a worse, do tarry the time of judgment; then they that are worthy shall never die again, but those that are designed to punishment shall abide so long as God please to have them to live and to be punished." But I observe, that the primitive doctors were very willing to believe, that the mercy of God would find out a period to the torment of accursed souls; but such a period, which should be nothing but eternal destruction, called by the Scripture, "the second death:" only Origen (as I observed) is charged by St. Austin to have said, they shall return into joys, and back again to hell by an eternal revolution. But concerning the death of a wicked soul, and its being broken into pieces with fearful torments, and consumed with the wrath of God, they had entertained some different fancies very early in the church, as their sentences are collected by St. Jerome at the end of his commentaries upon Isaiah. And Irenæus[s] disputes it largely, "that they that are unthankful to God in this short life, and obey him not, shall never have an eternal duration of life in the ages to come," "sed ipse se privat in sæculum sæculi perseverantia,—he deprives his soul of living to eternal ages;" for he supposes an immortal duration not to be natural to the soul, but a gift of God, which he can take away, and did take away from Adam, and restored it again in Christ to them that believe in him and obey him: for the other; they shall be raised again to suffer shame, and fearful torments; and according to the degree of their sins, so shall be continued in their sorrows; and some shall die, and some shall not die: the devil, and the beast, and they that worshipped the beast, and they that were marked with his character, these St. John saith "shall be tormented for ever and ever;" he does not say so of all, but of some certain great criminals; ὅπως ἂν Θεὸς θέλῃ, all so long as God please,—some for ever and ever, and some not so severely; and whereas the general sentence is given to all wicked persons, to all on the left hand, to go into everlasting fire: it is answered, that the fire indeed is everlasting, but not all that enters into it is everlasting, but only the devils for whom it was prepared, and others, more mighty criminals (according as St. John intimates): though also *everlasting* signifies only to the end of its proper period.

Concerning this doctrine of theirs, so severe, and yet so moderated, there is less to be objected than against the supposed fancy of Origen: for it is a strange consideration to suppose an eternal torment

[r] Hymn v. lib. Cathemer.

[s] Lib. ii. cap. 65.

to those to whom it was never threatened, to those who never heard of Christ, to those that lived probably well, to heathens of good lives, to ignorants and untaught people, to people surprised in a single crime, to men that die young in their natural follies and foolish lusts, to them that fall in a sudden gaiety and excessive joy, to all alike; to all infinite and eternal, even to unwarned people; and that this should be inflicted by God who infinitely loves his creatures, who died for them, who pardons easily, and pities readily, and excuses much, and delights in our being saved, and would not have us to die, and takes little things in exchange for great: it is certain that God's mercies are infinite, and it is also certain that the matter of eternal torments cannot truly be understood; and when the schoolmen go about to reconcile the Divine justice to that severity, and consider why God punishes eternally a temporal sin, or a state of evil, they speak variously, and uncertainly, and unsatisfyingly. But, that in this question we may separate the certain from the uncertain;

1. It is certain that the torments of hell shall certainly last as long as the soul lasts; for eternal and everlasting can signify no less but to the end of that duration, to the perfect end of the period which it signifies. So Sodom and Gomorrah, when God rained down hell from heaven upon the earth, (as Salvian's expression is,) they are said "to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire:" that is, of a fire that consumed them finally, and they never were restored: and so the accursed souls shall suffer torments till they be consumed; who because they are immortal either naturally or by gift, shall be tormented for ever, or till God shall take from them the life that he restored to them on purpose to give them a capacity of being miserable, and the best that they can expect is to despair of all good, to suffer the wrath of God, never to come to any minute of felicity, or of a tolerable state, and to be held in pain till God be weary of striking. This is the gentlest sentence of some of the old doctors.

But, 2. The generality of christians have been taught to believe worse things yet concerning them; and the words of our blessed Lord are κόλασις αἰώνιος, eternal affliction or smiting;

> Nec mortis pœnas mora altera finiet hujus,
> Horaque erit tantis ultima nulla malis.

And St. John,[t] who well knew the mind of his Lord, saith, "the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever, and they have no rest day nor night:" that is, their torment is continual, and it is eternal. Their second death shall be but a dying to all felicity; for so death is taken in Scripture: Adam died when he ate the forbidden fruit; that is, he was liable to sickness and sorrows, and pain and dissolution of soul and body: and to be miserable is the worse death of the two; they shall see the eternal felicity of the saints, but they shall never taste of the holy chalice. Those joys shall indeed be for ever and ever; for immortality is part of their reward, and on them the second death shall have no power: but the wicked shall be tormented horribly and insufferably, till "death and hell be thrown into the lake of fire, and shall be no more: which is the second death."[u] But that they may not imagine that this second death shall be the end of their pains, St. John speaks expressly what that is, Rev. xxi. 8. "The fearful and unbelieving, the abominable and the murderers, the whoremongers and sorcerers, the idolaters and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death:" no dying there, but a being tormented, burning in a lake of fire, that is the second death. For if life be reckoned a blessing, then to be destitute of all blessing is to have no life; and therefore to be intolerably miserable is this second death, that is, death eternal.

3. And yet if God should deal with man hereafter more mercifully and proportionably to his weak nature than he does to angels, and as he admits him to repentance here, so in hell also to a period of his smart, even when he keeps the angels in pain for ever; yet he will never admit him to favour, he shall be tormented beyond all the measure of human ages, and be destroyed for ever and ever.

It concerns us all, who hear and believe these things, to do as our blessed Lord will do before the day of his coming; he will call and convert the Jews and strangers: conversion to God is the best preparatory to doomsday: and it concerns all them who are in the neighbourhood and fringes of the flames of hell, that is, in the state of sin, quickly to arise from the danger, and shake the burning coals of our flesh, lest it consume the marrow and the bones: "Exuenda est velociter de incendio sarcina, priusquam flammis supervenientibus concremetur. Nemo diu tutus est, periculo proximus," saith St. Cyprian; "No man is safe long, that is so near to danger;" for suddenly the change will come, in which the judge shall be called to judgment, and no man to plead for him, unless a good conscience be his advocate; and the rich shall be naked as a condemned criminal to execution; and there shall be no regard of princes or of nobles, and the differences of men's account shall be forgotten, and no distinction remaining but of good or bad, sheep and goats, blessed and accursed souls. Among the wonders of the day of judgment, our blessed Saviour reckons it, that men shall be marrying and giving in marriage, γαμοῦντες καὶ ἐγγαμίζοντες, marrying and cross-marrying, that is, raising families and lasting greatness and huge estates; when the world is to end so quickly, and the gains of a rich purchase so very a trifle, but no trifling danger; a thing that can give no security to our souls, but much hazards and a great charge. More reasonable it is, that we despise the world and lay up for heaven, that we heap up treasures by giving alms, and make friends of unrighteous Mammon; but at no hand to enter into a state of life, that is all the way a hazard to the main interest, and at the best, an increase of the particular charge. Every degree of riches, every degree of greatness, every ambitious employment, every great fortune, every eminency above our

[t] Rev. xiv. 11.

[u] Rev. xx. 14.

brother, is a charge to the accounts of the last day. He that lives temperately and charitably, whose employment is religion, whose affections are fear and love, whose desires are after heaven, and do not dwell below; that man can long and pray for the hastening of the coming of the day of the Lord. He that does not really desire and long for that day, either is in a very ill condition, or does not understand that he is in a good. I will not be so severe in this meditation as to forbid any man to laugh, that believes himself shall be called to so severe a judgment; yet St. Jerome said it, "Coram cœlo et terrâ rationem reddemus totius nostræ vitæ; et tu rides? Heaven and earth shall see all the follies and baseness of thy life: and dost thou laugh?" That we may, but we have not reason to laugh loudly and frequently if we consider things wisely, and as we are concerned: but if we do, yet "præsentis temporis ita est agenda lætitia, ut sequentis judicii amaritudo nunquam recedat a memoriâ:—so laugh here that you may not forget your danger, lest you weep for ever." He that thinks most seriously and most frequently of this fearful appearance, will find that it is better staying for his joys till this sentence be past; for then he shall perceive, whether he hath reason or no. In the mean time wonder not, that God, who loves mankind so well, should punish him so severely: for therefore the evil fall into an accursed portion, because they despised that which God most loves, his Son and his mercies, his graces and his Holy Spirit; and they that do all this, have cause to complain of nothing but their own follies; and they shall feel the accursed consequents then, when they shall see the Judge sit above them, angry and severe, inexorable and terrible; under them, an intolerable hell; within them, their consciences clamorous and diseased: without them, all the world on fire; on the right hand, those men glorified whom they persecuted or despised; on the left hand, the devils accusing; for this is the day of the Lord's terror, and who is able to abide it?

Seu vigilo intentus studiis, seu dormio, semper
Judicis extremi nostras tuba personet aures.

SERMON IV.

THE RETURN OF PRAYERS; OR, THE CONDITIONS OF A PREVAILING PRAYER.

Now we know that God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doth his will, him he heareth.—John ix. 31.

I KNOW not which is the greater wonder, either that prayer, which is a duty so easy and facile, so ready and apted to the powers, and skill, and opportunities, of every man, should have so great effects, and be productive of such mighty blessings; or, that we should be so unwilling to use so easy an instrument of procuring so much good. The first declares God's goodness, but this publishes man's folly and weakness, who finds in himself so much difficulty to perform a condition so easy and full of advantage. But the order of this felicity is knotted like the foldings of a serpent; all those parts of easiness, which invite us to the duty, are become like the joints of a bulrush, not bendings, but consolidations and stiffenings: the very facility becomes its objection, and in every of its stages, we make or find a huge uneasiness. At first, we do not know what to ask; and when we do, then we find difficulty to bring our will to desire it; and when that is instructed and kept in awe, it mingles interest, and confounds the purposes; and when it is forced to ask honestly and severely, then it wills so coldly, that God hates the prayer; and, if it desires fervently, it sometimes turns that into passion, and that passion breaks into murmurs or unquietness; or, if that be avoided, the indifference cools into death, or the fire burns violently and is quickly spent; our desires are dull as a rock, or fugitive as lightning; either we ask ill things earnestly, or good things remissly; we either court our own danger, or are not zealous for our real safety; or, if we be right in our matter, or earnest in our affections, and lasting in our abode, yet we miss in the manner; and either we ask for evil ends, or without religious and awful apprehensions; or we rest on the words and signification of the prayer, and never take care to pass on to action; or else we sacrifice in the company of Korah, being partners of a schism, or a rebellion in religion; or we bring unhallowed censers, our hearts send up to God an unholy smoke, a cloud from the fires of lust; and either the flames of lust or rage, of wine or revenge, kindle the beast that is laid upon the altar; or we bring swine's flesh, or a dog's neck; whereas God never accepts or delights in a prayer, unless it be for a holy thing, to a lawful end, presented unto him upon the wings of zeal and love, of religious sorrow, or religious joy; by sanctified lips, and pure hands, and a sincere heart. It must be the prayer of a gracious man; and he is only gracious before God, and acceptable and effective in his prayer, whose life is holy, and whose prayer is holy; for both these are necessary ingredients to the constitution of a prevailing prayer; there is a holiness peculiar to the man, and a holiness peculiar to the prayer, that must adorn the prayer, before it can be united to the intercession of the holy Jesus, in which union alone our prayers can be prevailing.

"God heareth not sinners."—So the blind man in the text, and confidently, "this we know:" he had reason, indeed, for his confidence; it was a proverbial saying, and every where recorded in their Scriptures, which were read in the synagogues every sabbath-day. "For what is the hope of the hypocrite? (saith Job.) Will God hear his cry, when trouble cometh upon him?"[u] No, he will not. "For if I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me,"[x] said David; and so said the Spirit of the Lord by the son of David:

[u] Job xxvii. 9. [x] Psalm lxvi. 18.

"When distress and anguish come upon you, then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me."[y] And Isaiah, "When you spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when you make many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood."[z] And again, "When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they will offer burnt-offerings and oblations, I will not accept them. For they have loved to wander, they have not refrained their feet, therefore the Lord will not accept them; he will now remember their iniquity, and visit their sins."[a] Upon these and many other authorities,[b] it grew into a proverb; "Deus non exaudit peccatores." It was a known case, and an established rule in religion; "Wicked persons are neither fit to pray for themselves, nor for others."

Which proposition let us first consider in the sense of that purpose which the blind man spoke it in, and then in the utmost extent of it, as its analogy and equal reason go forth upon us and our necessities. The man was cured of his blindness, and being examined concerning him that did it, named and gloried in his physician; but the spiteful Pharisees bid him give glory to God, and defy the minister; for God indeed was good, but he wrought that cure by a wicked hand.—No, says he, this is impossible. If this man were a sinner and a false prophet, (for in that instance the accusation was intended,) God would not hear his prayer, and work miracles by him in verification of a lie.—A false prophet could not work true miracles: this hath received its diminution, when the case was changed; for at that time, when Christ preached, miracles were the only or the great verification of any new revelation; and, therefore, it proceeding from an almighty God, must needs be the testimony of a Divine truth; and if it could have been brought for a lie, there could not then have been sufficient instruction given to mankind, to prevent their belief of false prophets and lying doctrines. But when Christ proved his doctrine by miracles, that no enemy of his did ever do so great before or after him; then he also told, that, after him, his friends should do greater, and his enemies should do some, but they were fewer, and very inconsiderable; and, therefore, could have in them no unavoidable cause of deception, because they were discovered by a prophecy, and caution was given against them by him that did greater miracles, and yet ought to have been believed, if he had done but one; because against him there had been no caution, but many prophecies creating such expectations concerning him, which he verified by his great works. So that, in this sense of working miracles, though it was infinitely true that the blind man said, then when he said it, yet after that the case was altered; and sinners, magicians, astrologers, witches, heretics, simoniacs, and wicked persons of other instances, have done miracles, and God hath heard sinners, and wrought his own works by their hands, or suffered the devil to do his works under their pretences; and many at the day of judgment shall plead that they have done miracles in Christ's name, and yet they shall be rejected; Christ knows them not, and their portion shall be with dogs, and goats, and unbelievers.

There is, in this case, only this difference; that they who do miracles in opposition to Christ, do them by the power of the devil, to whom it is permitted to do such things, which we think miracles; and that is all one as though they were; but the danger of them is none at all, but to them that will not believe him that did greater miracles, and prophesied of these less, and gave warning of their attending danger, and was confirmed to be a true teacher by voices from heaven, and by the resurrection of his body after a three days' burial: so that to these the proposition still remains true, "God hears not sinners," God does not work those miracles; but concerning sinning christians, God, in this sense, and towards the purposes of miracles, does hear them, and hath wrought miracles by them, for they do them "in the name of Christ," and therefore Christ said, "cannot easily speak ill of him;" and although they either prevaricate in their lives, or in superinduced doctrines, yet, because the miracles are a verification of the religion, not of the opinion, of the power of truth of Christ, not of the veracity of the man, God hath heard such persons many times, whom men have long since, and to this day, called heretics; such were the Novatians and Arians; for to the heathens they could only prove their religion, by which they stood distinguished from them; but we find not that they wrought miracles among the christians, or to verify their superstructures and private opinions. But, besides this, yet we may also by such means arrest the forwardness of our judgments and condemnations of persons disagreeing in their opinions from us; for those persons, whose faith God confirmed by miracles, was an entire faith; and although they might have false opinions, or mistaken explications of true opinions, either inartificial, or misunderstood, yet we have reason to believe their faith to be entire; for that which God would have the heathen to believe, and to that purpose proved it by a miracle, himself intended to accept, first to a holy life, and then to glory. The false opinion should burn, and themselves escape. One thing more is here very considerable, that in this very instance of working miracles, God was so very careful not to hear sinners or permit sinners, till he had prevented all dangers to good and innocent persons, that the case of Christ and his apostles working miracles, was so clearly separated and remarked by the finger of God, and distinguished from the impostures and pretences of all the many antichrists that appeared in Palestine, Cyprus, Crete, Syria, and the vicinage, that there were but very few christians that, with hearty persuasions, fell away from Christ, Θᾶττόν τις τοὺς ἀπὸ Χριστοῦ μεταδιδάξειε, said Galen, "It is not easy to teach anew him that hath been taught by Christ:" and St. Austin tells a story of an unbelieving man, that, being troubled that his wife was a christian, went to the oracle to ask by what

[y] Prov. i. 28. [z] Isa. i. 15. [a] Jer. xiv. 12, 10.

[b] Vide etiam, Psalm xxxiv. 6. Micah iii. 4. 1 Pet. iii. 12.

means he should alter her persuasion; but he was answered, "it could never be done, he might as well imprint characters upon the face of a torrent, or a rapid river, or himself fly in the air, as alter the persuasion of a hearty and an honest christian;" I would to God it were so now in all instances, and that it were so hard to draw men from the severities of a holy life, as of old they could be cozened, disputed, or forced out of their faith. Some men are vexed with hypocrisy, and then their hypocrisy was punished with infidelity and a wretchless spirit. Demas, and Simon Magus, and Ecebolius, and the lapsed confessors, are instances of human craft or human weakness; but they are scarce a number that are remarked, in ancient story, to have fallen from christianity by direct persuasions, or the efficacy of abusing arguments and discourses. The reason of it is the truth in the text: God did so avoid hearing sinners in this affair, that he never permitted them to do any miracles, so as to do any mischief to the souls of good men; and therefore it is said, the enemies of Christ came "in the power of signs and wonders, able to deceive (if it were possible) even the very elect;" but that was not possible; without their faults it could not be; the elect were sufficiently strengthened, and the evidence of Christ's being heard of God, and that none of his enemies were heard of God to any dangerous effect, was so great, that if any christian had apostatized or fallen away by direct persuasion, it was like the sin of a falling angel, of so direct a malice, that he never could repent, and God never would pardon him, as St. Paul twice remarks in his epistle to the Hebrews. The result of this discourse is the first sense and explication of the words, "God heareth not sinners," viz. in that in which they are sinners: a sinner in his manners may be heard in his prayer, in order to the confirmation of his faith; but if he be a sinner in his faith, God hears him not at all in that wherein he sins; for God is truth, and cannot confirm a lie, and whenever he permitted the devil to do it, he secured the interest of his elect, that is, of all that believe in him and love him, "lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting."

2. That which yet concerns us more nearly is, that "God heareth not sinners;" that is, if we be not good men, our prayers will do us no good: we shall be in the condition of them that never pray at all. The prayers of a wicked man are like the breath of corrupted lungs; God turns away from such unwholesome breathings. But that I may reduce this necessary doctrine to a method, I shall consider that there are some persons whose prayers are sins, and some others whose prayers are ineffectual: some are such who do not pray lawfully; they sin when they pray, while they remain in that state and evil condition; others are such who do not obtain what they pray for, and yet their prayer is not a direct sin: the prayer of the first is a direct abomination, the prayer of the second is hindered; the first is corrupted by a direct state of sin, the latter by some intervening imperfection and unhandsome circumstance of action; and in proportion to these, it is required, 1. that he be in a state and possibility of acceptation; and, 2. that the prayer itself be in a proper disposition. 1. Therefore we shall consider, what are those conditions, which are required in every person that prays, the want of which makes the prayer to be a sin? 2. What are the conditions of a good man's prayer, the absence of which makes that even his prayer return empty? 3. What degrees and circumstances of piety are required to make a man fit to be an intercessor for others, both with holiness in himself and effect to them he prays for? And, 4. as an appendix to these considerations, I shall add the proper indices and signification, by which we may make a judgment whether God hath heard our prayers or no.

1. Whosoever prays to God while he is in a state or in the affection to sin, his prayer is an abomination to God. This was a truth so believed by all nations of the world, that in all religions they ever appointed baptisms and ceremonial expiations, to cleanse the persons, before they presented themselves in their holy offices. "Deorum templa cum adire disponitis, ab omni vos labe puros, lautos, castissimosque præstatis," said Arnobius to the gentiles: "When you address yourselves to the temples of your God, you keep yourselves chaste, and clean, and spotless." They washed their hands and wore white garments, they refused to touch a dead body, they avoided a spot upon their clothes as they avoided a wound upon their head, *μὴ καθαρῷ γὰρ καθαροῦ ἐφάπτεσθαι μὴ οὐ θεμιτὸν ᾖ.* That was the religious ground they went upon; "an impure thing ought not to touch that which is holy," much less to approach the Prince of purities; and this was the sense of the old world in their lustrations, and of the Jews in their preparatory baptisms; they washed their hands to signify, that they should cleanse them from all iniquity, and keep them pure from blood and rapine; they washed their garments; but that intended, they should not be spotted with the flesh; and their follies consisted in this, that they did not look to the bottom of their lavatories; they did not see through the veil of their ceremonies. "Flagitiis omnibus inquinati veniunt ad precandum, et se pie sacrificâsse opinantur, si cutem laverint, tanquam libidines intra pectus inclusas ulla amnis abluat, aut ulla maria purificent," said Lactantius; "They come to their prayers dressed round about with wickedness, *ut quercus hederâ;* and think God will accept their offering, if their skin be washed; as if a river could purify their lustful souls, or a sea take off their guilt." But David reconciles the ceremony with the mystery, "I will wash my hands, I will wash them in innocency, and so I will go to thine altar." "Hæ sunt veræ munditiæ, (saith Tertullian,) non quas plerique superstitione curant ad omnem orationem, etiam cum lavacro totius corporis aquam sumentes. This is the true purification, not that which most men do, superstitiously cleansing their hands and washing when they go to prayers, but cleansing the soul from all impiety, and leaving every affection to sin; then they come pure to God:" and this is it which the apostle also signifies, having translated the gentile and Jewish ceremony into the spirituality

of the gospel, "I will therefore, that men pray every where, levantes puras manus, lifting up clean hands," so it is in the vulgar Latin; ὁσίους χεῖρας, so it is in the Greek, *holy hands;* that is the purity that God looks for upon them that lift up their hands to him in prayer: and this very thing is founded upon the natural constitution of things, and their essential proportion to each other.

1. It is an act of profanation for any unholy person to handle holy things and holy offices. For if God was ever careful to put all holy things into cancels, and immure them with acts and laws and cautions of separation; and the very sanctification of them was nothing else but the solemn separating them from common usages, that himself might be distinguished from men by actions of propriety; it is naturally certain, he that would be differenced from common things, would be infinitely divided from things that are wicked. If things that are lawful may yet be unholy in this sense, much more are unlawful things most unholy in all senses. If God will not admit of that which is beside religion, he will less endure that which is against religion. And therefore if a common man must not serve at the altar, how shall he abide a wicked man to stand there? No: he will not endure him, but he will cast him and his prayer into the separation of an infinite and eternal distance. "Sic profanatis sacris peritura Troja perdidit primum Deos;—So Troy entered into ruin when their prayers became unholy, and they profaned the rites of their religion."

2. A wicked person, while he remains in that condition, is not the natural object of pity: Ἔλεός ἐστι λύπη ὡς ἐπὶ ἀναξίως κακοπαθοῦντι, said Zeno; "Mercy is a sorrow or a trouble at that misery, which falls upon a person which deserved it not." And so Aristotle defines it, it is λύπη τις ἐπὶ τῷ πονηρῷ τοῦ ἀναξίου τυγχάνειν, "when we see the person deserves a better fortune," or is disposed to a fairer entreaty, then we naturally pity him: and Sinon pleaded for pity to the Trojans, saying,

———Miserere animi non digna ferentis.

For who pitieth the fears of a base man, who hath treacherously murdered his friend? or who will lend a friendly sigh, when he sees a traitor to his country pass forth through the execrable gates of cities? and when any circumstance of baseness, that is, any thing that takes off the excuse of infirmity, does accompany a sin, (such as are ingratitude, perjury, perseverance, delight, malice, treachery,) then every man scorns the criminal, and God delights and rejoices in, and laughs at the calamity of such a person. When Vitellius with his hands bound behind him, his imperial robe rent, and with a dejected countenance and an ill name, was led to execution, every man cursed him, but no man wept. "Deformitas exitus misericordiam abstulerat," saith Tacitus, "The filthiness of his life and death took away pity." So it is with us in our prayers; while we love our sin, we must nurse all its children; and when we roar in our lustful beds, and groan with the whips of an exterminating angel, chastising those ὑπογαστρίους ἐπιθυμίας, (as Aretas calls them,) "the lusts of the lower belly," wantonness, and its mother intemperance, we feel the price of our sin, that which God foretold to be their issues, that which he threatened us withal, and that which is the natural consequence, and its certain expectation, that which we delighted in, and chose, even then when we refused God, and threw away felicity, and hated virtue. For punishment is but the latter part of sin; it is not a new thing and distinct from it: or if we will kiss the hyæna, or clip the lamia about the neck, we have as certainly chosen the tail, and its venomous embraces, as the face and lip. Every man that sins against God and loves it, or, which is all one, continues in it, for by interpretation that is love, hath all the circumstances of unworthiness towards God; he is unthankful, and a breaker of his vows, and a despiser of his mercies, and impudent against his judgments; he is false to his profession, false to his faith; he is an unfriendly person, and useth him barbarously, who hath treated him with an affection not less than infinite; and if any man does half so much evil, and so unhandsomely to a man, we stone him with stones and curses, with reproach, and an unrelenting scorn. And how then shall such a person hope that God should pity him? For God better understands, and deeper resents, and more essentially hates, and more severely exacts, the circumstances and degrees of baseness, than we can do; and therefore proportionably scorns the person and derides the calamity. Is not unthankfulness to God a greater baseness and unworthiness than unthankfulness to our patron? And is not he as sensible of it, and more than we? These things are more than words; and therefore if no man pities a base person, let us remember, that no man is so base in any thing as in his unhandsome demeanour towards God. Do we not profess ourselves his servants, and yet serve the devil? Do we not live upon God's provision, and yet stand or work at the command of lust or avarice, human regards and little interests of the world? We call him Father when we desire our portion, and yet spend it in the society of all his enemies. In short, let our actions to God and their circumstances be supposed to be done towards men, and we should scorn ourselves; and how then can we expect God should not scorn us, and reject our prayer, when we have done all the dishonour to him, and with all the unhandsomeness in the world? Take heed lest we fall into a condition of evil, in which it shall be said, you may thank yourselves; and be infinitely afraid lest at the same time we be in a condition of person, in which God will upbraid our unworthiness, and scorn our persons, and rejoice in our calamity. The first is intolerable, the second is irremediable; the first proclaims our folly, and the second declares God's final justice; in the first there is no comfort, in the latter there is no remedy; that therefore makes us miserable, and this renders us desperate.

3. This great truth is further manifested by the necessary and convenient appendages of prayer required, or advised, or recommended, in Holy Scripture. For why is fasting prescribed together with prayer? For "neither if we eat, are we the

better; neither if we eat not, are we the worse;" and God does not delight in that service, the first, second, and third part of which is nothing but pain and self-affliction. But therefore fasting is useful with prayer, because it is a penal duty, and an action of repentance; for then only God hears sinners, when they enter first into the gates of repentance, and proceed in all the regions of sorrow and carefulness; therefore we are commanded to fast, that we may pray with more spirituality, and with repentance; that is, without the loads of meat, and without the loads of sin. Of the same consideration it is that alms are prescribed together with prayer, because it is a part of that charity, without which our souls are enemies to all that, which ought to be equally valued with our own lives. But besides this, we may easily observe what special indecencies there are, which besides the general malignity and demerit, are special deleteries and hinderances to our prayers, by irreconciling the person of him that prays.

1. The first is unmercifulness. Οὔτε ἐξ ἱεροῦ βωμὸν, οὔτε ἐξ ἀνθρωπίνης φύσεως ἀφαιρετέον τὸν ἔλεον, said one in Stobæus; and they were well joined together: "He that takes mercy from a man, is like him that takes an altar from the temple;" the temple is of no use without an altar, and the man cannot pray without mercy; and there are infinite of prayers sent forth by men which God never attends to, but as to so many sins, because the men live in a course of rapine, or tyranny, or oppression, or uncharitableness, or something that is most contrary to God, because it is unmerciful. Remember, that God sometimes puts thee into some images of his own relation. We beg of God for mercy, and our brother begs of us for pity: and therefore let us deal equally with God and all the world. I see myself fall by a too frequent infirmity, and still I beg for pardon, and hope for pity: thy brother that offends thee, he hopes so too, and would fain have the same measure, and would be as glad thou wouldst pardon him, as thou wouldst rejoice in thy own forgiveness. I am troubled when God rejects my prayer, or, instead of hearing my petition, sends a judgment: is not thy tenant, or thy servant, or thy client, so to thee? Does not he tremble at thy frown, and is of an uncertain soul till thou speakest kindly unto him, and observe thy looks as he watches the colour of the bean coming from the box of sentence, life or death depending on it? When he begs of thee for mercy, his passion is greater, his necessities more pungent, his apprehension more brisk and sensitive, his case dressed with the circumstance of pity, and thou thyself canst better feel his condition than thou dost usually perceive the earnestness of thy own prayers to God; and if thou regardest not thy brother whom thou seest, whose case thou feelest, whose circumstances can afflict thee, whose passion is dressed to thy fancy, and proportioned to thy capacity,—how shall God regard thy distant prayer, or be melted with thy cold desire, or softened with thy dry story, or moved by thy unrepenting soul? If I be sad, I seek for comfort, and go to God and to the ministry of his creatures for it; and is it not just in God to stop his own fountains, and seal the cisterns and little emanations of the creatures from thee, who shuttest thy hand, and shuttest thy eye, and twistest thy bowels against thy brother, who would as fain be comforted as thou? It is a strange iliacal passion that so hardens a man's bowels, that nothing proceeds from him but the name of his own disease; a "miserere mei Deus," a prayer to God for pity upon him, that will not show pity to others. We are troubled when God through severity breaks our bones, and hardens his face against us; but we think our poor brother is made of iron, and not of flesh and blood, as we are. God hath bound mercy upon us by the iron bands of necessity, and though God's mercy is the measure of his justice, yet justice is the measure of our mercy; and as we do to others, it shall be done to us, even in the matter of pardon and of bounty, of gentleness and remission, of bearing each other's burdens, and fair interpretation; "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us," so we pray. The final sentence in this affair is recorded by St. James, "He that shows no mercy, shall have justice without mercy:"[c] as thy poor brother hath groaned under thy cruelty and ungentle nature without remedy, so shalt thou before the throne of God; thou shalt pray, and plead, and call, and cry, and beg again, and in the midst of thy despairing noises be carried into the regions of sorrow, which never did and never shall feel a mercy. "God never can hear the prayers of an unmerciful man."

2. Lust and uncleanness are a direct enemy to the praying man, an obstruction to his prayers; for this is not only a profanation, but a direct sacrilege; it defiles a temple to the ground; it takes from a man all affection to spiritual things, and mingles his very soul with the things of the world; it makes his understanding low, and his reasonings cheap and foolish, and it destroys his confidence, and all his manly hopes; it makes his spirit light, effeminate, and fantastic, and dissolves his attention; and makes his mind so to disaffect all the objects of his desires, that when he prays he is as uneasy as an impaled person, or a condemned criminal upon the hook or wheel; and it hath in it this evil quality, that a lustful person cannot pray heartily against his sin; he cannot desire his cure, for his will is contradictory to his collect, and he would not that God should hear the words of his prayer, which he poor man never intended. For no crime so seizes upon the will as that; some sins steal an affection, or obey a temptation, or secure an interest, or work by the way of understanding, but lust seizes directly upon the will, for the devil knows well that the lusts of the body are soon cured; the uneasiness that dwells there, is a disease very tolerable, and every degree of patience can pass under it. But therefore the devil seizes upon the will, and that is it that makes adulteries and all the species of uncleanness; and lust grows so hard a cure, because the formality of it is, that it will not be cured; the will loves it, and so long

[c] James ii. 13.

as it does, God cannot love the man; for God is the prince of purities, and the Son of God is the king of virgins, and the Holy Spirit is all love, and that is all purity and all spirituality; and therefore the prayer of an adulterer, or an unclean person, is like the sacrifices to Moloch, or the rites of Flora, "ubi Cato spectator esse non potuit." A good man will not endure them; much less will God entertain such reekings of the Dead sea and clouds of Sodom. For so an impure vapour,—begotten of the slime of the earth by the fevers and adulterous heats of an intemperate summer-sun, striving by the ladder of a mountain to climb up to heaven, and rolling into various figures by an uneasy, unfixed revolution, and stopped at the middle region of the air, being thrown from his pride and attempt of passing towards the seat of the stars,—turns into an unwholesome flame, and like the breath of hell is confined into a prison of darkness, and a cloud, till it breaks into diseases, plagues, and mildews, stink and blastings; so is the prayer of an unchaste person; it strives to climb the battlements of heaven, but because it is a flame of sulphur, salt, and bitumen, and was kindled in the dishonourable regions below, derived from hell, and contrary to God, it cannot pass forth to the element of love, but ends in barrenness and murmur, fantastic expectations, and trifling imaginative confidences; and they at last end in sorrows and despair. Every state of sin is against the possibility of a man's being accepted; but these have a proper venom against the graciousness of the person, and the power of the prayer. God can never accept an unholy prayer, and a wicked man can never send forth any other; the waters pass through impure aqueducts and channels of brimstone, and therefore may end in brimstone and fire, but never in forgiveness, and the blessings of an eternal charity.

Henceforth, therefore, never any more wonder that men pray so seldom; there are few that feel the relish, and are enticed with the deliciousness, and refreshed with the comforts, and instructed with the sanctity, and acquainted with the secrets of a holy prayer; but cease also to wonder, that of those few that say many prayers, so few find any return of any at all. To make up a good and a lawful prayer, there must be charity, with all its daughters, "alms, forgiveness," not judging uncharitably; there must be purity of spirit, that is, purity of intention; and there must be purity of the body and soul, that is, the cleanness of chastity; and there must be no vice remaining, no affection to sin; for he that brings his body to God, and hath left his will in the power of any sin, offers to God the calves of his lips, but not a whole burnt-offering; a lame oblation, but not a "reasonable sacrifice;" and therefore their portion shall be amongst them whose prayers were never recorded in the book of life, whose tears God never put into his bottle, whose desires shall remain ineffectual to eternal ages. Take heed you do not lose your prayers; "for by them ye hope to have eternal life;" and let any of you, whose conscience is most religious and tender, consider what condition that man is in, that hath not said his prayers in thirty or forty years together; and that is the true state of him, who hath lived so long in the course of an unsanctified life; in all that while he never said one prayer that did him any good, but they ought to be reckoned to him upon the account of his sins. He that is in the affection, or in the habit, or in the state, of any one sin whatsoever, is at such distance from and contrariety to God, that he provokes God to anger in every prayer he makes: and then add but this consideration; that prayer is the great sum of our religion, it is the effect, and the exercise, and the beginning, and the promoter, of all graces, and the consummation and perfection of many; and all those persons who pretend towards heaven, and yet are not experienced in the secrets of religion, they reckon their piety, and account their hopes, only upon the stock of a few prayers. It may be they pray twice every day, it may be thrice, and blessed be God for it; so far is very well; but if it shall be remembered and considered, that this course of piety is so far from warranting any one course of sin, that any one habitual and cherished sin destroys the effect of all that piety, we shall see there is reason to account this to be one of those great arguments, with which God hath so bound the duty of holy living upon us, that without a holy life we cannot in any sense be happy, or have the effect of one prayer. But if we be returning and repenting sinners, God delights to hear, because he delights to save us:

——Si precibus (dixerunt) numina justis
Victa remollescunt ——

When a man is holy, then God is gracious, and a holy life is the best, and it is a continual prayer; and repentance is the best argument to move God to mercy, because it is the instrument to unite our prayers to the intercession of the holy Jesus.

SERMON V.

PART II.

AFTER these evidences of Scripture, and reason derived from its analogy, there will be less necessity to take any particular notices of those little objections, which are usually made from the experience of the success and prosperities of evil persons. For true it is, there is in the world a generation of men that pray long and loud, and ask for vile things, such which they ought to fear, and pray against, and yet they are heard; "the fat upon earth eat and worship:"[d] but if these men ask things hurtful and sinful, it is certain God hears them not in mercy: they pray to God as despairing Saul did to his armour-bearer, "Sta super me et interfice me;" "Stand upon me and kill me;" and he that obeyed his voice did him dishonour, and sinned against the

[d] Psal. xxii. 29.

head of his king, and his own life. And the vicious persons of old prayed to Laverna,

——Pulchra Laverna,
Da mihi fallere, da justum sanctumque videri,
Noctem peccatis et fraudibus objice nubem.

"Give me a prosperous robbery, a rich prey, and secret escape, let me become rich with thieving, and still be accounted holy:" for every sort of men hath some religion or other, by the measures of which they proportion their lives and their prayers; now, as the Holy Spirit of God, teaching us to pray, makes us like himself, in order to a holy and an effective prayer; and no man prays well, but he that prays by the Spirit of God, "the Spirit of holiness," and he that prays with the spirit must be made like to the Spirit; he is first sanctified and made holy, and then made fervent, and then his prayer ascends beyond the clouds: first, he is renewed in the spirit of his mind, and then he is inflamed with holy fires, and guided by a bright star; first purified and then lightened, then burning and shining: so is every man in every of his prayers; he is always like the Spirit by which he prays: if he be a lustful person, he prays with a lustful spirit; if he does not pray for it, he cannot heartily pray against it: if he be a tyrant or a usurper, a robber or a murderer, he hath his Laverna too, by which all his desires are guided, and his prayers directed, and his petitions furnished: he cannot pray against that spirit that possesses him, and hath seized upon his will and affections: if he be filled with a lying spirit, and be conformed to it in the image of his mind, he will be so also in the expressions of his prayer, and the sense of his soul. Since, therefore, no prayer can be good but that which is taught by the Spirit of grace, none holy but the man whom God's Spirit hath sanctified, and therefore none heard to any purposes of blessing, which the Holy Ghost does not make for us (for he makes intercession for the saints; the Spirit of Christ is the precentor or *rector chori*, the master of the choir); it follows that all other prayers, being made with an evil spirit, must have an evil portion; and though the devils by their oracles have given some answers, and by their significations have foretold some future contingencies, and in their government and subordinate rule have assisted some armies, and discovered some treasures, and prevented some snares of chance and accidents of men; yet no man, that reckons by the measures of reason or religion, reckons witches and conjurors amongst blessed and prosperous persons: these and all other evil persons have an evil spirit, by the measures of which their desires begin and proceed on to issue; but this success of theirs neither comes from God, nor brings felicity: but if it comes from God, it is anger; if it descends upon good men, it is a curse; if upon evil men, it is a sin; and then it is a present curse, and leads on to an eternal infelicity. Plutarch reports, that the Tyrians tied their gods with chains, because certain persons did dream, that Apollo said he would leave their city, and go to the party of Alexander, who then besieged the town: and Apollodorus tells of some, that tied the image of Saturn with bands of wool upon his feet. So some christians; they think God is tied to their sect, and bound to be of their side, and the interest of their opinion; and they think, he can never go to the enemy's party, so long as they charm him with certain forms of words or disguises of their own; and then all the success they have, and all the evils that are prosperous, all the mischiefs they do, and all the ambitious designs that do succeed, they reckon upon the account of their prayers; and well they may: for their prayers are sins, and their desires are evil; they wish mischief, and they act iniquity, and they enjoy their sin: and if this be a blessing or a cursing, themselves shall then judge, and all the world shall perceive, when the accounts of all the world are truly stated; then, when prosperity shall be called to accounts, and adversity shall receive its comforts, when virtue shall have a crown, and the satisfaction of all sinful desires shall be recompensed with an intolerable sorrow, and the despair of a perishing soul. Nero's mother prayed passionately, that her son might be emperor; and many persons, of whom St. James speaks, "pray to spend upon their lusts," and they are heard too: some were not, and very many are: and some, that fight against a just possessor of a country, pray, that their wars may be prosperous; and sometimes they have been heard too: and Julian the Apostate prayed, and sacrificed, and inquired of demons, and burned man's flesh, and operated with secret rites, and all that he might craftily and powerfully oppose the religion of Christ; and he was heard too, and did mischief beyond the malice and the effect of his predecessors, that did swim in christian blood: but when we sum up the accounts at the foot of their lives, or so soon as the thing was understood, and find that the effect of Agrippian's prayer was, that her son murdered her; and of those lustful petitioners, in St. James, that they were given over to the tyranny and possession of their passions, and baser appetites; and the effect of Julian the Apostate's prayer was, that he lived and died a professed enemy of Christ; and the effect of the prayers of usurpers is, that they do mischief, and reap curses, and undo mankind, and provoke God, and live hated, and die miserable, and shall possess the fruit of their sin to eternal ages; these will be no objections to the truth of the former discourse; but greater instances, that, if by hearing our prayers, we mean or intend a blessing, we must also, by making prayers, mean, that the man first be holy, and his desires just and charitable, before he can be admitted to the throne of grace, or converse with God by the intercourses of a prosperous prayer.

That is the first general. 2. Many times good men pray, and their prayer is not a sin, but yet it returns empty; because, although the man may be, yet the prayer is not, in proper disposition; and here I am to account to you concerning the collateral and accidental hinderances of the prayer of a good man.

The first thing that hinders the prayer of a good man from obtaining its effects, is a violent anger

and a violent storm in the spirit of him that prays. For anger sets the house on fire, and all the spirits are busy upon trouble, and intend propulsion, defence, displeasure, or revenge; it is a short madness, and an eternal enemy to discourse, and sober counsels, and fair conversation; it intends its own object with all the earnestness of perception, or activity of design, and a quicker motion of a too warm and distempered blood; it is a fever in the heart, and a calenture in the head, and a fire in the face, and a sword in the hand, and a fury all over; and therefore can never suffer a man to be in a disposition to pray. For prayer is an action, and a state of intercourse and desire, exactly contrary to this character of anger. Prayer is an action of likeness to the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of gentleness and dove-like simplicity; an imitation of the holy Jesus, whose spirit is meek, up to the greatness of the biggest example, and a conformity to God; whose anger is always just, and marches slowly, and is without transportation, and often hindered, and never hasty, and is full of mercy: prayer is the peace of our spirit, the stillness of our thoughts, the evenness of recollection, the seat of meditation, the rest of our cares, and the calm of our tempest; prayer is the issue of a quiet mind, of untroubled thoughts, it is the daughter of charity, and the sister of meekness; and he that prays to God with an angry, that is, with a troubled and discomposed spirit, is like him that retires into a battle to meditate, and sets up his closet in the out-quarters of an army, and chooses a frontier-garrison to be wise in. Anger is a perfect alienation of the mind from prayer, and therefore is contrary to that attention, which presents our prayers in a right line to God. For so have I seen a lark rising from his bed of grass, and soaring upwards, singing as he rises, and hopes to get to heaven, and climb above the clouds; but the poor bird was beaten back with the loud sighings of an eastern wind, and his motion made irregular and inconstant, descending more at every breath of the tempest, than it could recover by the libration and frequent weighing of his wings; till the little creature was forced to sit down and pant, and stay till the storm was over; and then it made a prosperous flight, and did rise and sing, as if it had learned music and motion from an angel, as he passed sometimes through the air, about his ministries here below: so is the prayer of a good man; when his affairs have required business, and his business was matter of discipline, and his discipline was to pass upon a sinning person, or had a design of charity, his duty met with infirmities of a man, and anger was its instrument, and the instrument became stronger than the prime agent, and raised a tempest, and overruled the man; and then his prayer was broken, and his thoughts were troubled, and his words went up towards a cloud, and his thoughts pulled them back again, and made them without intention; and the good man sighs for his infirmity, but must be content to lose the prayer, and he must recover it when his anger is removed, and his spirit is becalmed, made even as the brow of Jesus, and smooth like the heart of God; and then it ascends to heaven upon the wings of the holy dove, and dwells with God, till it returns, like the useful bee, loaden with a blessing and the dew of heaven.

But besides this; anger is a combination of many other things, every one of which is an enemy to prayer; it is *λύπη*, and *ὄρεξις*, and *τιμωρία*, and it is *ζέσις*, and it is *ἄθροος*, and it is *κόλασις*, and *ἐπιτίμησις*; so it is in the several definitions of it, and in its natural constitution. It hath in it the trouble of sorrow, and the heats of lust, and the disease of revenge, and the boilings of a fever, and the rashness of precipitancy, and the disturbance of persecution; and therefore is a certain effective enemy against prayer; which ought to be a spiritual joy, and an act of mortification; and to have in it no heats, but of charity and zeal; and they are to be guided by prudence and consideration, and allayed with the deliciousness of mercy, and the serenity of a meek and a quiet spirit; and therefore St. Paul gave caution, that "the sun should not go down upon our anger," meaning, that it should not stay upon us till evening prayer; for it would hinder our evening sacrifice; but the stopping of the first egressions of anger, is a certain artifice of the Spirit of God, to prevent unmercifulness, which turns not only our desires into vanity, but our prayers into sin; and, remember, that Elisha's anger, though it was also zeal, had so discomposed his spirit, when the two kings came to inquire of the Lord, that, though he was a good man and a prophet, yet he could not pray, he could not inquire of the Lord, till by rest and music he had gathered himself into the evenness of a dispassionate and recollected mind; therefore, let your prayers be without wrath. *Βούλεται αὐτοὺς ἀναδιδάξαι διὰ συμβόλων ὑπότε, προσέρχοιντο εἰς βωμοὺς εὐξάμενοι ἢ εὐχαριστήσαντες, μηδὲν ἀῤῥώστημα ἢ πάθος ἐπιφέρεσθαι τῇ ψυχῇ*; "for God, by many significations, hath taught us, that when men go to the altars to pray or give thanks, they must bring no sin or violent passion along with them to the sacrifice," said Philo.

2. Indifferency and easiness of desire is a great enemy to the success of a good man's prayer. When Plato gave Diogenes a great vessel of wine, who asked but a little, and a few caraways, the Cynic thanked him with his rude expression: "Cum interrogaris, quot sint duo et duo, respondes viginti; ita non secundum ea, quæ rogaris, das; nec ad ea, quæ interrogaris, respondes:" "Thou neither answerest to the question thou art asked, nor givest according as thou art desired: being inquired of, how many are two and two, thou answerest, twenty." So it is with God and us in the intercourse of our prayers: we pray for health, and he gives us, it may be, a sickness that carries us into eternal life; we pray for necessary support for our persons and families, and he gives us more than we need; we beg for a removal of a present sadness, and he gives us that which makes us able to bear twenty sadnesses, a cheerful spirit, a peaceful conscience, and a joy in God, as an antepast of eternal rejoicings in the kingdom of God. But, then, although God doth very frequently give us beyond the matter of our

desires, yet he does not so often give us great things beyond the spirit of our desires, beyond the quickness, vivacity, and fervour of our minds: for there is but one thing in the world that God hates besides sin, that is, indifferency and lukewarmness;[e] which, although it hath not in it the direct nature of sin, yet it hath this testimony from God, that it is loathsome and abominable; and excepting this thing alone, God never said so of any thing in the New Testament, but what was a direct breach of a commandment. The reason of it is, because lukewarmness, or an indifferent spirit, is an undervaluing of God and of religion; it is a separation of reason from affections, and a perfect conviction of the understanding to the goodness of a duty, but a refusing to follow what we understand. For he that is lukewarm alway, understands the better way, and seldom pursues it; he hath so much reason as is sufficient, but he will not obey it; his will does not follow the dictate of his understanding, and therefore it is unnatural. It is like the fantastic fires of the night, where there is light and no heat; and therefore may pass on to the real fires of hell, where there is heat and no light; and therefore, although an act of lukewarmness is only an indecency, and no sin, yet a state of lukewarmness is criminal, and a sinful state of imperfection and indecency; an act of indifferency hinders a single prayer from being accepted; but a state of it makes the person ungracious and despised in the court of heaven: and therefore St. James, in his accounts concerning an effective prayer, not only requires that he be a just man who prays, but his prayer must be fervent; δέησις δικαίου ἐνεργουμένη, "an effectual fervent prayer," so our English reads it; it must be an intent, zealous, busy, operative prayer; for consider what a huge indecency it is, that a man should speak to God for a thing that he values not; or that he should not value a thing, without which he cannot be happy; or that he should spend his religion upon a trifle; and if it be not a trifle, that he should not spend his affections upon it. If our prayers be for temporal things, I shall not need to stir up your affections to be passionate for their purchase; we desire them greedily, we run after them intemperately, we are kept from them with huge impatience, we are delayed with infinite regrets; we prefer them before our duty, we ask them unseasonably; we receive them with our own prejudice, and we care not; we choose them to our hurt and hinderance, and yet delight in the purchase; and when we do pray for them, we can hardly bring ourselves to it, to submit to God's will, but will have them (if we can) whether he be pleased or no; like the parasite in the comedy, "Qui comedit quod fuit et quod non fuit:" "he ate all, and more than all; what was set before him, and what was kept from him." But then, for spiritual things, for the interest of our souls, and the affairs of the kingdom, we pray to God with just such a zeal, as a man begs of a chirurgeon to cut him of the stone; or a condemned man desires his executioner quickly to put him out of his pain, by taking away his life; when things are come to that pass, it must be done, but God knows with what little complacency and desire the man makes his request: and yet the things of religion and the Spirit are the only things that ought to be desired vehemently, and pursued passionately, because God hath set such a value upon them, that they are the effects of his greatest loving-kindness; they are the purchases of Christ's blood, and the effect of his continual intercession, the fruits of his bloody sacrifice, and the gifts of his healing and saving mercy; the graces of God's Spirit, and the only instruments of felicity: and if we can have fondnesses for things indifferent or dangerous, our prayers upbraid our spirits, when we beg coldly and tamely for those things for which we ought to die, which are more precious than the globes of kings, and weightier than imperial sceptres, richer than the spoils of the sea, or the treasures of the Indian hills.

He that is cold and tame in his prayers, hath not tasted of the deliciousness of religion and the goodness of God; he is a stranger to the secrets of the kingdom, and therefore he does not know what it is, either to have hunger or satiety; and therefore, neither are they hungry for God, nor satisfied with the world; but remain stupid and inapprehensive, without resolution and determination, never choosing clearly, nor pursuing earnestly, and therefore never enter into possession; but always stand at the gate of weariness, unnecessary caution, and perpetual irresolution. But so it is too often in our prayers; we come to God because it is civil so to do, and a general custom, but neither drawn thither by love, nor pinched by spiritual necessities and pungent apprehensions; we say so many prayers, because we are resolved so to do, and we pass through them, sometimes with a little attention, sometimes with none at all; and can we think that the grace of chastity can be obtained at such a purchase, *that* grace, that hath cost more labours than all the persecutions of faith, and all the disputes of hope, and all the expense of charity besides, amounts to? Can we expect that our sins should be washed by a lazy prayer? Can an indifferent prayer quench the flames of hell, or rescue us from an eternal sorrow? Is lust so soon overcome, that the very naming it can master it? Is the devil so slight and easy an enemy, that he will fly away from us at the first word, spoken without power and without vehemence? Read and attend to the accents of the prayers of saints. "I cried day and night before thee, O Lord; my soul refused comfort; my throat is dry with calling upon my God, my knees are weak through fasting;" and, "Let me alone," says God to Moses, and, "I will not let thee go till thou hast blessed me," said Jacob to the angel. And I shall tell you a short character of a fervent prayer out of the practice of St. Jerome, in his epistle "ad Eustachium de Custodia Virginitatis." "Being destitute of all help, I threw myself down at the feet of Jesus; I watered his feet with tears, and wiped them with my hair, and mortified the lust of my flesh with the abstinence and hungry diet of many weeks; I remember, that in my crying to God, I did frequently join the night and the day, and never did entertain to call, nor cease from

[e] See Sermon II. of Lukewarmness and Zeal.

beating my breast, till the mercy of the Lord brought to me peace and freedom from temptation. After many tears, and my eyes fixed in heaven, I thought myself sometimes encircled with troops of angels, and then at last I sang to God, 'We will run after thee into the smell and deliciousness of thy precious ointments;' "—such a prayer as this will never return without its errand. But though your person be as gracious as David or Job, and your desire as holy as the love of angels, and your necessities great as a new penitent, yet it pierces not the clouds, unless it be also as loud as thunder, passionate as the cries of women, and clamorous as necessity. And we may guess at the degrees of importunity by the insinuation of the apostle: "Let the married abstain for a time," *ut vacent orationi et jejunio*, "that they may attend to prayer;" it is a great attendance, and a long diligence, that is promoted by such a separation; and supposes a devotion that spends more than many hours: for ordinary prayers, and many hours of every day, might well enough consist with an ordinary cohabitation; but that which requires such a separation, calls for a longer time and a greater attendance than we usually consider. For every prayer we make is considered by God, and recorded in heaven; but cold prayers are not put into the account, in order to effect and acceptation; but are laid aside like the buds of roses, which a cold wind hath nipped into death, and the discoloured, tawny face of an Indian slave: and when in order to your hopes of obtaining a great blessing, you reckon up your prayers, with which you have solicited your suit in the court of heaven, you must reckon, not by the number of the collects, but by your sighs and passions, by the vehemence of your desires, and the fervour of your spirit, the apprehension of your need, and the consequent prosecution of your supply. Christ prayed κραυγαῖς ἰσχυραῖς "with loud cryings," and St. Paul made mention of his scholars in his prayers "night and day." Fall upon your knees and grow there, and let not your desires cool nor your zeal remit, but renew it again and again, and let not your offices and the custom of praying put thee in mind of thy need, but let thy need draw thee to thy holy offices; and remember, how great a God, how glorious a Majesty you speak to; therefore, let not your devotions and addresses be little. Remember, how great a need thou hast; let not your desires be less. Remember, how great the thing is you pray for; do not undervalue it with thy indifferency. Remember, that prayer is an act of religion; let it, therefore, be made thy business: and, lastly, Remember that God hates a cold prayer; and, therefore, will never bless it, but it shall be always ineffectual.

3. Under this title of lukewarmness and tepidity may be comprised also these cautions: that a good man's prayers are sometimes hindered by inadvertency, sometimes by want of perseverance. For inadvertency, or want of attendance to the sense and intention of our prayers, is certainly an effect of lukewarmness, and a certain companion and appendage to human infirmity; and is only so remedied, as our prayers are made zealous, and our infirmities pass into the strengths of the Spirit. But if we were quick in our perceptions, either concerning our danger, or our need, or the excellency of the object, or the glories of God, or the niceties and perfections of religion, we should not dare to throw away our prayers so like fools, or come to God and say a prayer with our mind standing at distance, trifling like untaught boys at their books, with a truantly spirit. I shall say no more to this, but that, in reason, we can never hope, that God in heaven will hear our prayers, which we ourselves speak, and yet hear not at the same time, when we ourselves speak them with instruments joined to our ears; even with those organs, which are parts of our hearing faculties. If they be not worth our own attending to, they are not worth God's hearing; if they are worth God's attending to, we must make them so by our own zeal, and passion, and industry, and observation, and a present and a holy spirit.

But concerning perseverance, the consideration is something distinct. For when our prayer is for a great matter, and a great necessity, strictly attended to, yet we pursue it only by chance or humour, by the strengths of fancy, and natural disposition; or else our choice is cool as soon as hot, like the emissions of lightning, or like a sunbeam often interrupted with a cloud, or cooled with intervening showers: and our prayer is without fruit, because the desire lasts not, and the prayer lives like the repentance of Simon Magus, or the trembling of Felix, or the Jews' devotion for seven days of unleavened bread, during the passover, or the feast of tabernacles: but if we would secure the blessing of our prayers, and the effect of our prayers, we must never leave till we have obtained what we need.

There are many that pray against a temptation for a month together, and so long as the prayer is fervent, so long the man hath a nolition, and a direct enmity against the lust; he consents not all that while; but when the month is gone, and the prayer is removed, or become less active, then the temptation returns, and forages, and prevails, and seizes upon all our unguarded strengths. There are some desires which have a period, and God's visitations expire in mercy at the revolution of a certain number of days; and our prayer must dwell so long as God's anger abides; and in all the storm we must outcry the noise of the tempest, and the voices of that thunder. But if we become hardened, and by custom and cohabitation with the danger lose our fears, and abate of our desires and devotions, many times we shall find, that God, by a sudden breach upon us, will chastise us for letting our hands go down. Israel prevailed no longer than Moses held up his hands in prayer; and he was forced to continue his prayer, till the going down of the sun; that is, till the danger was over, till the battle was done. But when our desires, and prayers, are in the matter of spiritual danger, they must never be remitted, because danger continues for ever, and, therefore, so must our watchfulness, and our guards. "Vult enim Deus rogari, vult cogi, vult quâdam importunitate vinci," says St. Gregory; "God loves to be invited, entreated, importuned,

with an unquiet restless desire and a persevering prayer." Χρῆ ἀδιαλείπτως εὔχεσθαι τῆς περὶ τὸ θεῖον θρησκείας, said Proclus. That is a holy and a religious prayer, that never gives over, but renews the prayer, and dwells upon the desire; for this only is effectual. Δηθύνοντι βροτῷ κραιπνοὶ μάκαρες τελέθουσι, "God hears the persevering man, and the unwearied prayer." For it is very considerable, that we be very curious to observe, that many times a lust is *sopita, non mortua*, "it is asleep;" the enemy is at truce, and at quiet for a while, but not conquered, "not dead;" and if we put off our armour too soon, we lose all the benefit of our former war, and are surprised by indiligence and a careless guard. For God sometimes binds the devil in a short chain, and gives his servants respite, that they may feel the short pleasures of a peace, and the rest of innocence; and perceive, what are the eternal felicities of heaven, where it shall be so for ever; but then we must return to our warfare again; and every second assault is more troublesome, because it finds our spirits at ease, and without watchfulness, and delighted with a spiritual rest, and keeping holyday. But let us take heed; for whatsoever temptation we can be troubled withal by our natural temper, or by the condition of our life, or the evil circumstances of our condition, so long as we have capacity to feel it, so long we are in danger, and must "watch thereunto with prayer" and continual diligence. And when your temptations let you alone, let not your God alone; but lay up prayers and the blessings of a constant devotion against the day of trial. Well may your temptation sleep, but if your prayers do so, you may chance to be awakened with an assault that may ruin you. However, the rule is easy: Whatsoever you need, ask it of God so long as you want it, even till you have it. For God, therefore, many times defers to grant, that thou mayest persevere to ask; and because every holy prayer is a glorification of God by the confessing many of his attributes, a lasting and a persevering prayer is a little image of the hallelujahs and services of eternity; it is a continuation to do that, according to our measures, which we shall be doing to eternal ages: therefore, think not that five or six hearty prayers can secure to thee a great blessing, and a supply of a mighty necessity. He that prays so, and then leaves off, hath said some prayers, and done the ordinary offices of his religion; but hath not secured the blessing, nor used means reasonably proportionable to a mighty interest.

4. The prayers of a good man are oftentimes hindered, and destitute of their effect, for want of praying in good company; for sometimes an evil or an obnoxious person hath so secured and ascertained a mischief to himself, that he that stays in his company or his traffic, must also share in his punishment: and the Tyrian sailors with all their vows and prayers could not obtain a prosperous voyage, so long as Jonas was within the bark; for in this case the interest is divided, and the public sin prevails above the private piety. When the philosopher asked a penny of Antigonus, he told him "it was too little for a king to give;" when he asked a talent, he told him "it was too much for a philosopher to receive;" for he did purpose to cozen his own charity, and elude the other's necessity, upon pretence of a double inequality. So it is in the case of a good man mingled in evil company; if a curse be too severe for a good man, a mercy is not to be expected by evil company; and his prayer, when it is made in common, must partake of that event of things which is appropriate to that society. The purpose of this caution is, that every good man be careful, that he do not mingle his devotion in the communions of heretical persons, and in schismatical conventicles; for although he be like them that follow Absalom in the simplicity of their heart, yet his intermedial fortune, and the event of his present affairs, may be the same with Absalom's; and it is not a light thing, that we curiously choose the parties of our communion. I do not say it is necessary to avoid all the society of evil persons: "for then we must go out of the world;" and when we have thrown out a drunkard, possibly we have entertained a hypocrite; or when a swearer is gone, an oppressor may stay still; or if that be remedied, yet pride is soon discernible, but not easily judicable: but that which is of caution in this question, is, that we never mingle with those, whose very combination is a sin; such as were Corah and his company that rebelled against Moses their prince; and Dathan and Abiram, that made a schism in religion against Aaron the priest: for so said the Spirit of the Lord, "Come out from the congregation of these men, lest ye perish in their company;" and all those that were abused in their communion, did perish in the gainsaying of Corah. It is a sad thing to see a good man cozened by fair pretences, and allured into an evil snare; for besides that he dwells in danger, and cohabits with a dragon, and his virtue may change by evil persuasion into an evil disposition, from sweetness to bitterness, from thence to evil speaking, from thence to believe a lie, and from believing to practise it;—besides this, it is a very great sadness, that such a man should lose all his prayers to very many purposes. God will not respect the offering of those men, who assemble by a peevish spirit; and therefore, although God in pity regards the desires of a good man, if innocently abused, yet as it unites in that assembly, God will not hear it to any purposes of blessing and holiness: unless "we keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," we cannot have the blessing of the Spirit in the returns of a holy prayer; and all those assemblies, which meet together against God or God's ordinance, may pray and call, and cry loudly and frequently, and still they provoke God to anger; and many times he will not have so much mercy for them, as to deny them; but lets them prosper in their sin, till it swells to intolerable and unpardonable. But when good men pray with one heart, and in a holy assembly, that is, holy in their desires, lawful in their authority, though the persons be of different complexions, then the prayer flies up to God like the hymns of a choir of angels; for God—that made body and soul to be one man, and God and man to be one Christ; and three persons are one God, and

his praises are sung to him by choirs, and the persons are joined in orders, and the orders into hierarchies, and all, that God might be served by unions and communities—loves that his church should imitate the concords of heaven, and the unions of God, and that every good man should promote the interests of his prayers by joining in the communion of saints in the unions of obedience and charity, with the powers that God and the laws have ordained.

The sum is this: If the man that makes the prayer be an unholy person, his prayer is not the instrument of a blessing, but a curse; but when the sinner begins to repent truly, then his desires begin to be holy. But if they be holy, and just, and good, yet they are without profit and effect, if the prayer be made in schism, or an evil communion, or if it be made without attention, or if the man soon gives over, or if the prayer be not zealous, or if the man be angry. There are very many ways for a good man to become unblessed and unthriving in his prayers, and he cannot be secure unless he be in the state of grace, and his spirit be quiet, and his mind be attentive, and his society be lawful, and his desires earnest and passionate, and his devotions persevering, lasting till his needs be served or exchanged for another blessing: so that what Lælius *(apud Cicer. de senectute)* said concerning old age, "neque in summâ inopiâ levis esse senectus potest, ne sapienti quidem, nec insipienti etiam in summâ copiâ non gravis;" "that a wise man could not bear old age, if it were extremely poor; and yet if it were very rich, it were intolerable to a fool;" we may say concerning our prayers; they are sins and unholy, if a wicked man makes them; and yet if they be made by a good man, they are ineffective, unless they be improved by their proper dispositions. A good man cannot prevail in his prayers, if his desires be cold, and his affections trifling, and his industry soon weary, and his society criminal; and if all these appendages of prayer be observed, yet they will do no good to an evil man: for his prayer that begins in sin, shall end in sorrow.

SERMON VI.

PART III.

3. NEXT I am to inquire and consider, What degrees and circumstances of piety are required to make us fit to be intercessors for others, and to pray for them with probable effect? I say "with probable effect;" for when the event principally depends upon that which is not within our own election, such as are the lives and actions of others, all that we can consider in this affair is, whether we be persons fit to pray in the behalf of others, that hinder not, but are persons within the limit and possibilities of the present mercy. When the emperor Maximinus was smitten with the wrath of God, and a sore disease, for his cruel persecuting the christian cause, and putting so many thousand innocent and holy persons to death, and he understood the voice of God and the accents of thunder, and discerned that cruelty was the cause,—he revoked their decrees made against the christians, recalled them from their caves and deserts, their sanctuaries and retirements, and enjoined them to pray for the life and health of their prince. They did so; and they who could command mountains to remove and were obeyed, they who could do miracles, they who with the key of prayer could open God's four closets, of the *womb* and the *grave*, of *providence* and *rain*,—could not obtain for their bloody emperor one drop of mercy, but he must die miserable for ever. God would not be entreated for him; and though he loved the prayer because he loved the advocates, yet Maximinus was not worthy to receive the blessing. And it was threatened to the rebellious people of Israel, and by them to all people that should sin grievously against the Lord, God "would break their staff of bread," and even the righteous should not be prevailing intercessors; "Though Noah, Job, or Daniel, were there, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord God:"[a] and when Abraham prevailed very far with God in the behalf of Sodom, and the five cities of the plain, it had its period: if there had been ten righteous in Sodom, it should have been spared for their sakes; but four only were found, and they only delivered their own souls too; but neither their righteousness, nor Abraham's prayer, prevailed any farther. And we have this case also mentioned in the New Testament: "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death."[b] At his prayer the sinner shall receive pardon; God shall "give him life for them," to him that prays in their behalf that sin, provided it be "not a sin unto death:" for "there is a sin unto death, but I do not say that he shall pray for it:" there his commission expires, and his power is confined. For there are some sins of that state and greatness that God will not pardon. St. Austin in his books "de Sermone Domini in Monte" affirms it, concerning some one single sin of a perfect malice. It was also the opinion of Origen and Athanasius, and is followed by Venerable Bede; and whether the apostle means a peculiar state of sin, or some one single great crime which also supposes a precedent and a present state of criminal condition; it is such a thing as will hinder our prayers from prevailing in their behalf: we are therefore not encouraged to pray, because they cannot receive the benefit of Christ's intercession, and therefore much less of our advocation, which only can prevail by virtue and participation of his mediation. For whomsoever Christ prays, for them we pray; that is, for all them that are within the covenant of repentance, for all whose actions have not destroyed the very being of religion, who have not renounced their faith, nor voluntarily quit their

[a] Ezek. xiv. 14.

[b] 1 John v. 16

hopes, nor openly opposed the Spirit of grace, nor grown by a long progress to a resolute and final impiety, nor done injustices greater than sorrow, or restitution, or recompence, or acknowledgment. However, though it may be uncertain and disputed concerning the number of "sins unto death," and therefore to pray, or not to pray, is not matter of duty;—yet it is all one as to the effect, whether we know them or no; for though we intend charity, when we pray for the worst of men—yet concerning the event God will take care, and will certainly return thy prayer upon thy own head, though thou didst desire it should water and refresh thy neighbour's dryness; and St. John so expresses it, as if he had left the matter of duty undetermined; because the instances are uncertain; yet the event is certainly none at all, therefore because we are not encouraged to pray, and because it is a "sin unto death;" that is, such a sin that hath no portion in the promises of life, and the state of repentance. But now, suppose the man, for whom we pray, to be capable of mercy, within the covenant of repentance, and not far from the kingdom of heaven; yet,

1. No prayers of others can further prevail, than to remove this person to the next stage in order to felicity. When St. Monica prayed for her son, she did not pray to God to save him, but to convert him; and when God intended to reward the prayers and alms of Cornelius, he did not do it by giving him a crown, but by sending an apostle to him to make him a christian; the meaning of which observation is, that we may understand, that as, in the person prayed for, there ought to be the great disposition of being in a savable condition; so there ought also to be all the intermedial aptnesses; for just as he is disposed, so can we prevail; and the prayers of a good man first prevail in behalf of a sinner, that he shall be invited, that he shall be reproved,—and then that he shall attend to it, then that he shall have his heart opened, and then that he shall repent: and still a good man's prayers follow him through the several stages of pardon, of sanctification, of restraining graces, of a mighty Providence, of great assistance, of perseverance, and a holy death. No prayers can prevail upon an indisposed person. For the sun himself cannot enlighten a blind eye, nor the soul move a body whose silver cord is loosed, and whose joints are untied by the rudeness and dissolutions of a pertinacious sickness. But then, suppose an eye quick and healthful, or apt to be refreshed with light and a friendly prospect; yet a glow-worm or a diamond, the shells of pearl, or a dead man's candle, are not enough to make him discern the beauties of the world, and to admire the glories of creation. Therefore,

2. As the persons must be capable for whom we pray, so they that pray for others must be persons extraordinary in something. 1. If persons be of an extraordinary piety, they are apt to be intercessors for others. This appears in the case of Job; when the wrath of God was kindled against Eliphaz and his two friends, God commanded them to offer a sacrifice, but "my servant Job shall pray for you, for him will I accept:"[c] and it was so in the case of the prevaricating Israelites; God was full of indignation against them, and smote them; "then stood up Phinehas and prayed, and the plague ceased." For this man was a good man, and the spirit of an extraordinary zeal filled him, and he did glory to God in the execution upon Zimri and his fair Midianite. And it was a huge blessing, that was entailed upon the posterity of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; because they had a great religion, a great power with God, and their extraordinary did consist especially in the matter of prayers and devotion; for that was eminent in them, besides their obedience: for so Maimonides tells concerning them, that Abraham first instituted morning-prayer. The affairs of religion had not the same constitution then as now. They worshipped God never but at their memorials, and in places, and seldom times of separation. They bowed their head when they came to a hallowed stone, and upon the top of their staff, and worshipped when they came to a consecrated pillar, but this was seldom; and they knew not the secrets and the privileges of a frequent prayer, of intercourses with God by ejaculations, and the advantages of importunity: and the doctors of the Jews,—that record the prayer of Noah, who in all reason knew the secret best, because he was to teach it to all the world,—yet have transmitted to us but a short prayer of some seven lines long; and this he only said within the ark, in that great danger, once on a day, provoked by his fear, and stirred up by a religion then made actual, in those days of sorrow and penance. But in the descending ages, when God began to reckon a church in Abraham's family; there began to be a new institution of offices, and Abraham appointed that God should be prayed to every morning. Isaac being taught by Abraham, made a law, or at least commended the practice, and adopted it into the religion, that God should be worshipped by decimation or tithing of our goods; and he added an order of prayer to be said in the afternoon; and Jacob, to make up the office complete, added evening-prayer; and God was their God, and they became fit persons to bless, that is, of procuring blessings to their relatives; as appears in the instances of their own families, of the king of Egypt, and the cities of the plain. For a man of an ordinary piety is like Gideon's fleece, wet in its own locks; but it could not water a poor man's garden; but so does a thirsty land drink all the dew of heaven that wets its face, and a greater shower makes no torrent, nor digs so much as a little furrow, that the drills of the water might pass into rivers, or refresh their neighbour's weariness; but when the earth is full, and hath no strange consumptive needs, then at the next time, when God blesses it with a gracious shower, it divides into portions, and sends it abroad in free and equal communications, that all that stand round about may feel the shower. So is a good man's prayer; his own cup is full, it is crowned with health, and overflows with blessings, and all that drink of his cup and eat at his table, are refreshed with his joys,

[c] Chap. xlii. 7, 8.

and divide with him in his holy portions. And indeed he hath need of a great stock of piety, who is first to provide for his own necessities, and then to give portions to a numerous relation. It is a great matter, that every man needs for himself,—the daily expenses of his own infirmities, the unthriving state of his omission of duties, and recessions from perfection,—and sometimes the great losses and shipwrecks, the plunderings and burning of his house by a fall into a deadly sin; and most good men are in this condition, that they have enough to do to live, and keep themselves above water; but how few men are able to pay their own debts, and lend great portions to others? The number of those who can effectually intercede for others to great purposes of grace and pardon, are as soon told as the number of wise men, as the gates of a city, or the entries of the river Nilus.

But then do but consider, what a great engagement this is to a very strict and holy life. If we chance to live in times of an extraordinary trouble, or if our relatives can be capable of great dangers or great sorrows, or if we ourselves would do the noblest friendship in the world, and oblige others by acts of greatest benefit; if we would assist their souls and work towards their salvation; if we would be public ministers of the greatest usefulness to our country; if we would support kings, and relieve the great necessities of kingdoms; if we would be effective in the stopping of a plague, or in the success of armies;—a great and an exemplar piety, and a zealous and holy prayer, can do all this. "Semper tu hoc facito, ut cogites id optimum esse, tute ut sis optimus; si id nequeas, saltem ut optimis sis proximus:" "He that is the best man towards God, is certainly the best minister to his prince or country, and therefore do thou endeavour to be so, and if thou canst not be so, be at least next to the best." For in that degree in which our religion is great, and our piety exemplar, in the same we can contribute towards the fortune of a kingdom: and when Elijah was taken into heaven, Elisha mourned for him, because it was a loss to Israel: "My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and horsemen thereof." But consider how useless thou art, when thou canst not by thy prayers obtain so much mercy, as to prevail for the life of a single trooper, or in a plague beg of God for the life of a poor maid-servant; but the ordinary emanations of Providence shall proceed to issue without any arrest, and the sword of the angel shall not be turned aside in one single infliction. Remember, although he is a great and excellent person, that can prevail with God for the interest of others; yet thou, that hast no stock of grace and favour, no interest in the court of Heaven, art but a mean person, extraordinary in nothing; thou art unregarded by God, cheap in the sight of angels, useless to thy prince or country; thou mayest hold thy peace in a time of public danger. For kings never pardon murderers at the intercession of thieves; and if a mean mechanic should beg a reprieve for a condemned traitor, he is ridiculous and impudent: so is a vicious advocate or an ordinary person with God. It is well if God will hear him begging for his own pardon, he is not yet disposed to plead for others.

And yet every man that is in the state of grace, every man that can pray without a sinful prayer, may also intercede for others; and it is a duty for all men to do it; all men, I say, who can pray at all acceptably: "I will, therefore, that prayers, and supplications, and intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;" and this is a duty that is prescribed to all them that are concerned in the duty and in the blessings of prayer; but this is it which I say—if their piety be but ordinary, their prayer can be effectual but in easy purposes, and to smaller degrees; but he,—that would work effectually towards a great deliverance, or in great degrees towards the benefit or ease of any of his relatives—can be confident of his success but in the same degree in which his person is gracious. "There are strange things in heaven:" judgments there are made of things and persons by the measures of religion, and a plain promise produces effects of wonder and miracle; and the changes that are there made, are not effected by passions, and interests, and corporal changes; and the love that is there, is not the same thing that is here; it is more beneficial, more reasonable, more holy, of other designs, and strange productions; and upon that stock it is, that a holy poor man,—that possesses no more (it may be) than a ewe-lamb, that eats of his bread, and drinks of his cup, and is a daughter to him, and is all his temporal portion,—this poor man is ministered to by angels, and attended to by God, and the Holy Spirit makes intercession for him, and Christ joins the man's prayer to his own advocation, and the man by prayer shall save the city, and destroy the fortune of a tyrant-army, even then when God sees it good it should be so: for he will no longer deny him any thing, but when it is no blessing; and when it is otherwise, his prayer is most heard when it is most denied.

2. That we should prevail in intercessions for others, we are to regard and to take care, that as our piety, so also must our offices be extraordinary. He that prays to recover a family from an hereditary curse, or to reverse a sentence of God, to cancel a decree of Heaven gone out against his friend; he that would heal the sick with his prayer, or with his devotion prevail against an army, must not expect such great effects upon a morning or evening collect, or an honest wish put into the recollections of a prayer, or a period put in on purpose. Mamercus, bishop of Vienna, seeing his city and all the diocess in great danger of perishing by an earthquake, instituted great litanies, and solemn supplications, besides the ordinary devotions of his usual hours of prayer; and the church from his example took up the practice, and translated it into an anniversary solemnity, and upon St. Mark's day did solemnly intercede with God to divert or prevent his judgments falling upon the people, "majoribus litaniis," so they are called; with the more solemn supplications they did pray unto God in behalf of their people. And this hath in it the same consideration, that is in every great necessity; for it is

a great thing for a man to be so gracious with God as to be able to prevail for himself and his friend, for himself and his relatives; and therefore in these cases, as in all great needs, it is the way of prudence and security, that we use all those greater offices, which God hath appointed as instruments of importunity, and arguments of hope, and acts of prevailing, and means of great effect and advocation: such as are, separating days for solemn prayer, all the degrees of violence and earnest address, fasting and prayer, alms and prayer, acts of repentance and prayer, praying together in public with united hearts, and, above all, praying in the susception and communication of the holy sacrament; the effects and admirable issues of which we know not, and perceive not; we lose because we desire not, and choose to lose many great blessings rather than purchase them with the frequent commemoration of that sacrifice, which was offered up for all the needs of mankind, and for obtaining all favours and graces to the Catholic church. Εὐχῆς δικαίας οὐκ ἀνήκοος Θεὸς, "God never refuses to hear a holy prayer;" and our prayers can never be so holy, as when they are offered up in the union of Christ's sacrifice: for Christ, by that sacrifice, reconciled God and the world; and because our needs continue, therefore we are commanded to continue the memory, and to represent to God that which was done to satisfy all our needs: then we receive Christ; we are, after a secret and mysterious, but most real and admirable manner, made all one with Christ; and if God giving us his Son could not but "with him give us all things else," how shall he refuse our persons, when we are united to his person, when our souls are joined to his soul, our body nourished by his body, and our souls sanctified by his blood, and clothed with his robes, and marked with his character, and sealed with his Spirit, and renewed with holy vows, and consigned to all his glories, and adopted to his inheritance? when we represent his death, and pray in virtue of his passion, and imitate his intercession, and do that which God commands, and offer him in our manner that which he essentially loves; can it be that either any thing should be more prevalent, or that God can possibly deny such addresses and such importunities? Try it often, and let all things else be answerable, and you cannot have greater reason for your confidence. Do not all the christians in the world, that understand religion, desire to have the holy sacrament when they die; when they are to make their great appearance before God, and to receive their great consignation to their eternal sentence, good or bad? And if then be their greatest needs, that is their greatest advantage, and instrument of acceptation. Therefore if you have a great need to be served, or a great charity to serve, and a great pity to minister, and a dear friend in a sorrow, take Christ along in thy prayers: in all the ways thou canst, take him; take him in affection, and take him in a solemnity; take him by obedience, and receive him in the sacrament; and if thou then offerest up thy prayers, and makest thy needs known; if thou nor thy friend be not relieved; if thy party be not prevalent, and the war be not appeased, or the plague be not cured, or the enemy taken off, there is something else in it: but thy prayer is good and pleasing to God, and dressed with circumstances of advantage, and thy person is apt to be an intercessor, and thou hast done all that thou canst; the event must be left to God; and the secret reasons of the denial, either thou shalt find in time, or thou mayest trust with God, who certainly does it with the greatest wisdom and the greatest charity. I have in this thing only one caution to insert; *viz.*

That is our importunity and extraordinary offices for others, we must not make our accounts by multitude of words, and long prayers, but by the measures of the spirit, by the holiness of the soul, and the justness of the desire, and the usefulness of the request, and its order to God's glory, and its place in the order of providence, and the sincerity of our heart, and the charity of our wishes, and the perseverance of our advocation. There are some, (as Tertullian observes,) "Qui loquacitatem facundiam existimant, et impudentiam constantiam deputant;" "they are praters and they are impudent, and they call that constancy and importunity:" concerning which, the advice is easy: many words or few are extrinsical to the nature, and not at all considered in the effects of prayer; but much desire, and much holiness, are essential to its constitution; but we must be very curious, that our importunity do not degenerate into impudence and rude boldness. Capitolinus said of Antoninus the emperor and philosopher, "Sane quamvis esset constans, erat etiam verecundus:" "he was modest even when he was most pertinacious in his desires." So must we; though we must not be ashamed to ask for whatsoever we need, "Rebus semper pudor absit in arctis:" and in this sense it is true, that Stasimus in the comedy said concerning meat, "Verecundari neminem apud mensam decet, Nam ibi de divinis et humanis cernitur:" "men must not be bashful so as to lose their meat; for that is a necessary that cannot be dispensed withal:" so it is in our prayers; whatsoever our necessity calls to us for, we must call to God for; and he is not pleased with that rusticity or fond modesty of being ashamed to ask of God any thing, that is honest and necessary; yet our importunity hath also bounds of modesty, but such as are to be expressed with other significations; and he is rightly modest towards God, who, without confidence in himself, but not without confidence in God's mercy, or without great humility of person, and reverence of address, presents his prayers to God as earnestly as he can; provided always, that in the greatest of our desires, and holy violence, we submit to God's will, and desire him to choose for us. Our modesty to God in prayers hath no other measures but these: 1. Distrust of ourselves: 2. Confidence in God: 3. Humility of person: 4. Reverence of address: and, 5. Submission to God's will. These are all, unless you also will add that of Solomon, "Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter a thing before God; for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: there-

fore let thy words be few." These things being observed, let your importunity be as great as it can; it is still the more likely to prevail, by how much it is the more earnest, and signified and represented by the most offices extraordinary.

3. The last great advantage towards a prevailing intercession for others is, that the person that prays for his relatives, be a person of an extraordinary dignity, employment, or designation. For God hath appointed some persons and callings of men to pray for others, such are fathers for their children, bishops for their diocesses, kings for their subjects, and the whole order ecclesiastical for all the men and women in the christian church. And it is well it is so; for, as things are now, and have been too long, how few are there that understand it to be their duty, or part of their necessary employment, that some of their time, and much of their prayers, and an equal portion of their desires, be spent upon the necessities of others. All men do not think it necessary, and fewer practise it frequently, and they but coldly, without interest and deep resentment: it is like the compassion we have in other men's miseries; we are not concerned in it, and it is not our case, and our hearts ache not when another man's children are made fatherless, or his wife a sad widow: and just so are our prayers for their relief: if we thought their evils to be ours, —if we and they, as members of the same body, had sensible and real communications of good and evil, —if we understood what is really meant by being "members one of another," or if we did not think it a spiritual word of art, instrumental only to a science, but no part of duty, or real relation,—surely we should pray more earnestly one for another than we usually do. How few of us are troubled, when he sees his brother wicked, or dishonourably vicious! Who is sad and melancholy, when his neighbour is almost in hell? when he sees him grow old in iniquity? How many days have we set apart for the public relief and interests of the kingdom? How earnestly have we fasted, if our prince be sick or afflicted? What alms have we given for our brother's conversion? Or if this be great, how importunate and passionate have we been with God by prayer in his behalf, by prayer and secret petition? But, however, though it were well, very well, that all of us would think of this duty a little more; because, besides the excellency of the duty itself, it would have this blessed consequent, that for whose necessities we pray, if we do desire earnestly they should be relieved, we would, whenever we can, and in all we can, set our hands to it; and if we pity the orphan-children, and pray for them heartily, we would also, when we could, relieve them charitably: but though it were therefore very well, that things were thus with all men, yet God, who takes care of us all, makes provision for us in special manner; and the whole order of the clergy are appointed by God to pray for others to be ministers of Christ's priesthood, to be followers of his advocation, to stand between God and the people, and to present to God all their needs, and all their desires. That this God hath ordained and appointed, and that this rather he will bless and accept, appears by the testimony of God himself, for he only can be witness in this particular, for it depends wholly upon his gracious favour and acceptation. It was the case of Abraham and Abimelech: "Now, therefore, restore the man his wife, for he is a prophet, and he will pray for thee, and thou shalt live:"[d] and this caused confidence in Micah: "Now know I that the Lord will do me good, seeing I have a Levite to my priest:"[e] meaning that in his ministry, in the ministry of priests, God hath established the alternate returns of blessing and prayers, the intercourses between God and his people; and through the descending ages of the synagogue it came to be transmitted also to the christian church, that the ministers of religion are advocates for us under Christ, by "the ministry of reconciliation," by their dispensing the holy sacraments, by "the keys of the kingdom of heaven," by baptism and the Lord's supper, by "binding and loosing," by "the word of God and prayer;" and, therefore, saith St. James, "If any man be sick among you, let him send for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him:"[f] meaning that God hath appointed them especially, and will accept them in ordinary and extraordinary; and this is that which is meant by blessing. A father blesses his child, and Solomon blessed his people, and Melchisedec the priest blessed Abraham, and Moses blessed the sons of Israel, and God appointed the Levitical priest to "bless the congregation;" and this is more than can be done by the people; for though they can say the same prayer, and the people pray for their kings, and children for their parents, and the flock for the pastor, yet they cannot bless him as he blesseth them; "for the less is blessed of the greater, and not the greater of the less;" and this is "without all contradiction," said St. Paul:[g] the meaning of the mystery is this, That God hath appointed the priest to pray for the people, and because he hath made it to be his ordinary office and employment, he also intends to be seen in that way, which he hath appointed, and chalked out for us; his prayer, if it be "found in the way of righteousness," is the surer way to prevail in his intercessions for the people.

But upon this stock comes in the greatest difficulty of the text: for if "God heareth not sinners," there is an infinite necessity, that the ministers of religion should be very holy: for all their ministries consist in preaching and praying; to these two are reducible all the ministries ecclesiastical, which are of Divine institution: so the apostles summed up their employment: "But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word:"[h] to exhort, to reprove, to comfort, to cast down, to determine cases of conscience, and to rule in the church by "the word of their proper ministry;" and the very making laws ecclesiastical, is the ministry of the word; for so their dictates pass into laws by being duties enjoined by God, or the acts, or exercises, or instruments of some enjoined graces. To prayer is reduced "administration of

[d] Gen. xx. 7. [e] Judg. xvii. 13. [f] James v. 14. [g] Heb. vii. 7. [h] Acts vi. 4.

the sacraments;" but "binding and loosing," and "visitation of the sick," are mixed offices, partly relating to one, partly to the other. Now although the word of God preached will have a great effect, even though it be preached by an evil minister, a vicious person; yet it is not so well there as from a pious man, because by prayer also his preaching is made effectual, and by his good example his homilies and sermons are made active; and therefore it is very necessary in respect of this half of the minister's office, "the preaching of the word," he be a good man; unless he be, much perishes to the people, most of the advantages are lost. But then for the other half, all those ministries which are by way of prayer, are rendered extremely invalid, and ineffectual, if they be ministered by an evil person. For upon this very stock it was that St. Cyprian affirmed, that none were to be chosen to the ministry but "immaculati et integri antistites, 'holy and upright men,' who, offering their sacrifices worthily to God and holily, may be heard in their prayers, which they make for the safety of the Lord's people."[i] But he presses this caution to a further issue: that it is not only necessary to choose holy persons to these holy ministries for fear of losing the advantages of a sanctified ministry, but also that the people may not be guilty of an evil communion, and a criminal state of society. "Nec enim sibi plebs blandiatur, quasi immunis a contagione delicti esse possit, cum sacerdote peccatore communicans; 'The people cannot be innocent if they communicate with a vicious priest:' for so said the Lord by the prophet Hosea, Sacrificia eorum panis luctûs; for 'their sacrifices are like bread of sorrow,' whosoever eats thereof shall be defiled." The same also he says often and more vehemently, *ibid. et lib.* 4. *ep.* 2. But there is yet a further degree of this evil. It is not only a loss, and also criminal to the people, to communicate with a minister of a notorious evil life and scandalous, but it is affirmed by the doctors of the church to be wholly without effect; and their prayers are sins, their sacraments are null and ineffective, their communions are without consecration, their hand is χεὶρ ἄκυρος, "a dead hand," the blessing vain, their sacrifices rejected, their ordinations imperfect, their order is vanished, their character is extinguished, and the Holy Ghost will not descend upon the mysteries, when he is invocated by unholy hands and unsanctified lips. This is a sad story, but it is expressly affirmed by Dionysius, by St. Jerome upon the second chapter of Zephaniah,[k] affirming that they do wickedly who affirm, "Eucharistiam imprecantis facere verba, non vitam; et necessariam esse tantum solennem orationem et non sacerdotum merita:" "that the eucharist is consecrated by the word and solemn prayer, and not by the life and holiness of the priest;" and by St. Gelasius,[l] by the author of the imperfect work attributed to St. Chrysostom,[m] who quotes the eighth book of the Apostolical Constitutions for the same doctrine; the words of which in the first chapter are so plain, that Bovius[n] and Sixtus Senensis[o] accuse both the author of the Apostolical Constitutions, and St. Jerome, and the author of these homilies, to be guilty of the doctrine of John Huss, who for the crude delivery of this truth was sentenced by the council of Constance. To the same sense and signification of doctrine is that, which is generally agreed upon by almost all persons; that he that enters into his ministry by simony, receives nothing but a curse, which is expressly affirmed by Petrus Damiani,[p] and Tarasius[q] the patriarch of Constantinople, by St. Gregory,[r] and St. Ambrose.[s]

For if the Holy Ghost leaves polluted temples and unchaste bodies, if he takes away his grace from them that abuse it, if the Holy Ghost would not have descended upon Simon Magus at the prayer of St. Peter, if St. Peter had taken money for him: it is but reasonable to believe the Holy Ghost will not descend upon the simoniacal, unchaste concubinaries, schismatics, and scandalous priests, and excommunicate. And beside the reasonableness of the doctrine, it is also further affirmed by the council of Neocæsarea, by St. Chrysostom,[t] Innocentius,[u] Nicholaus the first,[v] and by the Master of the Sentences upon the saying of God by the prophet Malachi, i. "Maledicam benedictionibus vestris," "I will curse your blessings:" upon the stock of these scriptures, reasons, and authorities, we may see how we are to understand this advantage of intercession. The prayer and offices of the holy ministers are of great advantages for the interest of the people; but if they be ministered to by evil men, by vicious and scandalous ministers, this extraordinary advantage is lost, they are left to stand alone or to fall by their own crimes; so much as is the action of God, and so much as is the piety of the man that attends and prays in the holy place with the priest, so far he shall prevail, but no farther; and therefore, the church hath taught her ministers to pray thus in their preparatory prayer to consecration; "Quoniam me peccatorem inter te et eundem populum medium esse voluisti, licet in me boni operis testimonium non agnoscas, officium dispensationis creditæ non recuses, nec per me, indignum famulum tuum, eorum salutis pereat pretium, pro quibus victima factus salutaris, dignatus es fieri redemptio." For we must know, that God hath not put the salvation of any man into the power of another. And although the church of Rome, by calling the priest's actual intention simply necessary, and the sacraments also indispensably necessary, hath left it in the power of every curate to damn very many of his parish; yet it is otherwise with the accounts of truth and the Divine mercy; and, therefore, he will never exact the sacraments of us by the measures and proportions of an evil priest, but by the piety of the com-

[i] Lib. i. Ep. 4.
[k] Ad Demo.
[l] 1. q. 1. c. sacro sancta.
[m] Homil. 53.
[n] In Scholiis ad hunc locum.
[o] Lib. vi. A. D. 108. Biblioth.
[p] Ep. 16. Biblioth. pp. tom. 3. n. 19.
[q] Decret. 1. q. 1 ad c. eos qui.
[r] Lib. vi. regist. 5. in decretis et l. vii. c. 120.
[s] De dignit. sacerd. c. 5.
[t] Can. 9. orat. 4. de sacerd.
[u] 1. in ep. 20. hom. 1. part. 2. ep. 27.
[v] Ep. 9. tom. 3. ad Micael. imperator. d. in 4. dist. 13.

municant, by the prayers of Christ, and the mercies of God. But although the greatest interest of salvation depends not upon this ministry; yet, as by this we receive many advantages, if the minister be holy; so, if he be vicious, we lose all that which could be conveyed to us by his part of the holy ministration; every man and woman in the assembly prays and joins in the effect, and for the obtaining the blessing; but the more vain persons are assembled, the less benefits are received, even by good men there present; and therefore, much is the loss, if a wicked priest ministers, though the sum of affairs is not entirely turned upon his office or default, yet many advantages are. For we must not think, that the effect of the sacraments is indivisibly done at once, or by one ministry; but they operate by parts, and by moral operation, by the length of time, and whole order of piety, and holy ministries; every man is συνεργὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, "a fellow-worker with God," in the work of his salvation; and as in our devotion, no one prayer of our own alone prevails upon God for grace and salvation, but all the devotions of our life are upon God's account for them; so is the blessing of God brought upon the people by all the parts of their religion, and by all the assistances of holy people, and by the ministries, not of one, but of all God's ministers, and relies finally upon our own faith, and obedience, and the mercies of God in Jesus Christ; but yet, for want of holy persons to minister, much diminution of blessing and a loss of advantage is unavoidable; therefore, if they have great necessities, they can best hope, that God will be moved to mercy on their behalf, if their necessities be recommended to God by persons of a great piety, of a holy calling, and by the most solemn offices.

Lastly, I promised to consider concerning the signs of having our prayers heard: concerning which, there is not much of particular observation; but if our prayers be according to the warrant of God's word, if we ask according to God's will things honest and profitable, we are to rely upon the promises; and we are sure that they are heard; and, besides this, we can have no sign but "the thing signified;" when we feel the effect, then we are sure God hath heard us; but till then we are to leave it with God, and not to ask a sign of that, for which he hath made us a promise. And yet Cassian hath named one sign, which, if you give me leave, I will name unto you. "It is a sign we shall prevail in our prayers, when the Spirit of God moves us to pray,—'cum fiduciâ et quasi securitate impetrandi,' 'with a confidence and a holy security of receiving what we ask.'"[w] But this is no otherwise a sign, but because it is a part of the duty; and trusting in God is an endearing him, and doubting is a dishonour to him; and he that doubts hath no faith; for all good prayers rely upon God's word, and we must judge of the effect by Providence; for he that asks what is "not lawful," hath made an unholy prayer; if it be lawful and "not profitable," we are then heard, when God denies us; and if both these be in the prayer, "he that doubts is a sinner," and then God will not hear him; but beyond this I know no confidence is warrantable; and if this be a sign of prevailing, then all the prudent prayers of all holy men shall certainly be heard; and because that is certain, we need no farther inquiry into signs.

I sum up all in the words of God by the prophet; "Run to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if you can find a man; if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh truth, 'virum quærentem fidem,' 'a man that seeketh for faith;' 'et propitius ero ei,' 'and I will pardon it.'"[x] God would pardon all Jerusalem for one good man's sake; there are such days and opportunities of mercy, when God, at the prayer of one holy person, will save a people; and Ruffinus spake a great thing, but it was hugely true; "Quis dubitet mundum stare precibus sanctorum?" "the world itself is established and kept from dissolution by the prayers of saints;" and the prayers of saints shall hasten the day of judgment; and we cannot easily find two effects greater. But there are many other very great ones; for the prayers of holy men appease God's wrath, drive away temptations, and resist and overcome the devil: holy prayer procures the ministry and service of angels, it rescinds the decrees of God, it cures sicknesses and obtains pardon, it arrests the sun in its course, and stays the wheels of the chariot of the moon; it rules over all God's creatures, and opens and shuts the storehouses of rain; it unlocks the cabinet of the womb, and quenches the violence of fire; it stops the mouths of lions, and reconciles our sufferance and weak faculties, with the violence of torment and sharpness of persecution; it pleases God and supplies all our needs. But prayer that can do thus much for us, can do nothing at all without holiness; for "God heareth not sinners, but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doth his will, him he heareth."

[w] Collat. ix. c. 23.

[x] Jer. v. 1.

SERMON VII.

OF GODLY FEAR, &c.

PART I.

Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire.—Heb. xii. part of the 28th and 29th verses.

ΕΧΩΜΕΝ τὴν χάριν, so our Testaments usually read it, from the authority of Theophylact; "Let us have grace," but some copies read in the indicative mood ἔχομεν, "We have grace, by which we do serve;" and it is something better consonant to the discourse of the apostle. For having enume-

rated the great advantages, which the gospel hath above those of the law, he makes an argument "a majori;" and answers a tacit objection. The law was delivered by angels, but the gospel by the Son of God: the law was delivered from mount Sinai, the gospel from mount Sion, from "the heavenly Jerusalem:" the law was given with terrors and noises, with amazements of the standers-by, and Moses himself, "the minister, did exceedingly quake and fear," and gave demonstration how infinitely dangerous it was by breaking that law to provoke so mighty a God, who with his voice did shake the earth; but the gospel was given by a meek Prince, a gentle Saviour, with a still voice, scarce heard in the streets. But that this may be no objection, he proceeds and declares the terror of the Lord: "Deceive not yourselves, our Lawgiver appeared so upon earth, and was so truly, but now he is ascended into heaven, and from thence he speaks to us." "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh; for if they escaped not, who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven;" [y] for as God once shook the earth, and that was full of terror, so our Lawgiver shall do, and much more, and be far more terrible, Ἔτι ἅπαξ ἐγὼ σείσω τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γὴν καὶ τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ τὴν ξηράν, said the prophet Haggai, which the apostle quotes here, he once shook the earth. But "once more I shake;" σείσω, it is in the prophecy, "I *will* shake, not the earth only, but also heaven," [z] with a greater terror than was upon mount Sinai, with the voice of an archangel, with the trump of God, with a concussion so great, that heaven and earth shall be shaken in pieces, and new ones come in their room. This is an unspeakable and an unimaginable terror: Mount Sinai was shaken, but it stands to this day; but when that shaking shall be, "the things that are shaken shall be no more; that those things that cannot be shaken may remain:" that is, not only that the celestial Jerusalem may remain for ever, but that you, who do not turn away from the faith and obedience of the Lord Jesus, you, who cannot be shaken nor removed from your duty, you may remain for ever; that when the rocks rend, and the mountains fly in pieces like the drops of a broken cloud, and the heavens shall melt, and the sun shall be a globe of consuming fire, and the moon shall be dark like an extinguished candle, then you poor men, who could be made to tremble with an ague, or shake by the violence of a northern wind, or be removed from your dwellings by the unjust decree of a persecutor, or be thrown from your estates by the violence of an unjust man, yet could not be removed from your duty, and though you went trembling, yet would go to death for the testimony of a holy cause, and you that would die for your faith, would also live according to it; you shall be established by the power of God, and supported by the arm of your Lord, and shall in all this great shaking be unmovable; as the corner-stone of the gates of the New Jerusalem, you shall remain and abide for ever. This is your case. And, to sum up the whole force of the argument, the apostle adds the words of Moses: as it was then, so it is true now, "Our God is a consuming fire:" [a] he was so to them that brake the law, but he will be much more to them that disobey his Son; he made great changes then, but those which remain are far greater, and his terrors are infinitely more intolerable; and therefore, although he came not in the spirit of Elias, but with meekness and gentle insinuations, soft as the breath of heaven, not willing to disturb the softest stalk of a violet, yet his second coming shall be with terrors such as shall amaze all the world, and dissolve it into ruin and a chaos. This truth is of so great efficacy to make us do our duty, that now we are sufficiently enabled with this consideration. This is the grace which we have to enable us, this terror will produce fear, and fear will produce obedience, and "we therefore have grace," that is, we have such a motive to make us reverence God and fear to offend him, that he that dares continue in sin, and refuses to hear him that speaks to us from heaven, and from thence shall come with terrors, this man despises the grace of God, he is a graceless, fearless, impudent man, and he shall find that true in "hypothesi," and in his own ruin, which the apostle declares in "thesi," and by way of caution, and provisionary terror, "Our God is a consuming fire;" this is the sense and design of the text.

Reverence and godly fear, they are the effects of this consideration, they are the duties of every christian, they are the graces of God. I shall not press them only to purposes of awfulness and modesty of opinion and prayers, against those strange doctrines, which some have introduced into religion, to the destruction of all manners and prudent apprehensions of the distances of God and man; such as are the doctrine of necessity of familiarity with God, and a civil friendship, and a party of estate, and an evenness of adoption; from whence proceed rudeness in prayer, flat and indecent expressions, affected rudeness, superstitious sitting at the holy sacrament, making it to be a part of religion to be without fear and reverence; the stating of the question is a sufficient reproof of this folly; whatsoever actions are brought into religion without "reverence and godly fear," are therefore to be avoided, because they are condemned in this advice of the apostle, and are destructive of those effects which are to be imprinted upon our spirits by the terrors of the day of judgment. But this fear and reverence, the apostle intends, should be a deletery to all sin whatsoever; φοβερὸν, δηλητήριον· φόβος, φυγή· says the Etymologicum: "Whatsoever is terrible, is destructive of that thing for which it is so;" and if we fear the evil effects of sin, let us fly from it, we ought to fear its alluring face too; let us be so afraid, that we may not dare to refuse to hear him whose throne is heaven, whose voice is thunder, whose tribunal is clouds, whose seat is the right hand of God, whose word is with power; whose law is given with mighty demonstration of the Spirit, who shall reward with heaven and joys eternal, and who punishes his rebels, that will not have him to reign

[y] Heb. xii. 25. [z] ii. 6. [a] Deut. iv. 24.

over them, with brimstone and fire, with a worm that never dies, and a fire that never is quenched; let us fear him who is terrible in his judgments, just in his dispensation, secret in his providence, severe in his demands, gracious in his assistances, bountiful in his gifts, and is never wanting to us in what we need; and if all this be not argument strong enough to produce fear, and that fear great enough to secure obedience, all arguments are useless, all discourses are vain, the grace of God is ineffective, and we are dull as the Dead sea; inactive as a rock, and we shall never dwell with God in any sense, but as "he is a consuming fire," that is, dwell in everlasting burnings.

Αἰδὼς καὶ εὐλάβεια, *Reverence* and *caution, modesty* and *fear*, μετὰ εὐλαβείας καὶ δέους, so it is in some copies, with *caution* and *fear;* or if we render εὐλάβεια to be "fear of punishment," as it is generally understood by interpreters of this place, and is in Hesychius εὐλαβεῖσθαι, φυλάττεσθαι, φοβεῖσθαι, then the expression is the same in both words, and it is all one with the other places of Scripture, "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling," degrees of the same duty; and they signify all those actions and graces, which are the proper effluxes of fear; such as are reverence, prudence, caution, and diligence, chastity, and a sober spirit; εὐλάβεια, σεμνότης, so also say the grammarians; and it means plainly this; since our God will appear so terrible at his second coming, "let us pass the time of our sojourning here in fear,"[b] that is, modestly, without too great confidence of ourselves; soberly, without bold crimes, which when a man acts, he must put on shamelessness; reverently towards God, as fearing to offend him; diligently observing his commandments, inquiring after his will, trembling at his voice, attending to his word, reverencing his judgments, fearing to provoke him to anger; for "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Thus far it is a duty.

Concerning which, that I may proceed orderly, I shall first consider how far fear is a duty of christian religion. 2. Who and what states of men ought to fear, and upon what reasons. 3. What is the excess of fear, or the obliquity and irregularity whereby it becomes dangerous, penal, and criminal; a state of evil, and not a state of duty.

1. Fear is taken sometimes in Holy Scripture for the whole duty of man, for his whole religion towards God. "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God?"[c]—*fear* is *obedience*, and *fear* is *love*, and *fear* is *humility*, because it is the parent of all these, and is taken for the whole duty to which it is an introduction. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and a good understanding have all they that do thereafter; the praise of it endureth for ever:"[d] and, "Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man:"[e] and thus it is also used in the New Testament: "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."[f]

2. *Fear* is sometimes taken for *worship;* for so our blessed Saviour expounds the words of Moses in Matt. iv. 10. taken from Deut. x. 20. "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God," so Moses; "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve," said our blessed Saviour; and so it was used by the prophet Jonah; "I am a Hebrew, and I fear the Lord the God of heaven,"[g] that is, I worship him; he is the Deity that I adore, that is, my worship and my religion; and because the new colony of Assyrians did not do so, at the beginning of their dwelling there, "they feared not the Lord," that is, they worshipped other gods, and not the God of Israel, therefore God sent lions among them, which slew many of them.[h] Thus far fear is not a distinct duty, but a word signifying something besides itself; and therefore cannot come into the consideration of this text. Therefore, 3. *Fear*, as it is a religious passion, is divided as the two Testaments are; and relates to the old and the new covenant, and accordingly hath its distinction. In the law, God used his people like servants; in the gospel, he hath made us to be sons. In the law, he enjoined many things, hard, intricate, various, painful, and expensive; in the gospel, he gave commandments, not hard, but full of pleasure, necessary and profitable to our life, and well-being of single persons and communities of men. In the law, he hath exacted those many precepts by the covenant of exact measures, grains and scruples; in the gospel, he makes abatement for human infirmities, temptations, moral necessities, mistakes, errors, for every thing that is pitiable, for every thing that is not malicious and voluntary. In the law, there are many threatenings, and but few promises, the promise of temporal prosperities branched into single instances; in the gospel, there are but few threatenings, and many promises: and when God by Moses gave the ten commandments, only one of them was sent out with a promise, the precept of obedience to all our parents and superiors; but when Christ in his first sermon recommended eight duties,[i] christian duties to the college of disciples, every one of them begins with a blessing and ends with a promise, and therefore *grace* is opposed to *law*.[k] So that upon these differing interests, the world put on the affections of servants, and sons; they of old feared God as a severe Lord, much in his commands, abundant in threatenings, angry in his executions, terrible in his name, in his majesty and appearance dreadful unto death; and this the apostle calls πνεῦμα δουλείας, "the spirit of bondage," or of a servant. But we have not received that Spirit, εἰς φόβον, "unto fear," not a servile fear, "but the Spirit of adoption" and filial fear we must have;[l] God treats us like sons, he keeps us under discipline, but designs us to the inheritance: and his government is paternal, his disciplines are merciful, his conduct gentle, his Son is our Brother, and our Brother is our Lord, and our Judge is our Ad-

[b] 1 Pet. i. 17. [c] Deut. x. 12. [d] Psal. cxi. 10
[e] Eccles. xii. 13. [f] 2 Cor. vii. 1. [g] Jonah i. 9.
[h] 2 Kings xvii. 25. [i] Matt. v. ad v. 10.
[k] John i. 17. Rom. vi. 14, 15. [l] Rom. viii. 15.

vocate, and our Priest hath felt our infirmities, and therefore knows how to pity them, and he is our Lord, and therefore he can relieve them: and from hence we have affections of sons; so that a fear we must not have, and yet a fear we must have; and by these proportions we understand the difference: "Malo vereri quàm timeri me à meis," said one in the comedy, "I had rather be reverenced than feared by my children." The English doth not well express the difference, but the apostle doth it rarely well. For that which he calls *πνεῦμα δουλείας* in Rom. viii. 15. he calls *πνεῦμα δειλίας*, 2 Tim. i. 7. The spirit of bondage is the spirit of *timorousness*, or *fearfulness*, rather than *fear;* when we are fearful that God will use us harshly; or when we think of the accidents that happen, worse than the things are, when they are proportioned by measures of eternity; and from this opinion conceive forced resolutions and unwilling obedience. *Χείρους δὲ ὅσοι οὐ δι' αἰδῶ, ἀλλὰ διὰ φόβον αὐτὸ δρῶσι, καὶ φεύγοντες οὐ τὸ αἰσχρὸν, ἀλλὰ τὸ λυπηρὸν*, said Aristotle; "Good men are guided by reverence, not by fear, and they avoid not that which is afflictive, but that which is dishonest;" they are not so good whose rule is otherwise. But that we may take more exact measures, I shall describe the proportions of christian or godly fear by the following propositions.

1. Godly fear is ever without despair;—because christian fear is an instrument of duty, and that duty without hope can never go forward. For what should that man do, who, like Nausiclides, *οὔτε ἔαρ, οὔτε φίλους ἔχῃ*, "hath neither spring nor harvest," friends nor children, rewards nor hopes? A man will very hardly be brought to deny his own pleasing appetite, when for so doing he cannot hope to have recompence; when the mind of a man is between hope and fear, it is intent upon its work; "At postquam adempta spes est, lassus, curâ confectus, stupet," "If you take away the hope, the mind is weary, spent with care, hindered by amazements:" "Aut aliquem sumpserimus temeraria in Deos desperatione," saith Arnobius; "A despair of mercy makes men to despise God:" and the damned in hell, when they shall for ever be without hope, are also without fear; their hope is turned into despair, and their fear into blasphemy, and they curse the fountain of blessing, and revile God to eternal ages. When Dionysius the tyrant imposed intolerable tributes upon his Sicilian subjects, it amazed them, and they petitioned and cried for help, and flattered him, and feared and obeyed him carefully; but he imposed still new ones, and greater, and at last left them poor as the valleys of Vesuvius, or the top of Ætna; but then, all being gone, the people grew idle and careless, and walked in the markets and public places, cursing the tyrant, and bitterly scoffing his person and vices; which when Dionysius heard, he caused his publicans and committees to withdraw their impost: for "now (says he) they are dangerous, because they are desperate," *νῦν γὰρ, οὐδὲν ἔχουσιν, ὅτε καταφρονοῦσιν ἡμῶν.* When men have nothing left, they will despise their rulers: and so it is in religion; "Audaces cogimur esse metu." If our fears be unreasonable, our diligence is none at all; and from whom we hope for nothing, neither benefit nor indemnity, we despise his command, and break his yoke, and trample it under our most miserable feet: and therefore, Æschylus calls these people *θερμοὺς*, "hot," mad, and furious, careless of what they do, and he opposes them to pious and holy people. Let your confidence be allayed with fear, and your fear be sharpened with the intertextures of a holy hope, and the active powers of our souls are furnished with feet and wings, with eyes and hands, with consideration and diligence, with reason and encouragements: but despair is part of the punishment that is in hell, and the devils still do evil things, because they never hope to receive a good, nor find a pardon.

2. Godly fear must always be with honourable opinion of God,—without disparagements of his mercies, without quarrellings at the intrigues of his providence, or the rough ways of his justice; and therefore it must be ever relative to ourselves and our own failings and imperfections.

Θαρσεῖτ'· οὔπω Ζεὺς αὐχένα λοξόν ἔχει.

"God never walks perversely towards us, unless we walk crookedly towards him:" and therefore persons,—that only consider the greatness and power of God, and dwell for ever in the meditation of those severe executions, which are transmitted to us by story, or we observe by accident and conversation,—are apt to be jealous concerning God, and fear him as an enemy, or as children fear fire, or women thunder, only because it can hurt them; "Sæpius illud cogitant, quid possit is, cujus in ditione sunt, quam quid debeat facere" *(Cicero pro Quinctio)*: "They remember oftener what God can do, than what he will;" being more affrighted at his judgments, than delighted with his mercy. Such as were the Lacedæmonians, whenever they saw a man grow popular, or wise, or beloved, and by consequence powerful, they turned him out of the country: and because they were afraid of the power of Ismenias, and knew that Pelopidas and Pherenicius and Androclydes could hurt them, if they listed, they banished them from Sparta, but they let Epaminondas alone, *ὡς διὰ μὲν φιλοσοφίαν ἀπράγμονα, διὰ δὲ πενίαν ἀδύνατον*, "as being studious and therefore inactive, and poor and therefore harmless:" it is harder when men use God thus, and fear him as the great justiciary of the world; who sits in heaven, and observes all we do, and cannot want excuse to punish all mankind. But this caution I have now inserted for their sakes, whose schools and pulpits raise doctrinal fears concerning God; which, if they were true, the greatest part of mankind would be tempted to think, they have reason not to love God; and all the other part, that have not apprehended a reason to hate him, would have very much reason to suspect his severity, and their own condition. Such are they, which say, That God hath decreed the greatest part of mankind to eternal damnation; and that only to declare his severity, and to manifest his glory by a triumph in our tor-

ments, and rejoicings in the gnashing of our teeth. And they also fear God unreasonably, and speak no good things concerning his name, who say, That God commands us to observe laws which are impossible; that think he will condemn innocent persons for errors of judgment, which they cannot avoid; that condemn whole nations for different opinions, which they are pleased to call heresy; that think God will exact the duties of a man by the measures of an angel, or will not make abatement for all our pitiable infirmities. The precepts of this caution are, that we remember God's mercies to be over all his works, that is, that he shows mercy to all his creatures that need it; that God delights to have his mercy magnified in all things, and by all persons, and at all times, and will not suffer his greatest honour to be most of all undervalued; and therefore as he, that would accuse God of injustice, were a blasphemer, so he that suspects his mercy, dishonours God as much, and produces in himself that fear, which is the parent of trouble, but no instrument of duty.

3. Godly fear is operative, diligent, and instrumental to caution and strict walking:—for so fear is the mother of holy living; and the apostle urges it by way of upbraiding: "What! do we provoke God to anger? Are we stronger than he?"[m] meaning, "that if we be not strong enough to struggle with a fever, if our voices cannot outroar thunder, if we cannot check the ebbing and flowing of the sea, if we cannot add one cubit to our stature, how shall we escape the mighty hand of God?" And here, heighten your apprehensions of the Divine power, of his justice and severity, of the fierceness of his anger, and the sharpness of his sword, the heaviness of his hand and the swiftness of his arrows, as much as ever you can; provided the effect pass on no farther, but to make us reverent and obedient: but that fear is unreasonable, servile, and unchristian, that ends in bondage and servile affections, scruple and trouble, vanity and incredulity, superstition and desperation: its proper bounds are "humble and devout prayers," and "a strict and holy piety" according to his laws, and "glorification of God," or speaking good things of his holy name; and then it cannot be amiss: we must be full of confidence towards God, we must with cheerfulness rely upon God's goodness for the issue of our souls, and our final interests; but this expectation of the Divine mercy must be in the ways of piety: "Commit yourselves to God in well-doing as unto a faithful Creator."[n] Alcibiades was too timorous; who being called from banishment refused to return, and being asked, If he durst not trust his country, answered, Τὰ μὲν ἄλλα πάντα, περὶ δὲ ψυχῆς τῆς ἐμῆς οὐδὲ τῇ μητρί· μήπως ἀγνοήσασα, τὴν μέλαιναν ἀντὶ τῆς λευκῆς ἐπενέγκῃ ψῆφον, "In every thing else, but in the question of his life he would not trust his mother, lest ignorantly she should mistake the black bean for the white, and intending a favour should do him a mischief." We must, we may most safely, trust God with our souls; the stake is great, but the venture is none at all: for he is our Creator, and he is faithful; he is our Redeemer, and he bought them at a dear rate; he is our Lord, and they are his own; he prays for them to his heavenly Father, and therefore he is an interested person. So that he is a party, and an advocate, and a judge too; and therefore there can be no greater security in the world on God's part: and this is our hope, and our confidence: but because we are but earthen vessels under a law, and assaulted by enemies, and endangered by temptations; therefore it concerns us to fear, lest we make God our enemy, and a party against us. And this brings me to the next part of the consideration; Who and what states of men ought to fear, and for what reasons? For, as the former cautions did limit, so this will encourage; those did direct, but this will exercise, our godly fear.

1. I shall not here insist upon the general reason of fear, which concerns every man, though it be most certain, that every one hath cause to fear, even the most confident and holy, because his way is dangerous and narrow, troublesome and uneven, full of ambushes and pitfalls; and I remember what Polynices said in the tragedy, when he was unjustly thrown from his father's kingdom, and refused to treat of peace but with a sword in his hand, Ἅπαντα γὰρ τολμῶσι δεινὰ φαίνεται, Ὅταν δ' ἐχθρᾶς πονὺς ἀμείβηται χθονός·[o] "Every step is a danger for a valiant man, when he walks in his enemy's country;" and so it is with us: we are espied by God, and observed by angels: we are betrayed within, and assaulted without; the devil is our enemy, and we are fond of his mischiefs; he is crafty, and we love to be abused; he is malicious, and we are credulous; he is powerful, and we are weak; he is too ready of himself, and yet we desire to be tempted; the world is alluring, and we consider not its vanity; sin puts on all pleasures, and yet we take it, though it puts us to pain: in short, we are vain, and credulous, and sensual, and trifling; we are tempted, and tempt ourselves, and we sin frequently, and contract evil habits, and they become second natures, and bring in a second death miserable and eternal: every man hath need to fear, because every man hath weakness, and enemies, and temptations, and dangers, and causes, of his own. But I shall only instance in some peculiar sorts of men, who, it may be, least think of it, and, therefore, have most cause to fear.

1. Are those of whom the apostle speaks, "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall."[p] Ἐν ξυνῷ ἰχθύι ἀκάνθαι οὐκ ἔνεισιν, (ὡς φησιν ὁ Δημόκριτος,) said the Greek proverb; "In ordinary fish we shall never meet with thorns, and spiny prickles:" and in persons of ordinary even course of life, we find in it too often, that they have no checks of conscience, or sharp reflections upon their condition; they fall into no horrid crimes, and they think all is peace round about them. But you must know, that as grace is the improvement and bettering of nature, and christian graces are the perfections of moral habits, and are but new circumstances, formalities, and degrees: so it grows in natural

[m] 1 Cor. x. 22. [n] 1 Pet. iv. 19. [o] Apud Empir. in Phœnissis. [p] 1 Cor. x. 12.

measures by supernatural aids, and it hath its degrees, its strengths and weaknesses, its promotions and arrests, its stations and declensions, its direct sicknesses and indispositions: and there is a state of grace that is next to sin; it inclines to evil and dwells with a temptation; its acts are imperfect, and the man is within the kingdom, but he lives in its borders, and is "dubiæ jurisdictionis." These men have cause to fear; these men seem to stand, but they reel indeed, and decline towards danger and death. "Let these men (saith the apostle) take heed lest they fall," for they shake already; such are persons, whom the Scriptures call "weak in faith." I do not mean new beginners in religion, but such, who have dwelt long in its confines, and yet never enter into the heart of the country; such whose faith is tempted, whose piety does not grow; such who yield a little; people that do all that they can lawfully do, and study how much is lawful, that they may lose nothing of a temporal interest; people that will not be martyrs in any degree, and yet have good affections; and love the cause of religion, and yet will suffer nothing for it: these are such of which the apostle speaks, δοκοῦσιν ἱστάναι, "they think they stand," and so they do upon one leg, that is, so long as they are untempted; but when the tempter comes, then they fall and bemoan themselves, that by losing peace they lost their inheritance. There are a great many sorts of such persons: some, when they are full, are content and rejoice in God's providence; but murmur and are amazed, when they fall into poverty. They are chaste, so long as they are within the protection of marriage, but when they return to liberty, they fall into bondage, and complain they cannot help it. They are temperate and sober, if you let them alone at home; but call them abroad, and they will lose their sober thoughts, as Dinah did her honour, by going into new company. These men in these estates think they stand, but God knows they are soon weary, and stand stiff as a cane, which the heat of the Syrian star, or the flames of the sun, cannot bend; but one sigh of a northern wind shakes them into the tremblings of a palsy: in this the best advice is, that such persons should watch their own infirmities, and see on which side they are most open, and by what enemies they use to fall, and to fly from such parties, as they would avoid death. But certainly they have great cause to fear, who are sure to be sick when the weather changes: or can no longer retain their possession, but till an enemy please to take it away; or will preserve their honour, but till some smiling temptation ask them to forego it.

2. They also have great reason to fear, whose repentance is broke into fragments, and is never a whole or entire change of life: I mean those, that resolve against a sin, and pray against it, and hate it in all the resolutions of their understanding, till that unlucky period comes, in which they use to act it; but then they sin as certainly, as they will infallibly repent it, when they have done: there are a very great many christians, who are esteemed of the better sort of penitents, yet feel this feverish repentance to be their best state of health; they fall certainly in the returns of the same circumstances, or at a certain distance of time; but, God knows, they do not get the victory over their sin, but are within its power. For this is certain, they who sin and repent, and sin again in the same or like circumstances, are in some degree under the power and dominion of sin; when their action can be reduced to an order or a method, to a rule or a certainty, that oftener hits than fails, that sin is habitual; though it be the least habit, yet a habit it is; every course, or order, or method of sin, every constant or periodical return, every return that can be regularly observed, or which a man can foresee, or probably foretell, even then when he does not intend it, but prays against it, every such sin is to be reckoned, not for a single action, or upon the accounts of a pardonable infirmity, but it is a combination, an evil state, such a thing as the man ought to fear concerning himself, lest he be surprised and called from this world, before this evil state be altered: for if he be, his securities are but slender, and his hopes will deceive him. It was a severe doctrine that was maintained by some great clerks and holy men in the primitive church, "That repentance was to be but once after baptism:" "One faith, one Lord, one baptism, one repentance;"[q] all these the Scripture saith; and it is true, if by repentance we mean the entire change of our condition; for he that returns willingly to the state of an unbelieving, or heathen, profane person, entirely and choosingly, in defiance of, and apostasy from, his religion, cannot be renewed again; as the apostle twice affirms in his epistle to the Hebrews. But then, concerning this state of apostasy, when it happened in the case, not of faith, but of charity and obedience, there were many fears and jealousies: they were, therefore, very severe in their doctrines, lest men should fall into so evil a condition, they enlarged their fear, that they might be stricter in their duty; and generally this they did believe, that every second repentance was worse than the first, and the third worse than the second, and still as the sin returned, the Spirit of God did the less love to inhabit; and if he were provoked too often, would so withdraw his aids and comfortable cohabitation, that the church had little comfort in such children; so said Clemens Alexandr. Stromat. 2. Αἱ δὲ συνεχεῖς καὶ ἐπάλληλαι ἐπὶ τοῖς ἁμαρτήμασι μετάνοιαι, οὐδὲν τῶν καθάπαξ μὴ πεπιστευκότων διαφέρουσιν· "Those frequent and alternate repentances, that is, repentances and sinnings interchangeably, differ not from the conditions of men that are not within the covenant of grace, from them that are not believers," ἢ μόνῳ τῷ συναισθέσθαι ὅτι ἁμαρτάνουσι, "save only (says he) that these men perceive that they sin;" they do it more against their conscience than infidels and unbelievers; and therefore they do it with less honesty and excuse, καὶ οὐκ οἶδ' ὁπότερον αὐτοῖς χεῖρον, ἢ τὸ εἰδότα ἁμαρτάνειν, ἢ μετανοήσαντα, ἐφ' οἷς ἥμαρτον, πλημμελεῖν αὖθις· "I know not which is worse, either to sin knowingly or willingly; or to repent of our sin, and

[q] Heb. vi. 6. x. 26. 2 Pet. ii. 22.

sin it over again." And the same severe doctrine is delivered by Theodoret in his twelfth book against the Greeks, and is hugely agreeable to the discipline of the primitive church: and it is a truth of so great severity, that it ought to quicken the repentance and sour the gaieties of easy people, and make them fear: whose repentance is, therefore, ineffectual, because it is not integral or united, but broken in pieces by the intervention of new crimes; so that the repentance is every time to begin anew; and then let it be considered, what growth that repentance can make, that is never above a week old, that is for ever in its infancy, that is still in its birth, that never gets the dominion over sin. These men, I say, ought to fear, lest God reject their persons, and deride the folly of their new-begun repentances, and at last be weary of giving them more opportunities, since they approve all, and make use of none; their understanding is right, and their will a slave, their reason is for God, and their affections for sin; these men (as the apostle's expression is) "walk not as wise, but as fools:" for we deride the folly of those men, that resolve upon the same thing a thousand times, and never keep one of those resolutions. These men are vain and light, easy and effeminate, childish and abused; these are they of whom our blessed Saviour said those sad decretory words, "Many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able."

SERMON VIII.

PART II.

3. THEY have great reason to fear, whose sins are not yet remitted; for they are within the dominion of sin, within the kingdom of darkness, and the regions of fear: light makes us confident; and sin checks the spirit of a man into pusillanimity and cowardice of a girl or a conscious boy: and they do their work in the days of peace and wealthy fortune, and come to pay their symbol in a war or in a plague; then they spend of their treasure of wrath, which they laid up in their vessels of dishonour: and, indeed, want of fear brought them to it; for if they had known how to have accounted concerning the changes of mortality, if they could have reckoned right concerning God's judgments falling upon sinners, and remembered, that themselves are no more to God than that brother of theirs that died in a drunken surfeit, or was killed in a rebel war, or was, before his grave, corrupted by the shames of lust; if they could have told the minutes of their life, and passed on towards their grave at least in religious and sober thoughts, and considered that there must come a time for them to die, and "after death comes judgment," a fearful and an intolerable judgment,—it would not have come to this pass, in which their present condition of affairs does amaze them, and their sin hath made them liable unto death, and that death is the beginning of an eternal evil. In this case it is natural to fear; and if men consider their condition, and know that all the felicity, and all the security, they can have, depends upon God's mercy pardoning their sins,—they cannot choose but fear infinitely, if they have not reason to hope that their sins are pardoned. Now concerning this, men indeed have generally taken a course to put this affair to a very speedy issue. "God is merciful," and "God forgive me," and all is done: it may be, a few sighs, like the deep sobbings of a man that is almost dead with laughter, that is, a trifling sorrow, returning upon a man after he is full of sin, and hath pleased himself with violence, and revolving only by a natural change from sin to sorrow, from laughter to a groan, from sunshine to a cloudy day; or, it may be, the good man hath left some one sin quite, or some degrees of all sin, and then the conclusion is firm, he is "rectus in curia," his sins are pardoned, he was indeed in an evil condition, but "now he is purged," he "is sanctified" and clean. These things are very bad: but it is much worse that men should continue in their sin, and grow old in it, and arrive at confirmation, and the strength of habitual wickedness, and grow fond of it; and yet think if they die, their account stands as fair in the eyes of God's mercy, as St. Peter's, after his tears and sorrow. Our sins are not pardoned easily and quickly; and the longer and the greater hath been the iniquity, the harder and more difficult and uncertain is the pardon; it is a great progress to return from all the degrees of death to life, to motion, to quickness, to purity, to acceptation, to grace, to contention, and growth in grace, to perseverance, and so to pardon: for pardon stands no where, but at the gates of heaven. It is a great mercy, that signifies a final and universal acquittance. God sends it out in little scrolls, and excuses you from falling by the sword of an enemy, or the secret stroke of an angel in the days of the plague; but these are but little entertainments and enticings of our hopes to work on towards the great pardon, which is registered in the leaves of the book of life. And it is a mighty folly to think, that every little line of mercy signifies glory and absolution from the eternal wrath of God; and therefore, it is not to be wondered at, that wicked men are unwilling to die; it is a greater wonder, that many of them die with so little resentment of their danger and their evil. There is reason for them to tremble, when the judge summons them to appear. When his messenger is clothed with horror, and speaks in thunder; when their conscience is their accuser, and their accusation is great, and their bills uncancelled, and they have no title to the cross of Christ, no advocate, no excuse; when God is their enemy, and Christ is the injured person, and the Spirit is grieved, and sickness and death come to plead God's cause against the man; then there is reason, that the natural fears of death should be high and pungent, and those natural fears increased by the reasonable and certain expectations of that anger, which God hath laid up in heaven for ever, to consume and destroy his enemies.

And, indeed, if we consider upon how trifling and inconsiderable grounds most men hope for pardon, (if at least that may be called hope, which is nothing but a careless boldness, and an unreasonable wilful confidence,) we shall see much cause to pity very many, who are going merrily to a sad and intolerable death. Pardon of sins is a mercy, which Christ purchased with his dearest blood, which he ministers to us upon conditions of an infinite kindness, but yet of great holiness and obedience, and an active living faith; it is a grace, that the most holy persons beg of God with mighty passion, and labour for with a great diligence, and expect with trembling fears, and concerning it many times suffer sadnesses with uncertain souls, and receive it by degrees, and it enters upon them by little portions, and it is broken as their sighs and sleeps. But so have I seen the returning sea enter upon the strand; and the waters, rolling towards the shore, throw up little portions of the tide, and retire as if nature meant to play, and not to change the abode of waters; but still the flood crept by little steppings, and invaded more by his progressions than he lost by his retreat: and having told the number of its steps, it possesses its new portion till the angel calls it back, that it may leave its unfaithful dwelling of the sand: so is the pardon of our sins; it comes by slow motions, and first quits a present death, and turns, it may be, into a sharp sickness; and if that sickness prove not health to the soul, it washes off, and, it may be, will dash against the rock again, and proceed to take off the several instances of anger and the periods of wrath, but all this while it is uncertain concerning our final interest, whether it be ebb or flood: and every hearty prayer, and every bountiful alms, still enlarges the pardon, or adds a degree of probability and hope; and then a drunken meeting, or a covetous desire, or an act of lust, or looser swearing, idle talk, or neglect of religion, makes the pardon retire; and while it is disputed between Christ and Christ's enemy, who shall be Lord, the pardon fluctuates like the wave, striving to climb the rock, and is washed off like its own retinue, and it gets possession by time and uncertainty, by difficulty and the degrees of a hard progression. When David had sinned but in one instance, interrupting the course of a holy life by one sad calamity, it pleased God to pardon him; but see upon what hard terms: he prayed long and violently, he wept sore, he was humbled in sackcloth and ashes, he ate the bread of affliction and drank his bottle of tears; he lost his princely spirit, and had an amazed conscience; he suffered the wrath of God, and the sword never did depart from his house: his son rebelled, and his kingdom revolted; he fled on foot, and maintained spies against his child; he was forced to send an army against him that was dearer than his own eyes, and to fight against him whom he would not hurt for all the riches of Syria and Egypt; his concubines were defiled by an incestuous mixture, in the face of the sun, before all Israel; and his child, that was the fruit of sin, after a seven days' fever, died, and left him nothing of his sin to show, but sorrow, and the scourges of the Divine vengeance; and after all this, God pardoned him finally, because he was for ever sorrowful, and never did the sin again. He that hath sinned a thousand times for David's once, is too confident if he thinks that all his shall be pardoned at a less rate than was used to expiate that one mischief of the religious king: "the Son of David" died for his father David, as well as he did for us; he was "the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world;" and yet that death, and that relation, and all the heap of the Divine favours, which crowned David with a circle richer than the royal diadem, could not exempt him from the portion of sinners, when he descended into their pollutions. I pray God we may find the "sure mercies of David," and may have our portion in the redemption wrought by the "Son of David;" but we are to expect it upon such terms as are revealed, such which include time, and labour, and uncertainty, and watchfulness, and fear, and holy living. But it is a sad observation, that the case of pardon of sins is so administered, that they that are most sure of it, have the greatest fears concerning it; and they to whom it doth not belong at all, are as confident as children and fools, who believe every thing they have a mind to, not because they have reason so to do, but because without it they are presently miserable. The godly and holy persons of the church "work out their salvation with fear and trembling;" and the wicked go to destruction with gaiety and confidence: these men think all is well, while they are "in the gall of bitterness;" and good men are tossed in a tempest, crying and praying for a safe conduct; and the sighs of their fears, and the wind of their prayers, waft them safely to their port. Pardon of sins is not easily obtained; because they who only certainly can receive it, find difficulty, and danger, and fears, in the obtaining it; and therefore, their case is pitiable and deplorable, who, when they have least reason to expect pardon, yet are most confident and careless.

But because there are sorrows on one side, and dangers on the other, and temptations on both sides, it will concern all sorts of men to know when their sins are pardoned. For then, when they can perceive their signs certain and evident, they may rest in their expectations of the Divine mercies; when they cannot see the signs, they may leave their confidence, and change it into repentance, and watchfulness, and stricter observation; and, in order to this, I shall tell you that which shall never fail you; a certain sign that you may know whether or no, and when, and in what degree, your persons are pardoned.

1. I shall not consider the evils of sin by any metaphysical and abstracted effects, but by sensible, real, and material. He that revenges himself of another, does something that will make his enemy grieve, something that shall displease the offender as much as sin did the offended; and therefore, all the evils of sin are such as relate to us, and are to be estimated by our apprehensions. Sin makes God angry; and God's anger, if it be not turned aside, will make us miserable and accursed; and

therefore, in proportion to this we are to reckon the proportion of God's mercy in forgiveness, or his anger in retaining.

2. Sin hath obliged us to suffer many evils, even whatsoever the anger of God is pleased to inflict; sickness and dishonour, poverty and shame, a caitiff spirit and a guilty conscience, famine and war, plague and pestilence, sudden death and a short life, temporal death or death eternal, according as God in the several covenants of the law and gospel hath expressed.

3. For in the law of Moses, sin bound them to nothing but temporal evils, but they were sore, and heavy, and many; but these only there were threatened: in the gospel, Christ added the menaces of evils spiritual and eternal.

4. The great evil of the Jews was their abscission and cutting off from being God's people, to which eternal damnation answers amongst us; and as sickness, and war, and other intermedial evils, were lesser strokes, in order to the final anger of God against their nation; so are these and spiritual evils intermedial, in order to the eternal destruction of sinning and unrepenting christians.

5. When God had visited any of the sinners of Israel with a grievous sickness, then they lay under the evil of their sin, and were not pardoned till God took away the sickness; but the taking the evil away, the evil of the punishment, was the pardon of the sin; "to pardon the sin is to spare the sinner:" and this appears; for when Christ had said to the man sick of the palsy, "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee,"[r] the Pharisees accused him of blasphemy, because none had power to forgive sins but God only; Christ, to vindicate himself, gives them an ocular demonstration, and proves his words: "That ye may know, the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, he saith to the man sick of the palsy, Arise, and walk;" then he pardoned the sin, when he took away the sickness, and proved the power by reducing it to act: for if pardon of sins be any thing else, it must be easier or harder: if it be easier, then sin hath not so much evil in it as a sickness, which no religion as yet ever taught: if it be harder, then Christ's power to do that which was harder, could not be proved by doing that which was easier. It remains, therefore, that it is the same thing to take the punishment away, as to procure or give the pardon; because, as the retaining the sin was an obligation to the evil of punishment, so the remitting the sin is the disobliging to its penalty. So far then the case is manifest.

6. The next step is this; that, although in the gospel God punishes sinners with temporal judgments, and sicknesses, and deaths, with sad accidents, and evil angels, and messengers of wrath; yet, besides these lesser strokes, he hath scorpions to chastise, and loads of worse evils to oppress the disobedient: he punishes one sin with another, vile acts with evil habits, these with a hard heart, and this with obstinacy, and obstinacy with impenitence, and impenitence with damnation. Now, because the worst of evils which are threatened to us, are such which consign to hell by persevering in sin, as God takes off our love and our affections, our relations and bondage under sin, just in the same degree he pardons us; because the punishment of sin being taken off and pardoned, there can remain no guilt. Guiltiness is an insignificant word, if there be no obligation to punishment. Since, therefore, spiritual evils, and progressions in sin, and the spirit of reprobation, and impenitence, and accursed habits, and perseverance in iniquity, are the worst of evils; when these are taken off, the sin hath lost its venom and appendant curse: for sin passes on to eternal death only by the line of impenitence, and it can never carry us to hell, if we repent timely and effectually; in the same degree, therefore, that any man leaves his sin, just in the same degree he is pardoned, and he is sure of it: for although curing the temporal evil was the pardon of sins among the Jews, yet we must reckon our pardon by curing the spiritual. If I have sinned against God in the shameful crime of lust, then God hath pardoned my sins, when, upon my repentance and prayers, he hath given me the grace of chastity. My drunkenness is forgiven when I have acquired the grace of temperance, and a sober spirit. My covetousness shall no more be a damning sin, when I have a loving and charitable spirit; loving to do good, and despising the world: for every further degree of sin being a nearer step to hell, and by consequence the worst punishment of sin, it follows inevitably, that according as we are put into a contrary state, so are our degrees of pardon, and the worst punishment is already taken off. And, therefore, we shall find, that the great blessing, and pardon, and redemption, which Christ wrought for us, is called "sanctification, holiness," and "turning us away from our sins:" so St. Peter; "Ye know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation;"[s] that is your redemption, that is your deliverance: you were taken from your sinful state; that was the state of death, this of life and pardon; and therefore they are made *synonyma* by the same apostle; "According as his Divine power hath given us all things that pertain to life and godliness:"[t] "to live" and "to be godly," is all one; to remain in sin and abide in death, is all one; to redeem us from sin, is to snatch us from hell; he that gives us godliness, gives us life, and that supposes the pardon, or the abolition of the rites of eternal death: and this was the conclusion of St. Peter's sermon, and the sum total of our redemption and of our pardon; "God having raised up his Son, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquity;"[u] this is the end of Christ's passion and bitter death, the purpose of all his and all our preaching, the effect of baptism, purging, washing, sanctifying; the work of the sacrament of the Lord's supper; and the same body that was broken, and the same blood that was shed for our redemption, is to conform us into his image and likeness of living and dying, of doing and suffering. The case is plain:

[r] Matt. ix. 2 [s] 1 Pet. i. 18. [t] 2 Pet. i. 3. [u] Acts iii. 26.

just as we leave our sins, so God's wrath shall be taken from us; as we get the graces contrary to our former vices, so infallibly we are consigned to pardon. If therefore you are in contestation against sin, while you dwell in difficulty, and sometimes yield to sin, and sometimes overcome it, your pardon is uncertain, and is not discernible in its progress; but when sin is mortified, and your lusts are dead, and under the power of grace, and you are "led by the Spirit," all your fears concerning your state of pardon are causeless, and afflictive without reason; but so long as you live at the old rate of lust or intemperance, of covetousness or vanity, of tyranny or oppression, of carelessness or irreligion, flatter not yourselves; you have no more reason to hope for pardon than a beggar for a crown, or a condemned criminal to be made heir-apparent to that prince whom he would traitorously have slain.

4. They have great reason to fear concerning their condition, who having been in the state of grace, who having begun to lead a good life, and given their names to God by solemn deliberate acts of will and understanding, and made some progress in the way of godliness, if they shall retire to folly, and unravel all their holy vows, and commit those evils, from which they formerly ran as from a fire or inundation; their case hath in it so many evils, that they have great reason to fear the anger of God, and concerning the final issue of their souls. For return to folly hath in it many evils beyond the common state of sin and death; and such evils, which are most contrary to the hopes of pardon. 1. He that falls back into those sins he hath repented of, does "grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by which he was sealed to the day of redemption." For so the antithesis is plain and obvious: if "at the conversion of a sinner there is joy before the beatified spirits, the angels of God," and that is the consummation of our pardon and our consignation to felicity, then we may imagine how great an evil it is to "grieve the Spirit of God," who is greater than the angels. The children of Israel were carefully warned, that they should not offend the angel: "Behold, I send an angel before thee, beware of him, and obey his voice; provoke him not, for he will not pardon your transgressions," [x] that is, he will not spare to punish you if you grieve him: much greater is the evil, if we grieve him who sits upon the throne of God, who is the Prince of all the spirits: and besides, grieving the Spirit of God is an affection, that is as contrary to his felicity as lust is to his holiness; both which are essential to him. "Tristitia enim omnium spirituum nequissima est, et pessima servis Dei, et omnius spiritus exterminat, et cruciat Spiritum sanctum," said Hennas: "Sadness is the greatest enemy to God's servants; if you grieve God's Spirit, you cast him out;" for he cannot dwell with sorrow and grieving; unless it be such a sorrow, which by the way of virtue passes on to joy and never-ceasing felicity. Now by grieving the Holy Spirit, is meant those things which displease him, doing unkindness to him; and then the grief, which cannot in proper sense seize upon him, will in certain effects return upon us: "Ita enim dico (said Seneca); sacer intra nos Spiritus sedet, bonorum malorumque nostrorum observator et custos; hic prout à nobis tractatus est, ita nos ipse tractat:" "There is a Holy Spirit dwells in every good man, who is the observer and guardian of all our actions; and as we treat him, so will he treat us." "Now we ought to treat him sweetly and tenderly, thankfully and with observation: "Deus præcepit, Spiritum Sanctum, utpote pro naturæ suæ bono tenerum et delicatum, tranquillitate, et lenitate, et quiete, et pace tractare," said Tertullian "de Spectaculis." The Spirit of God is a loving and kind Spirit, gentle and easy, chaste and pure, righteous and peaceable; and when he hath done so much for us as to wash us from our impurities, and to cleanse us from our stains, and straighten our obliquities, and to instruct our ignorances, and to snatch us from an intolerable death, and to consign us to the day of redemption, that is, to the resurrection of our bodies from death, corruption, and the dishonours of the grave, and to appease all the storms and uneasiness, and to "make us free as the sons of God," and furnished with the riches of the kingdom; and all this with innumerable arts, with difficulty, and in despite of our lusts and reluctances, with parts and interrupted steps, with waitings and expectations, with watchfulness and stratagems, with inspirations and collateral assistances; after all this grace, and bounty, and diligence, that we should despite this grace, and trample upon the blessings, and scorn to receive life at so great an expense, and love of God; this is so great a baseness and unworthiness, that by troubling the tenderest passions, it turns into the most bitter hostilities; by abusing God's love it turns into jealousy, and rage, and indignation. "Go and sin no more, lest a worse thing happen to thee."

2. Falling away after we have begun to live well, is a great cause of fear; because there is added to it the circumstance of inexcusableness. The man hath been taught the secrets of the kingdom, and therefore his understanding hath been instructed; he hath tasted the pleasures of the kingdom, and therefore his will hath been sufficiently entertained. He was entered into the state of life, and renounced the ways of death; his sin began to be pardoned, and his lusts to be crucified; he felt the pleasures of victory, and the blessings of peace, and therefore fell away, not only against his reason, but also against his interest; and to such a person the questions of his soul have been so perfectly stated, and his prejudices and enviable abuses so clearly taken off, and he was so made to view the paths of life and death, that if he chooses the way of sin again, it must be, not by weakness, or the infelicity of his breeding, or the weakness of his understanding, but a direct preference or prelation, a preferring sin before grace, the spirit of lust before the purities of the soul, the madness of drunkenness before the fulness of the Spirit, money before our friend, and above our religion, and heaven, and God himself. This man is not to be pitied upon pretence that he

[x] Exod. xxiii. 20, 21.

is betrayed; or to be relieved, because he is oppressed with potent enemies; or to be pardoned, because he could not help it: for he once did help it, he did overcome his temptation, and choose God, and delight in virtue, and was an heir of heaven, and was a conqueror over sin, and delivered from death; and he may do so still, and God's grace is upon him more plentifully, and the lust does not tempt so strongly; and if it did, he hath more power to resist it; and therefore, if this man falls, it is because he wilfully chooses death, it is the portion that he loves and descends into with willing and unpitied steps. "Quam vilis facta es, nimis iterans vias tuas!" said God to Judah.[y]

3. He that returns from virtue to his old vices, is forced to do violence to his own reason, to make his conscience quiet: he does so unreasonably, so against all his fair inducements, so against his reputation, and the principles of his society, so against his honour, and his promises, and his former discourses and his doctrines, his censuring of men for the same crimes, and the bitter invectives and reproofs which in the days of his health and reason he used against his erring brethren, that he is now constrained to answer his own arguments, he is entangled in his own discourses, he is ashamed with his former conversation; and it will be remembered against him, how severely he reproved and how reasonably he chastised the lust, which now he runs to in despite of himself and all his friends. And because this is his condition, he hath no way left him, but either to be impudent, which is hard for him at first; it being too big a natural change to pass suddenly from grace to immodest circumstances and hardnesses of face and heart: or else, therefore, he must entertain new principles, and apply his mind to believe a lie; and then begins to argue, "There is no necessity of being so severe in my life; greater sinners than I have been saved; God's mercies are greater than all the sins of man; Christ died for us, and if I may not be allowed to sin this sin, what ease have I by his death? or, This sin is necessary and I cannot avoid it; or, It is questionable, whether this sin be of so deep a dye as is pretended; or, Flesh and blood is always with me, and I cannot shake it off; or, There are some sects of christians that do allow it, or, if they do not, yet they declare it easily pardonable, upon no hard terms, and very reconcilable with the hopes of heaven; or, The Scriptures are not rightly understood in their pretended condemnations; or else, Other men do as bad as this, and there is not one in ten thousand but hath his private retirements from virtue; or else, When I am old, this sin will leave me, and God is very pitiful to mankind."—But while the man, like an entangled bird, flutters in the net, and wildly discomposes that which should support him, and that which holds him, the net and his own wings, that is, the laws of God and his own conscience and persuasion, he is resolved to do the thing, and seeks excuses afterward; and when he hath found out a fig-leaved apron that he could put on, or a cover for his eyes, that he may not see his own deformity, then he fortifies his error with irresolution and inconsideration; and he believes it, because he will; and he will, because it serves his turn: then he is entered upon his state of fear; and if he does not fear concerning himself, yet his condition is fearful, and the man hath *νοῦν ἀδόκιμον*, "a reprobate mind," that is, a judgment corrupted by lust: vice hath abused his reasoning, and if God proceeds in the man's method, and lets him alone in his course, and gives him over to believe a lie, so that he shall call good evil, and evil good, and come to be heartily persuaded that his excuses are reasonable, and his pretences fair,—then the man is desperately undone "through the ignorance that is in him," as St. Paul describes his condition; "his heart is blind, he is past feeling, his understanding is darkened;" then he may "walk in the vanity of his mind," and "give himself over to lasciviousness," and shall "work all uncleanness with greediness;"[z] then he needs no greater misery: this is the state of evil, which his fear ought to have prevented, but now it is past fear, and is to be recovered with sorrow, or else to be run through, till death and hell are become his portion; "fiunt novissima illius pejora prioribus;" "His latter end is worse than his beginning."[a]

4. Besides all this, it might easily be added, that he that falls from virtue to vice again, adds the circumstance of ingratitude to his load of sins; he sins against God's mercy, and puts out his own eyes, he strives to unlearn what with labour he hath purchased, and despises the trouble of his holy days, and throws away the reward of virtue for an interest, which himself despised the first day in which he began to take sober counsels; he throws himself back in the accounts of eternity, and slides to the bottom of the hill, from whence with sweat and labour of his hands and knees he had long been creeping; he descends from the spirit to the flesh, from honour to dishonour, from wise principles to unthrifty practices; like one of "the vainer fellows," who grows a fool, and a prodigal, and a beggar, because he delights in inconsideration, in the madness of drunkenness, and the quiet of a lazy and unprofitable life. So that this man hath great cause to fear; and, if he does, his fear is as the fear of enemies and not sons: I do not say, that it is a fear that is displeasing to God; but it is such a one, as may arrive at goodness, and the fear of sons, if it be rightly managed.

For we must know, that no fear is displeasing to God; no fear of itself, whether it be fear of punishment, or fear to offend; the "fear of servants," or the "fear of sons:" but the effects of fear do distinguish the man, and are to be entertained or rejected accordingly. If a servile fear makes us to remove our sins, and so passes us towards our pardon, and the receiving such graces which may endear our duty and oblige our affection; that fear is imperfect, but not criminal; it is "the beginning of wisdom," and the first introduction to it; but if that fear sits still, or rests in a servile mind, or a hatred of God, or speaking evil things concerning

[y] Jer. ii. 36. [z] Ephes. iv. 17, 18.

[a] Matt. xii. 45. Vide 2 Pet. ii. 20.

him, or unwillingness to do our duty, that which at first was indifferent, or at the worst imperfect, proves miserable and malicious; so we do our duty, it is no matter upon what principles we do it; it is no matter where we begin, so from that beginning we pass on to duties and perfection. If we fear God as an enemy, an enemy of our sins, and of our persons for their sakes, as yet this fear is but a servile fear; it cannot be a filial fear, since we ourselves are not sons; but if this servile fear makes us to desire to be reconciled to God, that he may no longer stay at enmity with us, from this fear we shall soon pass to carefulness, from carefulness to love, from love to diligence, from diligence to perfection; and the enemies shall become servants, and the servants shall become adopted sons, and pass into the society and the participation of the inheritance of Jesus: for this fear is also reverence, and then our God, instead of being "a consuming fire," shall become to us the circle of a glorious crown, and a globe of eternal light.

SERMON IX.

PART III.

I AM now to give account concerning the excess of fear, not directly and abstractedly, as it is a passion, but as it is subjected in religion, and degenerates into superstition: for so among the Greeks, fear is the ingredient and half of the constitution of that folly; Δεισιδαιμονία, φοβόθεια, said Hesychius, "it is a fear of God." Δεισιδαίμων, δειλος, that is more; it is a timorousness: "the superstitious man is afraid of the gods," (said the etymologist,) δεδιὼς τοὺς θεοὺς ὥσπερ τοὺς τυράννους, "fearing of God, as if he were a tyrant," and an unreasonable exacter of duty upon unequal terms, and disproportionable, impossible degrees, and unreasonable, and great and little instances.

1. But this fear some of the old philosophers thought unreasonable in all cases, even towards God himself; and it was a branch of the Epicurean doctrine, that God meddled not with any thing below, and was to be loved and admired, but not feared at all; and therefore they taught men neither to fear death, nor to fear punishment after death, nor any displeasure of God: "His terroribus ab Epicuro soluti non metuimus Deos," said Cicero;[b] and thence came this acceptation of the word, that superstition should signify "an unreasonable fear of God:" it is true, he and all his scholars extended the case beyond the measure, and made all fear unreasonable; but then if we, upon grounds of reason and Divine revelation, shall better discern the measure of the fear of God; whatsoever fear we find to be unreasonable, we may by the same reason call it superstition, and reckon it criminal, as they did all fear; that it may be called superstition, their authority is sufficient warrant for the grammar of the appellative; and that it is criminal, we shall derive from better principles.

But, besides this, there was another part of its definition, Δεισιδαίμων, ὁ τὰ εἴδωλα σέβων· εἰδωλολάτρης, "The superstitious man is also an idolater," δειλὸς παρὰ θεούς, "one that is afraid of something besides God." The Latins, according to their custom, imitating the Greeks in all their learned notices of things, had also the same conception of this, and by their word *superstitio* understood "the worship of demons," or separate spirits; by which they meant, either their *minores deos*, or else their ἡρῶας ἀποθεωθέντας, "their braver personages, whose souls were supposed to live after death;" the fault of this was the object of their religion: they gave a worship or a fear to whom it was not due; for whenever they worshipped the great God of heaven and earth, they never called that superstition in an evil sense, except the Ἄθεοι, "they that believed there was no God at all." Hence came the etymology of superstition: it was a worshipping or fearing the spirits of their dead heroes, "quos superstites credebant," "whom they thought to be alive" after their ἀποθέωσις, or deification, "quos superstantes credebant," "standing in places and thrones above us; and it alludes to that admirable description of old age, which Solomon made beyond all the rhetoric of the Greeks and Romans; "Also they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way;"[c] intimating the weakness of old persons, who, if ever they have been religious, are apt to be abused into superstition; they are "afraid of that which is high;" that is, of spirits, and separate souls of those excellent beings, which dwell in the regions above; meaning, that then they are superstitious. However, fear is most commonly its principle, always its ingredient. For if it enter first by credulity and a weak persuasion, yet it becomes incorporated into the spirit of a man, and thought necessary, and the action it persuades to, dares not be omitted, for fear of evil themselves dream of: upon this account the sin is reducible to two heads: the 1. is superstition of an undue object; 2. superstition of an undue expression to a right object.

1. Superstition of an undue object, is that which the etymologist calls τῶν εἰδώλων σέβασμα, "the worshipping of idols;" the Scripture adds θύειν δαιμονίοις, "a sacrificing to demons," in St. Paul,[d] and in Baruch;[e] where, although we usually read it "sacrificing to devils," yet it was but accidental that they were such; for those indeed were evil spirits who had seduced them, and tempted them to such ungodly rites; (and yet they who were of the Pythagorean sect, pretended a more holy worship, and did their devotion to angels); but whosoever shall worship angels, do the same thing; they worshipped them because they are good and powerful, as the gentiles did the devils, whom they thought so; and the error which the apostle reproves, was not in matter of judgment, in mistaking bad angels for good, but in matter of manners and choice; they

[b] Lib. de Nat. Deorum. [c] Eccles. xii. 5. [d] 1 Cor. x. 20. [e] Bar. iv. 7.

mistook the creature for the Creator; and therefore, it is more fully expressed by St. Paul, in a general signification, "they worshipped the creature," *παρὰ τὸν κτίσαντα*, "besides the Creator;"[f] so it should be read; if we worship any creature besides God, worshipping so as the worship of him becomes a part of religion, it is also a direct superstition; but, concerning this part of superstition, I shall not trouble this discourse, because I know no Christians blamable in this particular but the church of Rome, and they that communicate with her in the worshipping of images, of angels, and saints, burning lights and perfumes to them, making offerings, confidences, advocations, and vows to them; and direct and solemn Divine worshipping the symbols of bread and wine, when they are consecrated in the holy sacrament. These are direct superstition, as the word is used by all authors, profane and sacred, and are of such evil report, that wherever the word superstition does signify any thing criminal, these instances must come under the definition of it. They are *λατρεία τῆς κτίσεως*· A *λατρεία παρὰ τον κτίσαντα*, a "cultus superstitum" a "cultus dæmonum;" and therefore, besides that they have *ἴδιον ἔλεγχον*, "a proper reproof" in christian religion, are condemned by all wise men which call superstition criminal.

But as it is superstition to worship any thing *παρὰ τὸν κτίσαντα*, "besides the Creator;" so it is superstition to worship God *παρὰ τὸ εὔσχημον, παρὰ τὸ πρέπον, παρ' ὃ δεῖ*, "otherwise than is decent, proportionable, or described." Every inordination of religion, that is not in defect, is properly called superstition: *ὁ μὲν εὐσεβὴς φίλος Θεῷ, ὁ δὲ δεισιδαίμων κόλαξ Θεοῦ*, said Maximus Tyrius; "The true worshipper is a lover of God, the superstitious man loves him not, but flatters." To which if we add, that fear, unreasonable fear, is also superstition, and an ingredient in its definition, we are taught by this word to signify all irregularity and inordination in actions of religion. The sum is this: the atheist called all worship of God superstition; the Epicurean called all fear of God superstition, but did not condemn his worship; the other part of wise men called all unreasonable fear and inordinate worship superstition, but did not condemn all fear: but the christian, besides this, calls every error in worship, in the manner, or excess, by this name, and condemns it.

Now because the three great actions of religion are, "to worship God," "to fear God," and "to trust in him," by the inordination of these three actions, we may reckon three sorts of this crime; "the excess of fear," and "the obliquity in trust," and "the errors in worship," are the three sorts of superstition: the first of which is only pertinent to our present consideration.

1. Fear is the duty we owe to God, as being the God of power and justice, the great Judge of heaven and earth, the avenger of the cause of widows, the patron of the poor, and the advocate of the oppressed, a mighty God and terrible: and so essential an enemy to sin, that he spared not his own Son, but gave him over to death, and to become a sacrifice, when he took upon him our nature, and became a person obliged for our guilt. Fear is the great bridle of intemperance, the modesty of the spirit, and the restraint of gaieties and dissolutions; it is the girdle to the soul, and the handmaid to repentance; the arrest of sin, and the cure or antidote to the spirit of reprobation; it preserves our apprehensions of the Divine Majesty, and hinders our single actions from combining to sinful habits; it is the mother of consideration, and the nurse of sober counsels; and it puts the soul to fermentation and activity, making it to pass from trembling to caution, from caution to carefulness, from carefulness to watchfulness, from thence to prudence; and, by the gates and progresses of repentance, it leads the soul on to love, and to felicity, and to joys in God, that shall never cease again. Fear is the guard of a man in the days of prosperity; and it stands upon the watch-towers and spies the approaching danger, and gives warning to them that laugh loud and feast in the chambers of rejoicing, where a man cannot consider by reason of the noises of wine, and jest, and music: and if prudence takes it by the hand, and leads it on to duty, it is a state of grace, and a universal instrument to infant religion, and the only security of the less perfect persons; and, in all senses, is that homage we owe to God, who sends often to demand it, even then, when he speaks in thunder, or smites by a plague, or awakens us by threatenings, or discomposes our easiness by sad thoughts, and tender eyes, and fearful hearts, and trembling considerations.

But this so excellent grace is soon abused in the best and most tender spirits; in those who are softened by nature and by religion, by infelicities or cares, by sudden accidents or a sad soul: and the devil observing that fear, like spare diet, starves the fevers of lust, and quenches the flames of hell, endeavours to heighten this abstinence so much as to starve the man, and break the spirit into timorousness and scruple, sadness and unreasonable tremblings, credulity and trifling observation, suspicion and false accusations of God; and then vice, being turned out at the gate, returns in at the postern, and does the work of hell and death by running too inconsiderately in the paths which seem to lead to heaven. But so have I seen a harmless dove, made dark with an artificial night, and her eyes sealed and locked up with a little quill, soaring upward and flying with amazement, fear, and an undiscerning wing; she made towards heaven, but knew not that she was made a train and an instrument, to teach her enemy to prevail upon her and all her defenceless kindred: so is a superstitious man, zealous and blind, forward and mistaken, he runs towards heaven as he thinks, but he chooses foolish paths; and out of fear takes any thing that he is told; or fancies and guesses concerning God by measures taken from his own diseases and imperfections. But fear, when it is inordinate, is never a good counsellor, nor makes a good friend; and he that fears God as his enemy, is the most completely miserable person in the world. For if he with reason believes God to be

[f] Rom. i. 25.

his enemy, then the man needs no other argument to prove that he is undone than this, that the fountain of blessing (in this state in which the man is) will never issue any thing upon him but cursings. But if he fears this without reason, he makes his fears true by the very suspicion of God, doing him dishonour, and then doing those fond and trifling acts of jealousy, which will make God to be what the man feared he already was. We do not know God, if we can think any hard thing concerning him. If God be merciful, let us only fear to offend him; but then let us never be fearful that he will destroy us, when we are careful not to displease him. There are some persons so miserable and scrupulous, such perpetual tormenters of themselves with unnecessary fears, that their meat and drink is a snare to their consciences; if they eat, they fear they are gluttons; if they fast, they fear they are hypocrites; and if they would watch, they complain of sleep as of a deadly sin; and every temptation, though resisted, makes them cry for pardon; and every return of such an accident makes them think God is angry; and every anger of God will break them in pieces.

These persons do not believe noble things concerning God; they do not think that he is as ready to pardon them, as they are to pardon a sinning servant; they do not believe how much God delights in mercy, nor how wise he is to consider and to make abatement for our unavoidable infirmities: they make judgment of themselves by the measures of an angel, and take the account of God by the proportions of a tyrant. The best that can be said concerning such persons is, that they are hugely tempted, or hugely ignorant. For though "ignorance" is by some persons named the "mother of devotion;" yet, if it falls in a hard ground, it is the "mother of atheism:" if in a soft ground, it is the "parent of superstition;" but if it proceeds from evil or mean opinions of God, (as such scruples and unreasonable fears do many times,) it is an evil of a great impiety, and in some sense, if it were in equal degrees, is as bad as atheism: for so he that says, There was no such man as Julius Cæsar, does him less displeasure, than he that says, There was, but that he was a tyrant, and a bloody parricide. And the Cimmerians were not esteemed impious for saying, that there was no sun in the heavens; but Anaxagoras was esteemed irreligious for saying, the sun was a very stone: and though to deny there is a God is a high impiety and intolerable, yet he says worse who, believing there is a God, says, He delights in human sacrifices, in miseries and death, in tormenting his servants, and punishing their very infelicities and unavoidable mischances. To be God, and to be essentially and infinitely good, is the same thing; and therefore, to deny either, is to be reckoned among the greatest crimes in the world.

Add to this, that he that is afraid of God, cannot in that disposition love him at all; for what delight is there in that religion, which draws me to the altar as if I were going to be sacrificed, or to the temple as to the dens of bears? "Oderunt quos metuunt, sed colunt tamen:" "Whom men fear, they hate certainly, and flatter readily, and worship timorously;" and he that saw Hermolaus converse with Alexander, and Pausanias follow Philip the Macedonian, or Chæreas kissing the feet of Caius Caligula, would have observed how sordid men are made with fear, and how unhappy and how hated tyrants are in the midst of those acclamations, which are loud, and forced, and unnatural, and without love or fair opinion, And therefore, although the atheist says, "There is no God," the scrupulous, fearful, and superstitious man, does heartily wish what the other does believe.

But that the evil may be proportionable to the folly, and the punishment to the crime, there is no man more miserable in the world than the man who fears God as his enemy, and religion as a snare, and duty intolerable, and the commandments as impossible, and his Judge as implacable, and his anger as certain, insufferable, and unavoidable: whither shall this man go? where shall he lay his burden? where shall he take sanctuary? for he fears the altars as the places where his soul bleeds and dies; and God, who is his Saviour, he looks upon as his enemy; and because he is Lord of all, the miserable man cannot change his service, unless it be apparently for a worse. And therefore, of all the evils of the mind, fear is certainly the worst and the most intolerable: levity and rashness have in them some spritefulness, and greatness of action; anger is valiant; desire is busy and apt to hope; credulity is oftentimes entertained and pleased with images and appearances: but fear is dull, and sluggish, and treacherous, and flattering, and dissembling, and miserable, and foolish. Every false opinion concerning God is pernicious and dangerous; but if it be joined with trouble of spirit, as fear, scruple, or superstition are, it is like a wound with an inflammation, or a strain of a sinew with a contusion or contrition of the part, painful and unsafe; it puts on two actions when itself is driven: it urges reason and circumscribes it, and makes it pitiable, and ridiculous in its consequent follies; which, if we consider it, will sufficiently reprove the folly, and declare the danger.

Almost all ages of the world have observed many instances of fond persuasions and foolish practices proceeding from violent fears and scruples in matter of religion. Diomedon and many other captains were condemned to die, because after a great naval victory they pursued the flying enemies, and did not first bury their dead. But Chabrias, in the same case, first buried the dead, and by that time the enemy rallied, and returned, and beat his navy, and made his masters pay the price of their importune superstition: they feared where they should not, and where they did not, they should. From hence proceeds observation of signs and unlucky days; and the people did so, when the Gregorian account began, continuing to call those unlucky days which were so signified in their tradition or *erra pater*, although the day upon this account fell ten days sooner; and men were transported with many other trifling contingencies and little accidents; which, when they are once entertained by weakness, prevail upon their

own strength, and in sad natures and weak spirits have produced effects of great danger and sorrow. Aristodemas, king of the Messenians, in his war against the Spartans, prevented the sword of the enemy by a violence done upon himself, only because his dogs howled like wolves; and the soothsayers were afraid, because the briony grew up by the walls of his father's house: and Nicias, general of the Athenian forces, sat with his arms in his bosom, and suffered himself and forty thousand men tamely to fall by the insolent enemy, only because he was afraid of the labouring and eclipsed moon. When the marble statues in Rome did sweat, (as naturally they did against all rainy weather,) the augurs gave an alarm to the city; but if lightning struck the spire of the capitol, they thought the sum of affairs, and the commonwealth itself, was endangered. And this heathen folly hath stuck so close to the christians, that all the sermons of the church for sixteen hundred years have not cured them all: but the practices of weaker people, and the artifice of ruling priests, have superinduced many new ones. When Pope Eugenius sang mass at Rheims, and some few drops from the chalice were spilt upon the pavement, it was thought to foretell mischief, wars, and bloodshed to all christendom, though it was nothing but carelessness and mischance of the priest: and because Thomas Becket, archbishop of Canterbury, sang the mass of requiem upon the day he was reconciled to his prince, it was thought to foretell his own death by that religious office: and if men can listen to such whispers, and have not reason and observation enough to confute such trifles, they shall still be affrighted with the noise of birds, and every night-raven shall foretell evil as Micaiah to the king of Israel, and every old woman shall be a prophetess, and the events of human affairs, which should be managed by the conduct of counsel, of reason, and religion, shall succeed by chance, by the flight of birds, and the meeting with an evil eye, by the falling of the salt, or the decay of reason, of wisdom, and the just religion of a man.

To this may be reduced the observation of dreams, and fears commenced from the fancies of the night. For the superstitious man does not rest even when he sleeps; neither is he safe, because dreams usually are false, but he is afflicted for fear they should tell true. Living and waking men have one world in common, they use the same air and fire, and discourse by the same principles of logic and reason; but men that are asleep, have every one a world to himself, and strange perceptions; and the superstitious hath none at all: his reason sleeps, and his fears are waking; and all his rest, and his very securities, to the fearful man turn into affrights and insecure expectation of evils, that never shall happen; they make their rest uneasy and chargeable, and they still vex their weary soul, not considering there is no other sleep for sleep to rest in: and therefore, if the sleep be troublesome, the man's cares be without remedy till they be quite destroyed. Dreams follow the temper of the body, and commonly proceed from trouble or disease, business or care, an active head and a restless mind, from fear or hope, from wine or passion, from fulness or emptiness, from fantastic remembrances, or from some demon, good or bad: they are without rule and without reason, they are as contingent, as if a man should study to make a prophecy, and by saying ten thousand things may hit upon one true, which was therefore not foreknown, though it was forespoken; and they have no certainty, because they have no natural causality nor proportion to those effects, which many times they are said to foresignify. The dream of the yoke of an egg importeth gold (saith Artemidorus); and they that use to remember such fantastic idols, are afraid to lose a friend when they dream their teeth shake, when naturally it will rather signify a scurvy; for a natural indisposition and an imperfect sense of the beginning of a disease, may vex the fancy into a symbolical representation; for so the man that dreamed he swam against the stream of blood, had a pleurisy beginning in his side; and he that dreamt he dipped his foot into water, and that it was turned to a marble, was enticed into the fancy by a beginning dropsy; and if the events do answer in one instance, we become credulous in twenty. For want of reason we discourse ourselves into folly and weak observation, and give the devil power over us in those circumstances, in which we can least resist him. Ἐν ὄρφνῃ δραπέτης μέγα σθένει, "A thief is confident in the twilight;"[g] if you suffer impressions to be made upon you by dreams, the devil hath the reins in his own hands, and can tempt you by that, which will abuse you, when you can make no resistance. Dominica, the wife of Valens the emperor, dreamed that God threatened to take away her only son for her despiteful usage of St. Basil: the fear proceeding from this instance was safe and fortunate; but if she had dreamed in the behalf of a heretic, she might have been cozened into a false proposition upon a ground weaker than the discourse of a waking child. Let the grounds of our actions be noble, beginning upon reason, proceeding with prudence, measured by the common lines of men, and confident upon the expectation of a usual providence. Let us proceed from causes to effects, from natural means to ordinary events, and believe felicity not to be a chance but a choice; and evil to be the daughter of sin and the Divine anger, not of fortune and fancy; let us fear God, when we have made him angry, and not be afraid of him, when we heartily and laboriously do our duty; our fears are to be measured by open revelation and certain experience, by the threatenings of God and the sayings of wise men, and their limit is reverence, and godliness is their end; and then fear shall be a duty, and a rare instrument of many: in all other cases it is superstition or folly, it is sin or punishment, the ivy of religion, and the misery of an honest and a weak heart; and is to be cured only by reason and good company, a wise guide and a plain rule, a cheerful spirit and a contented mind, by joy in God according to the commandments, that is, "a rejoicing evermore."

[g] Eurip.

2. But, besides this superstitious fear, there is another fear directly criminal, and it is called "worldly fear," of which the Spirit of God hath said, "But the fearful and incredulous shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death;"[h] that is, such fears, which make men to fall in the time of persecution, those that dare not own their faith in the face of a tyrant, or in despite of an accursed law. For though it be lawful to be afraid in a storm, yet it is not lawful to leap into the sea; though we may be more careful for our fears, yet we must be faithful too; and we may fly from the persecution till it overtakes us; but when it does, we must not change our religion for our safety, or leave the robe of baptism in the hand of the tempter, and run away by all means. St. Athanasius for forty-six years did run and fight, he disputed with the Arians and fled from their officers; and he that flies, may be a man worth preserving, if he bears his faith along with him, and leaves nothing of his duty behind. But when duty and life cannot stand together, he that then flies a persecution by delivering up his soul, is one that hath no charity, no love to God, no trust in promises, no just estimation of the rewards of a noble contention. "Perfect love casts out fear" (saith the apostle); that is, he that loves God, will not fear to die for him, or for his sake to be poor. In this sense, no man can fear man and love God at the same time; and when St. Lawrence triumphed over Valerianus, St. Sebastian over Dioclesian, St. Vincentius over Dacianus, and the armies of martyrs over the proconsuls, accusers, and executioners, they showed their love to God by triumphing over fear, and "leading captivity captive," by the strength of their Captain, whose "garments were red from Bozrah."

3. But this fear is also tremulous and criminal, if it be a trouble from the apprehension of the mountains and difficulties of duty, and is called pusillanimity. For some see themselves encompassed with temptations, they observe their frequent falls, their perpetual returns from good purposes to weak performances, the daily mortifications that are necessary, the resisting natural appetites, and the laying violent hands upon the desires of flesh and blood, the uneasiness of their spirits, and their hard labours, and therefore this makes them afraid; and because they despair to run through the whole duty, in all its parts and periods, they think it as good not to begin at all, as after labour and expense to lose the jewel and the charges of their venture. St. Augustine compares such men to children and fantastic persons, affrighted with phantasms and spectres; "terribiles visu formæ," the sight seems full of horror; but touch them, and they are very nothing, the mere daughters of a sick brain and a weak heart, an infant experience and a trifling judgment: so are the illusions of a weak piety, or an unskilful confident soul: they fancy to see mountains of difficulty; but touch them, and they seem like clouds riding upon the wings of the wind, and put on shapes as we please to dream. He that denies to give alms for fear of being poor, or to entertain a disciple for fear of being suspected of the party, or to own a duty for fear of being put to venture for a crown; he that takes part of the intemperance, because he dares not displease the company, or in any sense fears the fears of the world, and not the fear of God,—this man enters into his portion of fear betimes, but it will not be finished to eternal ages. To fear the censures of men, when God is your judge; to fear their evil, when God is your defence; to fear death, when he is the entrance to life and felicity, is unreasonable and pernicious; but if you will turn your passion into duty, and joy, and security, fear to offend God, to enter voluntarily into temptation; fear the alluring face of lust, and the smooth entertainments of intemperance; fear the anger of God, when you have deserved it; and when you have recovered from the snare, then infinitely fear to return into that condition, in which whosoever dwells, is the heir of fear and eternal sorrow.

Thus far I have discoursed concerning good fear and bad, that is, filial and servile: they are both good, if by servile we intend initial, or the new beginning fear of penitents; a fear to offend God upon less perfect considerations: but servile fear is vicious, when it still retains the affection of slaves, and when its effects are hatred, weariness, displeasure, and want of charity: and of the same cognations are those fears, which are superstitious, and worldly.

But to the former sort of virtuous fear, some also add another, which they call angelical, that is, such a fear as the blessed angels have, who before God hide their faces, and tremble at his presence, and "fall down before his footstool," and are ministers of his anger and messengers of his mercy, and night and day worship him with the profoundest adoration. This is the same that is spoken of in the text: "Let us serve God with reverence and godly fear;" all holy fear partakes of the nature of this which divines call angelical, and it is expressed in acts of adoration, of vows and holy prayers, in hymns and psalms, in the eucharist and reverential addresses; and while it proceeds in the usual measures of common duty, it is but human; but as it rises to great degrees, and to perfection, it is angelical and Divine; and then it appertains to mystic theology, and therefore is to be considered in another place; but, for the present, that which will regularly concern all our duty, is this, that when the fear of God is the instrument of our duty, or God's worship, the greater it is, it is so much the better. It was an old proverbial saying among the Romans, "Religentem esse, oportet; religiosum, nefas;" "Every excess in the actions of religion is criminal;" they supposing, that, in the services of their gods, there might be too much. True it is, there may be too much of their undecent expressions; and in things indifferent, the very multitude is too much, and becomes an undecency: and if it be in its own nature undecent or disproportionable to the end, or the rules, or the analogy, of the religion, it will not stay for numbers to make it intolerable;

[h] Rev. xxi. 8.

but in the direct actions of glorifying God, in doing any thing of his commandments, or any thing which he commands, or counsels, or promises to reward, there can never be excess or superfluity: and therefore, in these cases, do as much as you can; take care that your expressions be prudent and safe, consisting with thy other duties; and for the passions or virtues themselves, let them pass from beginning to great progresses, from man to angel, from the imperfection of man to the perfections of the sons of God; and, whenever we go beyond the bounds of nature, and grow up with all the extension, and in the very commensuration of a full grace, we shall never go beyond the excellencies of God: for ornament may be too much, and turn to curiosity; cleanness may be changed into niceness; and civil compliance may become flattery; and mobility of tongue may rise into garrulity; and fame and honour may be great unto envy; and health itself, if it be athletic, may by its very excess become dangerous: but wisdom, and duty, and comeliness, and discipline, a good mind, and the fear of God, and doing honour to his holy name, can never exceed: but if they swell to great proportions, they pass through the measures of grace, and are united to felicity in the comprehensions of God, in the joys of an eternal glory.

SERMON X.

THE FLESH AND THE SPIRIT.

PART I.

The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.—Matt. xxvi. 41; latter part.

FROM the beginning of days, man hath been so cross to the Divine commandments, that in many cases there can be no reason given, why a man should choose some ways, or do some actions, but only because they are forbidden. When God bade the Israelites rise and go up against the Canaanites and possess the land, they would not stir; the men were Anakims, and the cities were impregnable; and there was a lion in the way: but, presently after, when God forbade them to go, they would and did go, though they died for it. I shall not need to instance in particulars, when the whole life of man is a perpetual contradiction; and the state of disobedience is called the "contradictions of sinners;" even the man in the gospel, that had two sons, they both crossed him, even he that obeyed him, and he that obeyed him not: for the one said he would, and did not; the other said he would not, and did; and so do we: we promise fair, and do nothing; and they that do best, are such as come out of darkness into light, such as said "they would not," and at last have better bethought themselves. And who can guess at any other reason, why men should refuse to be temperate? For he that refuseth the commandment, first does violence to the commandment, and puts on a preternatural appetite; he spoils his health and he spoils his understanding; he brings to himself a world of diseases and a healthless constitution; smart and sickly nights, a loathing stomach and a staring eye, a giddy brain and a swelled belly, gouts and dropsies, catarrhs and oppilations. If God should enjoin men to suffer all this, heaven and earth should have heard our complaints against unjust laws, and impossible commandments: for we complain already, even when God commands us to drink so long as it is good for us; this is one of the impossible laws: it is impossible for us to know when we are dry, or when we need drink; for if we do know, I am sure it is possible enough, not to lift up the wine to our heads. And when our blessed Saviour hath commanded us to love our enemies, we think we have so much reason against it, that God will easily excuse our disobedience in this case; and yet there are some enemies, whom God hath commanded us not to love, and those we dote on, we cherish and feast them, and, as St. Paul in another case, "upon our uncomely parts we bestow more abundant comeliness." For whereas our body itself is a servant to our soul, we make it the heir of all things, and treat it here already as if it were in majority; and make that, which at the best was but a weak friend, to become a strong enemy; and hence proceed the vices of the worst, and the follies and imperfections of the best: the spirit is either in slavery or in weakness, and when the flesh is not strong to mischief, it is weak to goodness; and even to the apostles our blessed Lord said, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

"The spirit," that is, ὁ ἔσω ἄνθρωπος, "the inward man," or the reasonable part of man, especially as helped by the Spirit of grace, *that* is willing; for it is the principle of all good actions, the ἐνεργητικὸν, "the power of working" is from the spirit; but the flesh is but a dull instrument, and a broken arm, in which there is a principle of life, but it moves uneasily; and the flesh is so weak, that in Scripture to be "in the flesh" signifies a state of weakness and infirmity: so the humiliation of Christ is expressed by being "in the flesh," θεὸς φανερωθεὶς ἐν σαρκὶ, "God manifested in the flesh;" and what St. Peter calls "put to death in the flesh," St. Paul calls "crucified through weakness;" and "ye know that through the infirmity of the flesh I preached unto you," said St. Paul: but here, flesh is not opposed to the spirit as a direct enemy, but as a weak servant: for if the flesh be powerful and opposite, the spirit stays not there:

—— veniunt ad candida tecta columbæ: (OVID.)

The old man and the new cannot dwell together; and therefore here, where the spirit inclining to good, well disposed, and apt to holy counsels, does inhabit in society with the flesh, it means only a weak and unapt nature, or a state of infant grace; for in both these, and in these only, the text is verified.

1. Therefore we are to consider the infirmities of the flesh naturally. 2. Its weakness in the first beginnings of the state of grace, its daily pretensions and temptations, its excuses and lessenings of duty. 3. What remedies there are in the spirit to cure the evils of nature. 4. How far the weakness of the flesh can consist with the Spirit of grace in well-grown christians. This is the sum of what I intend upon those words.

1. Our nature is too weak, in order to our duty and final interest, that at first it cannot move one step towards God, unless God, by his preventing grace, puts into it a new possibility.

> Οὐδὲν ἀκιδνότερον γαῖα τρέφει ἀνθρώποιο,
> Πάντων, ὅσσάτε γαῖαν ἐπιπνείετε καὶ ἕρπει. Od.

"There is nothing that creeps upon the earth, nothing that ever God made, weaker than man;" for God fitted horses and mules with strength, bees and pismires with sagacity, harts and hares with swiftness, birds with feathers and a light airy body; and they all know their times, and are fitted for their work, and regularly acquire the proper end of their creation; but man, that was designed to an immortal duration, and the fruition of God for ever, knows not how to obtain it; he is made upright to look up to heaven, but he knows no more how to purchase it than to climb it. Once, man went to make an ambitious tower to outreach the clouds, or the preternatural risings of the water, but could not do it; he cannot promise himself the daily bread of his necessity upon the stock of his own wit or industry; and for going to heaven, he was so far from doing that naturally, that as soon as ever he was made, he became the son of death, and he knew not how to get a pardon for eating of an apple against the Divine commandment: Καὶ ἦμεν φύσει τέκνα ὀργῆς, said the apostle: "By nature we are the sons of wrath," that is, we were born heirs of death, which death came upon us from God's anger for the sin of our first parents; or by nature, that is, ὄντως ἀληθῶς, "really," not by the help of fancy, and fiction of law, for so Œcumenius and Theophylact expound it;[1] but because it does not relate to the sin of Adam in its first intention, but to the evil state of sin, in which the Ephesians walked before their conversion; it signifies, that our nature of itself is a state of opposition to the Spirit of grace; it is privately opposed, that is, that there is nothing in it that can bring us to felicity; nothing but an obediential capacity; our flesh can become sanctified, as "the stones can become children unto Abraham," or as dead seed can become living corn; and so it is with us, that it is necessary God should make us a new creation, if he means to save us; he must take our hearts of stone away, and give us hearts of flesh; he must purge the old leaven, and make us a new conspersion; he must destroy the flesh, and must breathe into us "spiritum vitæ," the celestial breath of life, without which we can neither live, nor move, nor have our being. "No man can come unto me, (said Christ,) unless my Father draw him:" ὑπ' ἔρωτος ἁρπασθέντες οὐρανίου, καθάπερ οἱ βακχευόμενοι καὶ κορυβαντιῶντες ἐνθουσιάζουσι, μέχρις ἂν τὸ ποθούμενον ἴδωσι. "The Divine love must come upon us and snatch us" from our imperfection, enlighten our understanding, move and stir our affections, open the gates of heaven, turn our nature into grace, entirely forgive our former prevarications, take us by the hand, and lead us all along; and we only contribute our assent unto it, just as a child when he is tempted to learn to go, and called upon, and guided, and upheld, and constrained to put his feet to the ground, lest he feel the danger by the smart of a fall; just so is our nature and our state of flesh. God teaches us and invites us, he makes us willing, and then makes us able, he lends us helps, and guides our hands and feet; and all the way constrains us, but yet so as a reasonable creature can be constrained; that is, made willing with arguments, and new inducements, by a state of circumstances and conditional necessities: and as this is a great glorification of the free grace of God, and declares our manner of co-operation, so it represents our nature to be weak as a child, ignorant as infancy, helpless as an orphan, averse as an uninstructed person, in so great degrees that God is forced to bring us to a holy life, by arts great and many as the power and principles of the creation; with this only difference, that the subject matter and object of this new creation is a free agent: in the first it was purely obediential and passive; and as the passion of the first was an effect of the same power that reduced it to act, so the freedom of the second is given us in our nature by Him, that only can reduce it to act; for it is a freedom that cannot therefore choose, because it does not understand, nor taste, nor perceive, the things of God; and therefore must by God's grace be reduced to action, as at first the whole matter of the world was by God's almightiness; for so God "worketh in us to will and to do of his own good pleasure." But that I may instance in particulars: our natural weakness appears best in two things, even in the two great instances of temptations, pleasure, and pain; in both which the flesh is destroyed, if it be not helped by a mighty grace, as certainly as the canes do bow their heads before the breath of a mighty wind.

1. In pleasure we see it by the public miseries and follies of the world. An old Greek said well, Ὧν οὐδὲν ἀτεχνῶς ὑγιές ἐστιν, ἀλλά εἰσι τοῦ κέρδους ἅπαντες ἥττονες· "There is amongst men nothing perfect, because men carry themselves as persons that are less than money, servants of gain and interest; we are like the foolish poet that Horace tells of:

> Gestit enim nummum in loculos demittere; post hoc
> Securus, cadat, an recto stet fabula talo.

Let him but have money for rehearsing his comedy, he cares not whether you like it or no; and if a temptation of money comes strong and violent, you may as well tie a wild dog to quietness with the guts of a tender kid, as suppose that most men can do virtuously, when they may sin at a great price. Men avoid poverty, not only because it hath some inconveniences, for they are few and little;

[1] Ephes. ii. 3.

but because it is the nurse of virtue; they run from it as children from strict parents and tutors, from those that would confine them to reason and sober counsels, that would make them labour, that they may become pale and lean, that they may become wise: but because riches is attended by pride and lust, tyranny and oppression, and hath in its hand all that it hath in its heart; and sin waits upon wealth ready dressed and fit for action; therefore, in some temptations they confess, how little their souls are, they cannot stand that assault; but because this passion is the daughter of voluptuousness, and very often is but a servant-sin, ministering to sensual pleasures, the great weakness of the flesh is more seen in the matter of carnal crimes, lust and drunkenness. "Nemo enim se adsuefacit ad vitandum et ex animo evellendum ea, quæ molesta ei non sunt:" "Men are so in love with pleasure, that they cannot think of mortifying or crucifying their lust; we do violence to what we hate, not to what we love." But the weakness of the flesh, and the empire of lust, are visible in nothing so much, as in the captivity and folly of wise men. For you shall see some men fit to govern a province, sober in their counsels, wise in the conduct of their affairs, men of discourse and reason, fit to sit with princes, or to treat concerning peace and war, the fate of empires and the changes of the world; yet these men shall fall at the beauty of a woman, as a man dies at the blow of an angel, or gives up his breath at the sentence and decree of God. Was not Solomon glorious in all things, but when he bowed to Pharaoh's daughter, and then to devils? And is it not published by the sentence and observation of all the world, that the bravest men have been softened into effeminacy by the lisping charms and childish noises of women and imperfect persons? A fair slave bowed the neck of stout Polydamas, which was stiff and inflexible to the contentions of an enemy: and suppose a man set, like the brave boy of the king of Nicomedia, in the midst of temptation by a witty beauty, tied upon a bed with silk and pretty violences, courted with music and perfumes, with promises and easy postures, invited by opportunity and importunity, by rewards and impunity, by privacy and a guard; what would his nature do in this throng of evils and vile circumstances? The grace of God secured the young gentleman, and the spirit rode in triumph; but what can flesh do in such a day of danger? Is it not necessary, that we take in auxiliaries from reason and religion, from heaven and earth, from observation and experience, from hope and fear, and cease to be what we are, lest we become what we ought not? It is certain that in the cases of temptations to voluptuousness, a man is naturally, as the prophet said of Ephraim, "like a pigeon that hath no heart," no courage, no conduct, no resolution, no discourse, but falls as the water of Nilus when it comes to its cataracts,—it falls infinitely and without restraint: and if we consider, how many drunken meetings the sun sees every day, how many markets, and fairs, and clubs, that is, so many solemnities of drunkenness, are at this instant under the eye of heaven, that many nations are marked for intemperance, and that it is less noted because it is so popular, and universal, and that even in the midst of the glories of christianity there are so many persons drunk, or too full with meat, or greedy of lust; even now that the Spirit of God is given to us to make us sober, and temperate, and chaste,—we may well imagine, since all men have flesh, and all men have not the Spirit, the flesh is the parent of sin and death, and it can be nothing else.

2. And it is no otherwise, when we are tempted with pain. We are so impatient of pain, that nothing can reconcile us to it; not the laws of God, not the necessities of nature, not the society of all our kindred, and of all the world, not the interest of virtue, not the hopes of heaven; we will submit to pain upon no terms, but the basest and most dishonourable; for if sin brings us to pain, or affront, or sickness, we choose that, so it be in the retinue of a lust, and a base desire; but we accuse nature, and blaspheme God, we murmur and are impatient, when pain is sent to us, from him that ought to send it, and intends it as a mercy when it comes. But in the matter of afflictions and bodily sickness, we are so weak and broken, so uneasy and unapt to sufferance, that this alone is beyond the cure of the old philosophy. Many can endure poverty, and many can retire from shame and laugh at home, and very many can endure to be slaves; but when pain and sharpness are to be endured for the interests of virtue, we find but few martyrs; and they that are, suffer more within themselves by their fears and their temptations, by their uncertain purposes and violence to nature, than the hangman's sword; the martyrdom is within; and then he hath won his crown, not when he hath suffered the blow, but when he hath overcome his fears, and made his spirit conqueror. It was a sad instance of our infirmity, when of the forty martyrs of Cappadocia, set in a freezing lake, almost consummate, and an angel was reaching the crown, and placing it upon their brows, the flesh failed one of them, and drew the spirit after it; and the man was called off from his scene of noble contention, and died in warm water:

> ——— Odi artus, fragilemque hunc corporis usum
> Desertorem animi ———

We carry about us the body of death, and we bring evils upon ourselves by our follies, and then know not how to bear them; and the flesh forsakes the spirit. And, indeed, in sickness the infirmity is so very great, that God in a manner at that time hath reduced all religion into one virtue; patience with its appendages is the sum total of almost all our duty, that is proper to the days of sorrow; and we shall find it enough to entertain all our powers, and to employ all our aids; the counsels of wise men and the comforts of our friends, the advices of Scripture and the results of experience, the graces of God, and the strength of our own resolutions, are all then full of employments, and find it work enough to secure that one grace. For then it is, that a cloud is wrapped about our heads, and our reason stoops under sorrow; the soul is sad, and its instrument is

out of tune; the auxiliaries are disordered, and every thought sits heavily; then a comfort cannot make the body feel it, and the soul is not so abstracted to rejoice much without its partner; so that the proper joys of the soul,—such as are hope, and wise discourses, and satisfactions of reason, and the offices of religion,—are felt, just as we now perceive the joys of heaven, with so little relish, that it comes as news of a victory to a man upon the rack, or the birth of an heir to one condemned to die; he hears a story, which was made to delight him, but it came when he was dead to joy, and in all its capacities; and, therefore, sickness, though it be a good monitor, yet it is an ill stage to act some virtues in; and a good man cannot then do much; and therefore, he that is in the state of flesh and blood, can do nothing at all.

But in these considerations we find our nature in disadvantages; and a strong man may be overcome, when a stronger comes to disarm him; and pleasure and pain are the violences of choice and chance; but it is no better in any thing else: for nature is weak in all its strengths, and in its fights, at home and abroad, in its actions and passions; we love some things violently, and hate others unreasonably; any thing can fright us when we would be confident, and nothing can scare us when we ought to fear; the breaking of a glass puts us into a supreme anger, and we are dull and indifferent as a stoic when we see God dishonoured; we passionately desire our preservation, and yet we violently destroy ourselves, and will not be hindered; we cannot deny a friend, when he tempts us to sin and death, and yet we daily deny God, when he passionately invites us to life and health; we are greedy after money, and yet spend it vainly upon our lusts; we hate to see any man flattered but ourselves, and we can endure folly, if it be on our side, and a sin for our interest; we desire health, and yet we exchange it for wine and madness; we sink when a persecution comes, and yet cease not daily to persecute ourselves, doing mischiefs worse than the sword of tyrants, and great as the malice of a devil.

But to sum up all the evils that can be spoken of the infirmities of the flesh; the proper nature and habitudes of men are so foolish and impotent, so averse and peevish to all good, that a man's will is of itself only free to choose evils. Neither is it a contradiction to say liberty, and yet suppose it determined to one object only; because that one object is the thing we choose. For although God hath set life and death before us, fire and water, good and evil, and hath primarily put man into the hands of his own counsel, that he might have chosen good as well as evil; yet because he did not, but fell into an evil condition and corrupted manners, and grew in love with it, and infected all his children with vicious examples; and all nations of the world have contracted some universal stains, and "the thoughts of men's hearts are only evil, and that continually," and "there is not one that doth good, no, not one that sinneth not:" since (I say) all the world have sinned, we cannot suppose a liberty of indifferency to good and bad; it is impossible in such a liberty, that there should be no variety, that all should choose the same thing; but a liberty of complacency or delight we may suppose; that is so, that though naturally he might choose good, yet morally he is so determined with his love to evil, that good seldom comes into dispute; and a man runs to evil as he runs to meat or sleep; for why else should it be, that every one can teach a child to be proud, or to swear, to lie, or to do little spites to his playfellow, and can train him up to infant follies? But the severity of tutors, and the care of parents, discipline and watchfulness, art and diligence, all is too little to make him love but to say his prayers, or to do that, which becomes persons designed for honest purposes, and his malice shall outrun his years; he shall be a man in villany, before he is by law capable of choice or inheritance; and this indisposition lasts upon us for ever; even as long as we live, just in the same degrees as flesh and blood do rule us: Σώματος μὲν γὰρ ἀῤῥωστίαν ἰᾶται τέχνη, ψυχῆς δὲ νόσημα ἰατρὸς ἰᾶται θάνατος· "Art of physicians can cure the evils of the body, but this strange propensity to evil nothing can cure but death;" the grace of God eases the malignity here, but it cannot be cured but by glory: that is, this freedom of delight, or perfect unabated election of evil, which is consequent to the evil manners of the world, although it be lessened by the intermedial state of grace, yet it is not cured until it be changed into its quite contrary; but as it is in heaven, all that is happy, and glorious, and free, yet can choose nothing but the love of God, and excellent things, because God fills all the capacities of saints, and there is nothing without him that hath any degrees of amiability; so in the state of nature, of flesh and blood; there is so much ignorance of spiritual excellencies, and so much proportion to sensual objects, which in most instances and in many degrees are prohibited, that, as men naturally know no good, but to please a wild, undetermined, infinite appetite, so they will nothing else but what is good in their limit and proportion; and it is with us as it was with the she-goat that suckled the wolf's whelp; he grew up by his nurse's milk, and at last having forgot his foster-mother's kindness, ate that udder which gave him drink and nourishment:

Improbitas nullo flectitur obsequio;

For no kindness will cure an ill nature and a base disposition: so are we in the first constitution of our nature; so perfectly given to natural vices, that by degrees we degenerate into unnatural, and no education or power of art can make us choose wisely or honestly: Ἐγὼ δὲ μίαν εὐγένειαν οἶδα τὴν ἀρετὴν, said Phalaris; "There is no good nature but only virtue:" till we are new created, we are wolves and serpents, free and delighted in the choice of evil, but stones and iron to all excellent things and purposes.

2. Next I am to consider the weakness of the flesh, even when the state is changed, in the beginning of the state of grace: for many persons, as

soon as the grace of God rises in their hearts, are all on fire, and inflamed; it is with them as Homer said of the Sirian star.

Λαμπρότατος μὲν ὅγ' ἐστὶ, κακὸν δὲ τὸ σῆμα τέτυκται,
Καί τε φέρει πολλὸν πυρετὸν δειλοῖσι βροτοῖσιν. Il.

"It shines finely, and brings fevers;" splendour and zeal are the effects of the first grace, and sometimes the first turns into pride, and the second into uncharitableness; and either by too dull and slow motions, or by too violent and unequal, the flesh will make pretences, and too often prevail upon the spirit, even after the grace of God hath set up its banners in our hearts.

1. In some dispositions that are forward and apt, busy and unquiet, when the grace of God hath taken possession, and begins to give laws, it seems so pleasant and gay to their undiscerning spirits to be delivered from the sottishness of lust, and the follies of drunkenness, that, reflecting upon the change, they begin to love themselves too well, and take delight in the wisdom of the change, and the reasonableness of the new life; and then they, hating their own follies, begin to despise them that dwell below: it was the trick of the old philosophers whom Aristophanes thus describes, τοὺς ἀλαζόνας, τοὺς ὠχριῶντας, τοὺς ἀνυποδήτους λέγεις· "pale, and barefoot, and proud;" that is, persons singular in their habit, eminent in their institution, proud and pleased in their persons, and despisers of them that are less glorious in their virtue than themselves; and for this very thing our blessed Saviour remarks the Pharisees, they were severe and fantastical advancers of themselves, and judges of their neighbours; and here, when they have mortified corporal vices, such which are scandalous and punishable by men, they keep the spiritual, and those that are only discernible by God: these men do but change their sin from scandal to danger, and that they may sin more safely, they sin more spiritually.

2. Sometimes the passions of the flesh spoil the changes of the spirit, by natural excesses, and disproportion of degrees; it mingles violence with industry, and fury with zeal, and uncharitableness with reproof, and censuring with discipline, and violence with desires, and immortifications in all the appetites and prosecutions of the soul. Some think it is enough in all instances, if they pray hugely and fervently; and that it is religion, impatiently to desire a victory over our enemies, or the life of a child, or an heir to be born; they call it holy, so they desire it in prayer; that if they reprove a vicious person, they may say what they list, and be as angry as they please; that when they demand but reason, they may enforce it by all means; that when they exact duty of their children, they may be imperious and without limit; that if they design a good end, they may prosecute it by all instruments; that when they give God thanks for blessings, they may value the things as high as they list, though their persons come into a share of the honour; here the spirit is willing and holy, but the flesh creeps too busily, and insinuates into the substance of good actions, and spoils them by unhandsome circumstances; and then the prayer is spoiled for want of prudence or conformity to God's will, and discipline and government are imbittered by an angry spirit; and the father's authority turns into an uneasy load; by being thrust like an unequal burden to one side, without allowing equal measures to the other: and if we consider it wisely, we shall find, that in many good actions the flesh is the bigger ingredient, and we betray our weak constitutions, even when we do justice, or charity; and many men pray in the flesh, when they pretend they pray by the Spirit.

3. In the first changes and weak progresses of our spiritual life, we find a long weakness upon us, because we are long before we begin, and the flesh was powerful, and its habits strong, and it will mingle indirect pretences with all the actions of the spirit; if we mean to pray, the flesh thrusts in thoughts of the world; and our tongue speaks one thing, and our heart means another; and we are hardly brought to say our prayers, or to undertake a fasting-day, or to celebrate a communion: and if we remember all these holy actions, and that we have many opportunities of doing them all, and yet do them very seldom, and then very coldly, it will be found at the foot of the account, that our flesh and our natural weakness prevail oftener than our spiritual strengths: οἱ πολὺν χρόνον δεθέντες, κἂν λυθεῖεν, οὐ δυνάμενοι βαδίζειν, ὑποσκελίζονται· "they are bound long in chains, feel such a lameness, in the first restitutions of their liberty," ὑπὸ τῆς πολυχρονίου τῶν δεσμῶν συνηθείας, "by reason of the long-accustomed chain and pressure," that they may stay till nature hath set them free, and the disease be taken off as well as the chain; and when the soul is got free from her actual pressure of sins, still the wound remains, and a long habitude, and longing after it, a looking back: and upon the presenting the old object, the same company, or the remembrance of the delight, the fancy strikes, and the heart fails, and the temptations return and stand dressed in form and circumstances, and ten to one but the man dies again.

4. Some men are wise and know their weaknesses, and to prevent their startings back will make fierce and strong resolutions, and bind up their gaps with thorns, and make a new hedge about their spirits; and what then? This shows, indeed, that "the spirit is willing;" but the storm arises, and winds blow, and rain descends, and presently the earth trembles, and the whole fabric falls into ruin and disorder. A resolution (such as we usually make) is nothing but a little trench, which every child can step over; and there is no civil man that commits a willing sin, but he does it against his resolution; and what christian lives, that will not say and think that he hath repented in some degree; and yet still they commit sin, that is, they break all their holy purposes as readily as they lose a dream; and so great is our weakness, that to most men the strength of a resolution is just such a restraint as he suffers, who is imprisoned in a curtain, and secured with doors and bars of the finest linen: for though "the spirit be strong" to resolve, "the flesh is weak" to keep it.

5. But when they have felt their follies, and see the linen veil rent, some, that are desirous to please God, back their resolutions with vows, and then the spirit is fortified, and the flesh may tempt and call, but the soul cannot come forth, and therefore it triumphs, and acts its interest easily and certainly; and then the flesh is mortified: it may be so. But do not many of us inquire after a vow? And if we consider, it may be it was rash, or it was an impossible matter, or without just consideration and weighing of circumstances, or the case is altered, and there is a new emergent necessity, or a vow is no more than a resolution made in matter of duty; both are made for God, and in his eye and witness; or if nothing will do it, men grow sad and weary, and despair, and are impatient, and bite the knot in pieces with their teeth, which they cannot by disputing, and the arts of the tongue. A vow will not secure our duty, because it is not stronger than our appetite; and the spirit of man is weaker than the habits and superinduced nature of the flesh: but by little and little it falls off, like the finest thread twisted upon the traces of a chariot, it cannot hold long.

6. Beyond all this, some choose excellent guides, and stand within the restraints of modesty, and a severe monitor; and the Spirit of God hath put a veil upon our spirits; and by modesty in women and young persons, by reputation in the more aged, and by honour in the more noble, and by conscience in all, hath fortified the spirit of man, that men dare not prevaricate their duty, though they be tempted strongly, and invited perpetually; and this is a partition-wall, that separates the spirit from the flesh, and keeps it in its proper strengths and retirements. But here the spirit of man, for all that it is assisted, strongly breaks from the enclosure, and runs into societies of flesh, and sometimes despises reputation, and sometimes supplies it with little arts of flattery and self-love; and is modest as long as it can be secret; and when it is discovered, it grows impudent; and a man shelters himself in crowds and heaps of sinners, and believes that it is no worse with him than with other mighty criminals, and public persons, who bring sin into credit among fools and vicious persons; or else men take false measures of fame or public honesty, and the world being broken into so many parts of disunion, and agreeing in nothing but in confederate vice, and grown so remiss in governments, and severe accounts, every thing is left so loose, that honour and public fame, modesty and shame, are now so slender guards to the spirit, that the flesh breaks in, and makes most men more bold against God than against men, and against the laws of religion than of the commonwealth.

7. When the spirit is made willing by the grace of God, the flesh interposes in deceptions and false principles. If you tempt some man to a notorious sin, as to rebellion, to deceive his trust, or to be drunk, he will answer, he had rather die than do it: but put the sin civilly to him, and let it be disguised with little excuses, such things which indeed are trifles, but yet they are colours fair enough to make a weak pretence, and the spirit yields instantly. Most men choose the sin, if it be once disputable whether it be a sin or no. If they can but make an excuse, or a colour, so that it shall not rudely dash against the conscience with an open professed name of sin, they suffer the temptation to do its worst. If you tempt a man, you must tell him it is no sin, or it is excusable: this is not rebellion, but necessity, and self-defence; it is not against my allegiance, but is a performing of my trust; I do it for my friend, not against my superior; I do it for a good end, and for his advantage: this is not drunkenness, but free mirth, and fair society; it is refreshment, and entertainment of some supernumerary hours, but it is not a throwing away my time, or neglecting a day of salvation; and if there be any thing more to say for it, though it be no more than Adam's fig-leaves, or the excuses of children and truants, it shall be enough to make the flesh prevail, and the spirit not to be troubled: for so great is our folly, that the flesh always carries the cause, if the spirit can be cozened.

8. The flesh is so mingled with the spirit, that we are forced to make distinctions in our appetite, to reconcile our affections to God and religion, lest it be impossible to do our duty; we weep for our sins, but we weep more for the death of our dearest friends, or other temporal sadnesses; we say we had rather die than lose our faith, and yet we do not live according to it; we lose our estates, and are impatient; we lose our virtue, and bear it well enough; and what virtue is so great, as more to be troubled for having sinned, than for being ashamed, and beggared, and condemned to die? Here we are forced to a distinction: there is a valuation of price, and a valuation of sense: or the spirit hath one rate of things, and the flesh hath another; and what we believe the greatest evil, does not always cause to us the greatest trouble; which shows plainly, that we are imperfect carnal persons, and the flesh will in some measure prevail over the spirit; because we will suffer it in too many instances, and cannot help it in all.

9. The spirit is abated and interrupted by the flesh, because the flesh pretends it is not able to do those ministries which are appointed in order to religion; we are not able to fast; or, if we watch, it breeds gouts and catarrhs; or, charity is a grace too expensive, our necessities are too big to do it; or, we cannot suffer pain; and sorrow breeds death, and therefore our repentances must be more gentle, and we must support ourselves in all our calamities: for we cannot bear our crosses without a freer refreshment, and this freedom passes on to license; and many melancholy persons drown their sorrows in sin and forgetfulness, as if sin were more tolerable than sorrow, and the anger of God an easier load than a temporal care: here the flesh betrays its weakness and its follies: for the flesh complains too soon, and the spirit of some men, like Adam being too fond of his Eve, attends to all its murmurs and temptations; and yet the flesh is able to bear far more than is required of it in usual duties. Custom of suffering will make us endure

much, and fear will make us suffer more, and necessity makes us suffer any thing; and lust and desire make us to endure more than God is willing we should; and yet we are nice, and tender, and indulgent to our weaknesses, till our weaknesses grow too strong for us. And what shall we do to secure our duty, and to be delivered of ourselves, that the body of death, which we bear about us, may not destroy the life of the spirit?

I have all this while complained, and you see not without cause; I shall afterward tell you the remedies for all this evil. In the mean time, let us have but mean opinions of ourselves; let us watch every thing of ourselves as of suspected persons, and magnify the grace of God, and be humbled for our stock and spring of follies, and let us look up to him, who is the Fountain of grace and spiritual strengths:

Ζεῦ βασιλεῦ, τὰ μὲν ἐσθλὰ καὶ εὐχομένοις καὶ ἀνεύκτοις
Ἄμμι δίδου· τὰ δὲ λυγρὰ καὶ εὐχομένων ἀπερύκοις·

and pray that God would give us what we ask, and what we ask not; for we want more helps than we understand, and we are nearer to evil than we perceive, and we bear sin and death about us, and are in love with it; and nothing comes from us but false principles, and silly propositions, and weak discourses, and startings from our holy purposes, and care of our bodies and of our palates, and the lust of the lower belly; these are the employment of our lives; but if we design to live happily, and in a better place, it must be otherwise with us; we must become new creatures; and have another definition, and have new strengths, which we can only derive from God, whose "grace is sufficient for us," and strong enough to prevail over all our follies and infirmities.

SERMON XI.

PART II.

3. If it be possible to cure an evil nature, we must inquire after remedies for all this mischief. In order to which I shall consider; 1. That since it is our flesh and blood that is the principle of mischief, we must not think to have it cured by washings and light medicaments; the physician that went to cure the hectic with quicksilver and fasting-spittle, did his patient no good, but himself became a proverb; and he that by easy prayers and a seldom fast, by the scattering of a little alms, and the issues of some more natural virtue, thinks to cure his evil nature, does fortify his indisposition, as a stick is hardened by a little fire, which by a great one is devoured. "Quanto satius est mentem potius eluere, quæ malis cupiditatibus sordidatur, et, uno virtutis ac fidei lavacro, universa vitia depellere?" [k] "Better it is by an entire body of virtue, by a living and active faith, to cleanse the mind from every vice, and to take off all superinduced habits of sin;" "Quod qui fecerit, quamlibet inquinatum ac sordidum corpus gerat, satis purus est." If we take this course, although our body is foul, and our affections unquiet, and our rest discomposed, yet we shall be masters of our resolution, and clean from habitual sins, and so cure our evil nature. For our nature was not made evil but by ourselves; but yet we are naturally evil, that is, by a superinduced nature; just as drunkards and intemperate persons have made it necessary to drink extremely, and their nature requires it, and it is health to them; they die without it, because they have made themselves a new constitution, and another nature, but much worse than that which God made; their sin made this new nature; and this new nature makes sin necessary and unavoidable: so it is in all other instances; our nature is evil, because we have spoiled it; and, therefore, the removing the sin which we have brought in, is the way to cure our nature: for this evil nature is not a thing which we cannot avoid; we made it, and, therefore, we must help it; but as in the superinducing this evil nature, we were thrust forward by the world and the devil, by all objects from without, and weakness from within; so in the curing it, we are to be helped by God and his most holy Spirit.

Βαθεῖαν ἄλοκα διὰ φρενὸς καρπούμενος,
Ἀφ' ἧς τὰ κεδνὰ βλαστάνει βουλεύματα.—Æsch.

We must have a new nature put into us, which must be the principle of new counsels and better purposes, of holy actions and great devotion; and this nature is derived from God, and is a grace and a favour of heaven. The same Spirit, that caused the holy Jesus to be born after a new and strange manner, must also descend upon us, and cause us to be born again, and to begin a new life upon the stock of a new nature. Ἀπ' ἐκείνου ἤρξατο θεία καὶ ἀνθρωπίνη συννυφαίνεσθαι φύσις, ἵν' ἡ ἀνθρωπίνη τῇ πρὸς τὸ θειότερον κοινωνίᾳ γένηται θεία, said Origen; "From him it first began that a Divine and human nature were weaved together, that the human nature by communication with the celestial may also become Divine;" οὐκ ἐν μόνῳ τῷ Ἰησοῦ, ἀλλὰ ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς μετὰ τὸ πιστεύειν ἀναλαμβάνουσι βίον, ὃν Ἰησοῦς ἐδίδαξεν; "not only in Jesus, but in all that first believe in him, and then obey him, living such a life as Jesus taught:" and this is the sum total of the whole design; as we have lived to the flesh, so we must hereafter live to the Spirit: as our nature hath been flesh, not only in its original, but in habits and affection; so our nature must be spirit in habit and choice, in design and effectual prosecutions; for nothing can cure our old death, but this new birth: and this is the recovery of our nature, and the restitution of our hopes, and, therefore, the greatest joy of mankind.

——— φίλον μὲν φέγγος ἡλίου τὸ δὲ,
Καλλὸν δὲ πόντου χεῦμ' ἰδεῖν εὐήνεμον,
Γῆ τ' ἐρινὸν θάλλουσα, πλούσιόν θ' ὕδωρ.—Euripides.

"It is a fine thing to see the light of the sun, and

[k] Lactantius.

it is pleasant to see the storm allayed and turned into a smooth sea and a fresh gale; our eyes are pleased to see the earth begin to live, and to produce her little issues with parti-coloured coats:"

——'Αλλ' οὐδὲν οὕτω λαμπρὸν,
'Ως τοῖς ἀπάτῃ καὶ τόθῳ δεδηγμένοις
Παίδων νεογνῶν ἐν δόμοις ἰδεῖν φάος.

"Nothing is so beauteous as to see a new birth in a childless family;" and it is excellent to hear a man discourse the hidden things of nature, and unriddle the perplexities of human notices and mistakes; it is comely to see a wise man sit in the gates of the city, and give right judgment in difficult causes: but all this is nothing to the excellencies of a new birth; to see the old man carried forth to funeral with the solemn tears of repentance, and buried in the grave of Jesus, and in his place a new creation to arise, a new heart, and a new understanding, and new affections, and excellent appetites: for nothing less than this can cure all the old distempers.

2. Our life, and all our discourses, and every observation, and a state of reason, and a union of sober counsels, are too little to cure a peevish spirit, and a weak reasoning, and silly principles, and accursed habits, and evil examples, and perverse affections, and a whole body of sin and death. It was well said in the comedy:

Nunquam ita quisquam bene subducta ratione ad vitam fuit,
Quin ætas, usus semper aliquid apportet novi,
Aliquid moneat; ut illa, quæ scire credas, nescias,
Et quæ tibi putas prima, in experiundo repudies.

Men at first think themselves wise, and are always most confident when they have the least reason; and to-morrow they begin to perceive yesterday's folly, and yet they are not wise; but as the little embryo, in the natural sheet and lap of its mother, first distinguishes into a little knot, and that in time will be the heart, and then into a bigger bundle, which after some days' abode grows into two little spots, and they, if cherished by nature, will become eyes, and each part by order commences into weak principles, and is preserved with nature's greatest curiosity; that it may assist first to distinction, then to order, next to usefulness, and from thence to strength, till it arrive at beauty, and a perfect creature; so are the necessities, and so are the discourses of men; we first learn the principles of reason, which break obscurely through a cloud, and bring a little light, and then we discern a folly, and by little and little leave it, till that enlightens the next corner of the soul: and then there is a new discovery; but the soul is still in infancy and childish follies; and every day does but the work of one day; but therefore art and use, experience and reason, although they do something, yet they cannot do enough, there must be something else: but this is to be wrought by a new principle, that is, by the Spirit of grace: nature and reason alone cannot do it, and therefore the proper cure is to be wrought by those general means of inviting and cherishing, of getting and entertaining God's Spirit, which when we have observed, we may account ourselves sufficiently instructed towards the repair of our breaches, and reformation of our evil nature.

1. The first great instrument of changing our whole nature into the state of grace, flesh into the spirit, is a firm belief, and a perfect assent to, and hearty entertainment of, the promises of the gospel; for Holy Scripture speaks great words concerning faith. "It quenches the fiery darts of the devil," saith St. Paul;[m] "it overcomes the world," saith St. John;[n] it is the fruit of the Spirit, and the parent of love; it is obedience, and it is humility, and it is a shield, and it is a breastplate, and a work, and a mystery, it is a fight, and it is a victory, it is pleasing God, and it is that "whereby the just do live;" by "faith we are purified," and by "faith we are sanctified," and by "faith we are justified," and by "faith we are saved:" by this "we have access to the throne of grace," and by it our prayers shall prevail "for the sick," by it we stand, and by it we walk, and by this "Christ dwells in our hearts," and by it all the miracles of the church have been done: it gives great patience to suffer, and great confidence to hope, and great strength to do, and infallible certainty to enjoy the end of all our faith, and satisfaction of all our hopes, and the reward of all our labours, even "the most mighty prize of our high calling:" and if faith be such a magazine of spiritual excellencies, of such universal efficacy, nothing can be a greater antidote against the venom of a corrupted nature. But then this is not a grace seated finally in the understanding, but the principle that is designed to, and actually productive of, a holy life; it is not only a believing the propositions of Scripture as we believe a proposition in the metaphysics, concerning which a man is never the honester whether it be true or false; but it is a belief of things that concern us infinitely, things so great that if they be so true as great, no man that hath his reason and can discourse, that can think and choose, that can desire and work towards an end, can possibly neglect. The greatest object of our faith, to which all other articles do minister, is resurrection of our bodies and souls to eternal life, and glories infinite. Now is it possible that a man that believes this, and that he may obtain it for himself, and that it was prepared for him, and that God desires to give it him,—that he can neglect and despise it, and not work for it, and perform such easy conditions upon which it may be obtained? Are not most men of the world made miserable at a less price than a thousand pounds a year? Do not all the usurers and merchants, all tradesmen and labourers under the sun, toil and care, labour and contrive, venture and plot, for a little money; and no man gets, and scarce any man desires, so much of it as he can lay upon three acres of ground; not so much as will fill a great house. And is this sum, that is such a trifle, such a poor limited heap of dirt, the reward of all the labour, and the end of all the care, and the design of all the malice, and the recompence of all the wars, of the world; and can it be imaginable, that life

[m] Ephes. vi. 16.

[n] 1 John v. 4.

itself, and a long life, an eternal and happy life, a kingdom, a perfect kingdom and glorious, that shall never have ending, nor ever shall be abated with rebellion, or fears, or sorrow, or care; that such a kingdom should not be worth the praying for, and quitting of an idle company, and a foolish humour, or a little drink, or a vicious silly woman, for it? Surely men believe no such thing: they do not rely upon those fine stories that are read in books, and published by preachers, and allowed by the laws of all the world. If they did, why do they choose intemperance and a fever, lust and shame, rebellion and danger, pride and a fall, sacrilege and a curse, gain and passion, before humility and safety, religion and a constant joy, devotion and peace of conscience, justice and a quiet dwelling, charity and a blessing; and, at the end of all this, a kingdom more glorious than all the beauties the sun did ever see. "Fides est velut quoddam æternitatis exemplar, præterita simul et præsentia et futura sinu quodam vastissimo comprehendit, ut nihil ei prætereat, nil pereat, præeat nihil;" now, "Faith is a certain image of eternity, all things are present to it, things past and things to come," are all so before the eyes of faith, that he in whose eye that candle is enkindled, beholds heaven as present, and sees how blessed a thing it is to die in God's favour, and to be chimed to our grave with the music of a good conscience. Faith converses with the angels, and antedates the hymns of glory: every man that hath this grace, is as certain that there are glories for him, if he perseveres in duty, as if he had heard and sung the thanksgiving-song for the blessed sentence of doomsday. And therefore it is no matter, if these things are separate and distant objects; none but children and fools are taken with the present trifle, and neglect a distant blessing, of which they have credible and believed notices. Did the merchant see the pearls and the wealth he designed to get in the trade of twenty years? And is it possible that a child should, when he learns the first rudiments of grammar know, what excellent things there are in learning, whither he designs his labour and his hopes? We labour for that which is uncertain, and distant, and believed, and hoped for with many allays, and seen with diminution, and a troubled ray; and what excuse can there be that we do not labour for that, which is told us by God, and preached by his only Son, and confirmed by miracles, and which Christ himself died to purchase, and millions of martyrs died to witness, and which we see good men and wise believe with an assent stronger than their evidence, and which they do believe because they do love, and love because they do believe? There is nothing to be said, but that faith which did enlighten the blind, and cleanse the lepers, and washed the soul of the Æthiopian; that faith that cures the sick, and strengthens the paralytic, and baptizes the catechumens, and justifies the faithful, and repairs the penitent, and confirms the just, and crowns the martyrs; that faith, if it be true and proper, christian and alive, active and effective in us, is sufficient to appease the storm of our passions, and to instruct all our ignorances, and to make us wise unto salvation; it will, if we let it do its first intention, chastise our errors, and discover our follies; it will make us ashamed of trifling interests and violent prosecutions, of false principles and the evil disguises of the world; and then our nature will return to the innocence and excellency in which God first estated it; that is, our flesh will be a servant of the soul, and the soul a servant to the spirit; and then, because faith makes heaven to be the end of our desires, and God the object of our love and worshippings, and the Scripture the rule of our actions, and Christ our lord and master, and the Holy Spirit our mighty assistant and our counsellor, all the little uglinesses of the world and the follies of the flesh, will be uneasy and unsavoury, unreasonable and a load; and then that grace, the grace of faith, that lays hold upon the holy Trinity, although it cannot understand it, and beholds heaven before it can possess it, shall also correct our weaknesses, and master all our aversations: and though we cannot in this world be perfect masters, and triumphant persons, yet we be conquerors and more; that is, conquerors of the direct hostility, and sure of a crown to be revealed in its due time.

2. The second great remedy of our evil nature, and of the loads of the flesh, is devotion, or a state of prayer and intercourse with God. For the gift of the Spirit of God, which is the great antidote of our evil natures, is properly and expressly promised to prayer: "If you, who are evil, give good things to your children that ask you, how much more shall your Father from heaven give his Holy Spirit to them that ask it?" That which in St. Luke[o] is called ἅγιον πνεῦμα, "the Holy Spirit," is called in St. Matthew, τὰ ἀγαθὰ,[p] "good things;" that is, the Holy Spirit is all that good that we shall need towards our pardon, and our sanctification, and our glory, and this is promised to prayer; to this purpose Christ taught us the Lord's Prayer, by which we are sufficiently instructed in obtaining this magazine of holy and useful things. But prayer is but one part of devotion, and though of admirable efficacy towards the obtaining this excellent promise, yet it is to be assisted by the other parts of devotion, to make it a perfect remedy to our great evil. He that would secure his evil nature, must be a devout person; and he that is devout, besides that he prays frequently, he delights in it as it is a conversation with God; he rejoices in God, and esteems him the light of his eyes, and the support of his confidence, the object of his love, and the desire of his heart; the man is uneasy but when he does God service; and his soul is at peace and rest, when he does what may be accepted: and this is that which the apostle counsels and gives in precept; "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, Rejoice;"[q] that is, as the Levites were appointed to rejoice, because God was their portion in tithes and offerings, so now that in the spiritual sense God is our portion, we should rejoice in him, and make him our inheritance, and his service our employment, and the peace of conscience to be our rest, and then

[o] Luke xi. 13. [p] Matt. vii. 11. [q] Phil. iv. 4.

it is impossible we should be any longer slaves to sin, and afflicted by the baser employments of the flesh, or carry burdens for the devil; and therefore the scholiast upon Juvenal observed well, "Nullum malum gaudium est," "No true joy can be evil;" and therefore it was improperly said of Virgil, "Mala gaudia mentis," calling lust and wild desires, "the evil joys of the mind:" "Gaudium enim nisi sapienti non contingere," said Seneca; "None but a wise and a good man can truly rejoice;" the evil laugh loud, and sigh deeply, they drink drunk, and forget their sorrows, and all the joys of evil men are only arts of forgetfulness, devices to cover their sorrow, and make them not see their death, and its affrighting circumstances; but the heart never can rejoice and be secure, be pleased and be at rest, but when it dwells with holiness: the joys that come from thence are safe and great, unchangeable and unabated, healthful and holy; and this is true joy: and this is that which can cure all the little images of pleasure and temptation, which debauch our nature, and make it dwell with hospitals, in the region of diseases and evil sorrows. St. Gregory well observed the difference, saying that "Corporeal pleasures, when we have them not, enkindle a flame and a burning desire in the heart, and make a man very miserable before he tastes them; the appetite to them is like the thirst and desires of a fever;" the pleasure of drinking will not pay for the pain of the desire; and "when they are enjoyed, they instantly breed satiety and loathing. But spiritual rejoicings and delights are loathed by them that have them not, and despised by them that never felt them;" but when they are once tasted, they increase the appetite and swell into bigger capacities; and the more they are eaten, the more they are desired; and cannot become a weariness, because they satisfy all the way, and only increase the desire, because themselves grow bigger and more amiable. And therefore when this new and stranger appetite, and consequent joy, arises in the heart of man, it so fills the faculties, that there is no gust, no desire left for toads and vipers, for hemlock and the deadly nightshade.

> Sirenas, hilarem navigantium pœnam,
> Blandasque mortes, gaudiumque crudele,
> Quas nemo quondam deserebat auditas,
> Prudens Ulysses dicitur reliquisse.—MART.

Then a man can hear the music of songs and dances, and think them to be heathenish noises; and if he be engaged in the society of a woman-singer, he can be as unconcerned as a marble statue; he can be at a feast and not be defiled, he can pass through theatres as through a street: then he can look on money as his servant, "nec distant æra lupinis;" he can use it as the Greeks did their sharp coins, to cast accounts withal, and not from thence take the accounts of his wealth or his felicity. If you can once obtain but to delight in prayer, and to long for the day of a communion, and to be pleased with holy meditation, and to desire God's grace with great passion, and an appetite keen as a wolf upon the void plains of the north; if you can delight in God's love, and consider concerning his providence, and busy yourselves in the pursuit of the affairs of his kingdom, then you have the grace of devotion, and your evil nature shall be cured.

3. Because this great cure is to be wrought by the Spirit of God, which is a new nature in us, we must endeavour to abstain from those things, which, by a special malignity, are directly opposite to the spirit of reason and the Spirit of grace; and those are drunkenness and lust. He that is full of wine, cannot be full of the Spirit of God: St. Paul noteth the hostility; "Be not drunk with wine, but be filled with the Spirit:"[r] a man that is a drunkard, does *perire cito*, "he perishes quickly," his temptations that come to him, make but short work with him; a drunkard is ἄσωτος; our English well expresses it, it is "a sottishness," and the man is ἀκόλαστος, ἄχρειος, ἄχρηστος, 'a useless, senseless person:" εἴτ' οὐχ' ἁπάντων ἐστὶ τὸ μεθύειν κακὸν μέγιστον ἀνθρώποῖσι καὶ βλαβερώτατον; "Of all the evils of the world, nothing is worse to a man's self, nothing is more harmful than this;" ἀποστεροῦντα ἑαυτὸν τοῦ φρονεῖν, ὃ μέγιστον ἡμῖν ἀγαθὸν ἔχει ἡ φύσις, said Crobylus; "it deprives a wise man of his counsel and his understanding." Now, because it is the greatest good that nature hath, that which takes it away must needs be our greatest enemy. Nature is weak enough of itself, but drunkenness takes from it all the little strengths that are left to it, and destroys the Spirit; and the man can neither have the strengths of nature, nor the strengths of grace; and how then can the man do wisely or virtuously? "Spiritus sanctus amat sicca corda," "The Spirit of God loves dry hearts," said the christian proverb; and Josephus said of Samson, Δῆλον ἦν προφητεύσων ἀπὸ τῆς περὶ τὴν διαίταν σωφροσύνης, "It appears he was a prophet, or a man full of the Spirit, by the temperance of his diet;" and now that all the people are holy unto the Lord, they must ἀοίνους ἁγνείας ἔχειν, as Plutarch said of their consecrated persons; they must have "dry and sober purities:" for by this means their reason is useful, and their passions not violent, and their discourse united, and the precious things of their memory at hand, and they can pray and read, and they can meditate and practise, and then they can learn where their natural weaknesses are most urgent, and how they can be tempted, and can secure their aids accordingly; but how is it possible that such a man should cure all the evils of his nature, and repair the breaches of Adam's sin, and stop all the effect which is upon him from all the evils of the world, if he delights in seas of drink, and is pleased with the follies of distempered persons, and laughs loud at the childish humours and weak discourses of the man, that can do nothing but that for which Dionysius slew Antiphon, and Timagenes did fall from Cæsar's friendship; that is, play the fool and abuse his friend; he cannot give good counsel or spend an hour in wise sayings; but half a day they can talk "ut foret, unde corona cachinnum tollere possit," to make the crowd laugh, and consider not.

And the same is the case of lust; because it is exactly contrary to Christ the king of virgins, and his Holy Spirit, who is the prince of purities and

[r] Ephes. v. 18.

holy thoughts; it is a captivity of the reason and an enraging of the passions, it wakens every night and rages every day, it desires passionately and prosecutes violently, it hinders business and distracts counsel, it brings jealousies and enkindles wars, it sins against the body and weakens the soul, it defiles a temple and drives the Holy Spirit forth; and it is so entire a prosecution of the follies and weaknesses of nature, such a snare and a bait to weak and easy fools, that it prevails infinitely, and rages horribly, and rules tyrannically; it is a very fever in the reason, and a calenture in the passions; and therefore either it must be quenched, or it will be impossible to cure our evil natures: the curing of this is not the remedy of a single evil, but it is a doing violence to our whole nature; and therefore hath in it the greatest courage and an equal conduct, and supposes spiritual strengths great enough to contest against every enemy.

4. Hitherto is to be reduced, that we avoid all flatterers and evil company; for it was impossible that Alexander should be wise and cure his pride and his drunkenness, so long as he entertained Agesius and Agnon, Bagoas and Demetrius, and slew Parmenio and Philotas, and murdered wise Callisthenes; for he that loves to be flattered, loves not to change his pleasure; but had rather to hear himself called wise, than to be so. Flattery does bribe an evil nature, and corrupt a good one; and make it love to give wrong judgment and evil sentences: he that loves to be flattered, can never want some to abuse him, but he shall always want one to counsel him, and then he can never be wise.

5. But I must put these advices into a heap: he therefore that will cure his evil nature, must set himself against his chiefest lust, which when he hath overcome, the lesser enemies will come in of themselves. He must endeavour to reduce his affections to an indifferency; for all violence is an enemy to reason and counsel, and is that state of disease for which he is to inquire remedies.

6. It is necessary that in all actions of choice he deliberate and consider, that he may never do that for which he must ask a pardon, and he must suffer shame and smart: and therefore Cato did well reprove Aulus Albinus for writing the Roman story in the Greek tongue, of which he had but imperfect knowledge; and himself was put to make his apology for so doing: Cato told him that he was mightily in love with a fault, that had rather beg a pardon than be innocent. Who forced him to need the pardon? And when beforehand we know we must change from what we are or do worse, it is a better compendium not to enter in from whence we must uneasily retire.

7. In all the contingencies of chance and variety of action, remember that thou art the maker of thy own fortune, and of thy own sin; charge not God with it either before or after; the violence of thy own passion is no superinduced necessity from him, and the events of providence in all its strange variety can give no authority or patronage to a foul fordidden action, though the next chance of war or fortune be prosperous and rich. An Egyptian robber, sleeping under a rotten wall, was awakened by Serapis, and sent away from the ruin; but being quit from the danger, and seeing the wall to slide, he thought that the demon loved his crime, because he had so strangely preserved him from a sudden and a violent death. But Serapis told him, Θάνατον μὲν ἄλυπον νῦν ἔφυγες, σταυρῷ δ' ἴσθι φυλαττόμενος, "I saved you from the wall, to reserve you for the wheel;" from a short and private death, to a painful and disgraceful; and so it is very frequently in the event of human affairs: men are saved from one death, and reserved for another; or are preserved here, to be destroyed hereafter; and they that would judge of actions by events, must stay till all events are passed, that is, till all their posterity be dead, and the sentence is given at dooms-day; in the mean time the evils of our nature are to be looked upon without all accidental appendages; as they are in themselves, as they have an irregularity and disorder, an unreasonableness and a sting; and be sure to rely upon nothing, but the truth of laws and promises; and take severe accounts by those lines, which God gave us on purpose to reprove our evil habits and filthy inclinations. Men that are not willing to be cured, are glad of any thing to cozen them; but the body of death cannot be taken off from us, unless we be honest in our purposes, and severe in our counsels, and take just measures, and glorify God, and set ourselves against ourselves, that we may be changed into the likeness of the sons of God.

8. Avoid all delay in the counsels of religion. Because the aversation and perverseness of a child's nature may be corrected easily; but every day of indulgence and excuse increases the evil, and makes it still more natural, and still more necessary.

9. Learn to despise the world; or, which is a better compendium in the duty, learn but truly to understand it; for it is a cozenage all the way; the head of it is a rainbow, and the face of it is flattery; its words are charms, and all its stories are false; its body is a shadow, and its hands do knit spiders' webs; it is an image and a noise, with an hyena's lip and a serpent's tail; it was given to serve the needs of our nature; and instead of doing it, it creates strange appetites, and nourishes thirsts and fevers; it brings care, and debauches our nature, and brings shame and death as the reward of all our cares. Our nature is a disease, and the world does nourish it; but if you leave to feed upon such unwholesome diet, your nature reverts to its first purities, and to the entertainments of the grace of God.

4. I am now to consider, how far the infirmities of the flesh can be innocent, and consist with the Spirit of grace. For all these counsels are to be entertained into a willing spirit, and not only so, but into an active: and so long as the spirit is only willing, the weakness of the flesh will in many instances become stronger than the strengths of the spirit. For he that hath a good will, and does not do good actions, which are required of him, is hindered, but not by God that requires them, and therefore by himself, or his worst enemy. But the measures of this question are these:

1. If the flesh hinders us of our duty, it is our enemy; and then our misery is not, that the flesh is weak, but that it is too strong; but, 2. when it abates the degrees of duty and stops its growth, or its passing on to action and effect, then it is weak, but not directly nor always criminal. But to speak particularly,

1. If our flesh hinders us of any thing that is a direct duty, and prevails upon the spirit to make it do an evil action, or contract an evil habit, the man is in a state of bondage and sin; his flesh is the mother of corruption and an enemy to God. It is not enough to say, I desire to serve God, and cannot as I would: I would fain love God above all things in the world, but the flesh hath appetites of its own that must be observed: I pray to be forgiven as I forgive others; but flesh and blood cannot put up such an injury: for know that no infirmity, no unavoidable accident, no necessity, no poverty, no business, can hinder us from the love of God, or forgiving injuries, or being of a religious and a devout spirit: poverty and the intrigues of the world are things, that can no more hinder the spirit in these duties, than a strong enemy can hinder the sun to shine, or the clouds to drop rain. These things which God requires of us, and exacts from us with mighty penalties, these he hath made us able to perform; for he knows that we have no strength but what he gives us; and therefore, as he binds burdens upon our shoulders, so he gives us strength to bear them: and therefore, he that says he cannot forgive, says only that his lust is stronger than his religion; his flesh prevails upon his spirit. For what necessity can a man have to curse him, whom he calls enemy? or to sue him, or kill him, or do him any spite? A man may serve all his needs of nature, though he does nothing of all this; and if he be willing, what hinders him to love, to pardon, to wish well, to desire? The willing is the doing in this case; and he that says he is willing to do his duty, but he cannot, does not understand what he says. For all the duty of the inner man consists in the actions of the will, and there they are seated, and to it all the inferior faculties obey in those things which are direct emanations and effects of will. He that desires to love God, does love him; indeed men are often cozened with pretences, and in some good mood, or warmed with a holy passion, but it signifies nothing; because they will not quit the love of God's enemies; and therefore, they do not desire what they say they do: but if the will and heart be right, and not false and dissembling, this duty is or will be done infallibly.

2. If the spirit and the heart be willing, it will pass on to outward actions in all things, where it ought, or can. He that hath a charitable soul, will have a charitable hand; and will give his money to the poor, as he hath given his heart to God. For these things which are in our hand, are under the power of the will, and therefore are to be commanded by it. He that says to the naked, "Be warm and clothed," and gives him not the garment that lies by him, or money to buy one, mocks God, and the poor, and himself. "Nequam illud verbum est, 'Bene vult,' nisi qui bene facit," said the comedy; "It is an evil saying, 'He wishes well,' unless he do well."[s]

3. Those things which are not in our power, that is, such things in which the flesh is inculpably weak, or naturally or politically disabled, the will does the work of the outward and of the inward man; we cannot clothe Christ's body, he needs it not, and we cannot approach so sacred and separate a presence; but if we desire to do it, it is accounted as if we had. The ignorant man cannot discourse wisely and promote the interest of souls, but he can love souls, and desire their felicity: though I cannot build hospitals and colleges, or pour great sums of money into the lap of the poor, yet if I encourage others and exhort them, if I commend and promote the work, I have done the work of a holy religion. For in these and the like cases, the outward work is not always set in our power, and therefore, without our fault, is omitted, and can be supplied by that which is in our power.

4. For that is the last caution concerning this question. No man is to be esteemed of a willing spirit, but he that endeavours to do the outward work, or to make all the supplies that he can; not only by the forwardness of his spirit, but by the compensation of some other charities, or devotion, or religion. "Silver and gold have I none," and therefore I can give you none: but I wish you well; how will that appear? Why thus, "Such as I have I will give you; rise up and walk." I cannot give you gold, but I can give you counsel; I cannot relieve your need, but I can relieve your sadness; I cannot cure you, but I can comfort you; I cannot take away your poverty, but I can ease your spirit: and "God accepts us" (saith the apostle) "according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not." Only as our desires are great, and our spirits are willing, so we shall find ways to make supply of our want of ability and expressed liberality.

> Et labor ingenium misero dedit, et sua quemque
> Advigilare sibi jussit fortuna premendo.

What the poor man's need will make him do, that also the good man's charity will; it will find out ways and artifices of relief, in kind or in value; in comfort or in prayers; in doing it himself or procuring others.

> Πάντα δὲ ταῦτ' ἐδίδαξε πικρὴ πάντολμος ἀναγκη.

The necessity of our fortune and the willingness of our spirits will do all this; all that it can, and something that it cannot; "You have relieved the saints" (saith St. Paul) "according to your power, yea, and beyond your power;" only let us be careful in all instances, that we yield not to the weakness of the flesh, nor listen to its fair pretences; for the flesh can do more than it says, we can do more than we think we can; and if we do some violence to the flesh, to our affairs, and to the circumstances of our fortune, for the interest of our spirit, we shall make our flesh useful, and the spirit strong; the flesh and its weakness shall no more be

[s] Trinummus.

an objection, but shall comply, and co-operate, and serve all the necessities of the spirit.

SERMON XII.

OF LUKEWARMNESS AND ZEAL; OR, SPIRITUAL FERVOUR.

PART I.

Cursed be he that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully. Jer. xlviii. 10. ver. first part.

CHRIST'S kingdom,—being in order to the kingdom of his Father, which shall be manifest at the day of judgment,—must therefore be spiritual; because then it is, that all things must become spiritual, not only by way of eminency, but by entire constitution and perfect change of natures. Men shall be like angels, and angels shall be comprehended in the lap of spiritual and eternal felicities; the soul shall not understand by material phantasms, neither be served by the provisions of the body, but the body itself shall become spiritual, and the eye shall see intellectual objects, and the mouth shall feed upon hymns and glorifications of God; the belly shall be then satisfied by the fulness of righteousness, and the tongue shall speak nothing but praises, and the propositions of a celestial wisdom; the motion shall be the swiftness of an angel, and it shall be clothed with white as with a garment; holiness is the sun, and righteousness is the moon in that region; our society shall be choirs of singers, and our conversation wonder; contemplation shall be our food, and love shall be "the wine of elect souls." And as to every natural appetite there is now proportioned an object crass, material, unsatisfying, and allayed with sorrow and uneasiness; so there be new capacities and equal objects, the desires shall be fruition, and the appetite shall not suppose want, but a faculty of delight, and an immeasurable complacency: the will and the understanding, love and wonder, joys every day and the same for ever; this shall be their state who shall be accounted worthy of the resurrection to this life; where the body shall be a partner, but no servant; where it shall have no work of its own, but it shall rejoice with the soul; where the soul shall rule without resistance or an enemy; and we shall be fitted to enjoy God who is the Lord and Father of spirits. In this world, we see it is quite contrary: we long for perishing meat, and fill our stomachs with corruption; we look after white and red, and the weaker beauties of the night; we are passionate after rings and seals, and enraged at the breaking of a crystal; we delight in the society of fools and weak persons; we laugh at sin and contrive mischiefs; and the body rebels against the soul, and carries the cause against all its just pretences; and our soul itself is, above half of it, earth and stone, in its affections and distempers; our hearts are hard and inflexible to the softer whispers of mercy and compassion, having no love for any thing but strange flesh, and heaps of money, and popular noises, for misery and folly; and therefore we are a huge way off from the kingdom of God, whose excellencies, whose designs, whose ends, whose constitution, is spiritual and holy, and separate, and sublime, and perfect. Now between these two states of natural flesh and heavenly spirit, that is, the powers of darkness and the regions of light, the miseries of man and the perfections of God, the imperfection of nature where we stand by our creation, and supervening follies, and that state of felicities, whither we are designed by the mercies of God,—there is a middle state, "the kingdom of grace," wrought for us by our Mediator, the man Christ Jesus, who came to perfect the virtue of religion, and the designs of God, and to reform our nature, and to make it possible for us to come to that spiritual state, where all felicity does dwell. The religion that Christ taught, is a spiritual religion; it designs (so far as the state can permit) to make us spiritual; that is, so as the Spirit be the prevailing ingredient. God must now be worshipped in spirit, and not only so, but with a fervent spirit; and though God in all religions did seize upon the spirit, and even under Moses's law did, by the shadow of the ceremony, require the substantial worship, and, by cutting off the flesh, intended the circumcision of the heart; yet because they were to mind the outward action, it took off much from the intention and activity of the spirit; man could not do both busily. And then they failed also in the other part of a spiritual religion; for the nature of a spiritual religion is, that in it we serve God with our hearts and affections; and because while the spirit prevails, we do not to evil purposes of abatement converse with flesh and blood, this service is also fervent, intense, active, wise, and busy, according to the nature of things spiritual. Now because God always perfectly intended it, yet because he less perfectly required it in the law of Moses, I say they fell short in both.

For, 1. They so rested in the outward action, that they thought themselves chaste if they were no adulterers, though their eyes were wanton as kids, and their thoughts polluted as the springs of the wilderness, when a panther and a lioness descend to drink and lust; and if they did not rob the temple, they accounted it no sin if they murmured at the riches of religion; and Josephus reproves Polybius, for saying that Antiochus was punished for having a design of sacrilege; and therefore Tertullian says of them, they were "nec plenæ, nec adeo timendæ disciplinæ ad innocentiæ veritatem;" this was "their righteousness," which Christ said unless we will "exceed, we shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven," where all spiritual perfections are in state and excellency.

2. The other part of a spiritual worship is a fervour and a holy zeal of God's glory, greatness of desire, and quickness of action: of all this the Jews were not careful at all, excepting the zealots among

them, and they were not only fervent but inflamed; and they had the earnestness of passion for the holy warmth of religion, and instead of an earnest charity they had a cruel discipline, and for fraternal correction they did destroy a sinning Israelite: and by both these evil states of religion they did "the work of the Lord deceitfully;" they either gave him the action without the heart, or zeal without charity, or religion without zeal, or ceremony without religion, or indifferency without desires; and then God is served by the outward man and not the inward; or by part of the inward and not all; by the understanding and not by the will; or by the will, when the affections are cold and the body unapt, and the lower faculties in rebellion, and the superior in disorder, and the work of God is left imperfect, and our persons ungracious, and our ends unacquired, and the state of a spiritual kingdom not at all set forward towards any hope or possibility of being obtained. All this Christ came to mend; and by his laws did make provision that God should be served entirely, according as God always designed, and accordingly required by his prophets, and particularly in my text, that his work be done sincerely, and our duty with great affection; and by these two provisions, both the intention and the extension are secured; our duty shall be entire, and it shall be perfect, we shall be neither lame nor cold, without a limb nor without natural heat, and then "the work of the Lord will prosper in our hands;" but if we fail in either, we do "the Lord's work deceitfully," and then we are accursed. For so saith the Spirit of God, "Cursed be he, that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully."

1. Here then is the duty of us all: 1. God requires of us to serve him with an integral, entire, or a whole worship and religion. 2. God requires of us to serve him with earnest and intense affections; the entire purpose of both which, I shall represent in its several parts by so many propositions. 3. I shall consider concerning the measures of zeal and its inordinations.

1. He that serves God with the body without the soul, serves God deceitfully. "My son, give me thy heart;" and though I cannot think that nature was so sacramental, as to point out the holy and mysterious Trinity by the triangle of the heart, yet it is certain that the heart of man is God's special portion, and every angle ought to point out towards him directly; that is, the soul of man ought to be presented to God, and given him as an oblation to the interest of his service.

1. For, to worship God with our souls confesses one of his glorious attributes; it declares him to be the searcher of hearts, and that he reads the secret purposes, and beholds the smallest arrests of fancy, and bends in all the flexures and intrigues of crafty people; and searches out every plot and trifling conspiracy against him, and against ourselves, and against our brethren.

2. It advances the powers and concernments of his providence, and confesses all the affairs of men, all their cabinets and their mighty counsels, their snares and two-edged mischiefs, to be overruled by him; for what he sees he judges, and what he judges he rules, and what he rules must turn to his glory; and of this glory he reflects rays and influences upon his servants, and it shall also turn to their good.

3. This service distinguishes our duty towards God from all our conversation with man, and separates the Divine commandments from the imperfect decrees of princes and republics: for these are satisfied by the outward work, and cannot take any other cognizance of the heart, and the will of man, but as himself is pleased to signify. He that wishes the "fiscus" empty, and that all the revenues of the crown were in his counting-house, cannot be punished by the laws, unless himself become his own traitor and accuser; and therefore what man cannot discern, he must not judge, and must not require. But God sees it, and judges it, and requires it, and therefore reserves this as his own portion, and the chiefest feudal right of his crown.

4. He that secures the heart, secures all the rest; because this is the principle of all the moral actions of the whole man, and the hand obeys this, and the feet walk by its prescriptions; we eat and drink by measures which the soul desires and limits; and though the natural actions of men are not subject to choice and rule, yet the animal actions are under discipline; and although it cannot be helped but we shall desire, yet our desires can receive measures, and the laws of circumstances, and be reduced to order, and nature be changed into grace, and the actions animal (such as are, eating, drinking, laughing, weeping, &c.) shall become actions of religion; and those that are simply natural (such as, being hungry and thirsty) shall be adopted in the retinue of religion, and become religious by being ordered, or chastised, or suffered, or directed; and therefore God requires the heart, because he requires all; and all cannot be secured without the principle be enclosed. But he that seals up a fountain, may drink up all the waters alone, and may best appoint the channel where it shall run, and what grounds it shall refresh.

5. That I may sum up many reasons in one; God by requiring the heart secures the perpetuity and perseverance of our duty, and its sincerity, and its integrity, and its perfection: for so also God takes account of little things; it being all one in the heart of man, whether maliciously it omits a duty in a small instance or in a great; for although the expression hath variety and degrees in it, in relation to those purposes of usefulness and charity whither God designs it, yet the obedience and disobedience are all one, and shall be equally accounted for; and therefore the Jew Tryphon disputed against Justin, that the precepts of the gospel were impossible to be kept, because it also requiring the heart of man, did stop every egression of disorders: for making the root holy and healthful, as the balsam of Judea, or the drops of manna in the evening of the sabbath; it also causes that nothing spring thence but gums fit for incense, and oblations for the altar of proposition, and a cloud of perfume fit to make atonement for our sins; and being

united to the great sacrifice of the world, to reconcile God and man together. Upon these reasons you see it is highly fit that God should require it, and that we should pay the sacrifice of our hearts; and not at all think that God is satisfied with the work of the hands, when the affections of the heart are absent. He that prays because he would be quiet, and would fain be quit of it, and communicates for fear of the laws, and comes to church to avoid shame, and gives alms to be eased of an importunate beggar, or relieves his old parents because they will not die in their time, and provides for his children lest he be compelled by laws and shame, but yet complains of the charge of God's blessings; this man is a servant of the eyes of men, and offers parchment or a white skin in sacrifice, but the flesh and the inwards he leaves to be consumed by a stranger fire. And therefore, this is a deceit that robs God of the best, and leaves that for religion which men pare off; it is sacrilege, and brings a double curse.

2. He that serves God with the soul without the body, when both can be conjoined, "doth the work of the Lord deceitfully."—Paphnutius, whose knees were cut for the testimony of Jesus, was not obliged to worship with the humble flexures of the bending penitents; and blind Bartimeus could not read the holy lines of the law, and therefore that part of the work was not his duty; and God shall not call Lazarus to account for not giving alms, nor St. Peter and St. John for not giving silver and gold to the lame man, nor Epaphroditus for not keeping his fasting-days when he had his sickness. But when God hath made the body an apt minister to the soul, and hath given money for alms, and power to protect the oppressed, and knees to serve in prayer, and hands to serve our needs, then the soul alone is not to work; but as Rachel gave her maid to Jacob, and she bore children to her lord upon her mistress's knees; and the children were reckoned to them both, because the one had fruitful desires, and the other a fruitful womb: so must the body serve the needs of the spirit; that what the one desires the other may effect, and the conceptions of the soul may be the productions of the body, and the body must bow when the soul worships, and the hand must help when the soul pities, and both together do the work of a holy religion; the body alone can never serve God without the conjunction and preceding act of the soul; and sometimes the soul without the body is imperfect and vain; for in some actions there is a body and a spirit, a material and a spiritual part: and when the action hath the same constitution that a man hath, without the act of both, it is as imperfect as a dead man; the soul cannot produce the body of some actions any more than the body can put life into it; and therefore an ineffective pity and a lazy counsel, an empty blessing and gay words, are but deceitful charity.

Quod peto, da, Caî; non peto consilium. Mart.

He that gave his friend counsel to study the law, when he desired to borrow twenty pounds, was not so friendly in his counsel as he was useless in his charity; spiritual acts can cure a spiritual malady, but if my body needs relief, because you cannot feed me with diagrams, or clothe me with Euclid's Elements, you must minister a real supply by a corporal necessity. This proposition is not only useful in the doctrine of charity, and the virtue of religion, but in the professions of faith, and requires that it be public, open, and ingenuous. In matters of necessary duty it is not sufficient to have it to ourselves, but we must also have it to God, and all the world; and as in the heart we believe, so by the mouth we confess unto salvation: he is an ill man that is only a christian in his heart, and is not so in his profession and publications; and as your heart must not be wanting in any good professions and pretences, so neither must public profession be wanting in every good and necessary persuasion. The faith and the cause of God must be owned publicly; for if it be the cause of God, it will never bring us to shame. I do not say, whatever we think we must tell it to all the world, much less at all times, and in all circumstances; but we must never deny that which we believe to be the cause of God, in such circumstances, in which we can and ought to glorify him. But this extends also to other instances. He that swears a false oath with his lips, and unswears it with his heart, hath deceived one more than he thinks for; himself is the most abused person: and when my action is contrary to men, they will reprove me; but when it is against my own persuasion, I cannot but reprove myself; and am witness, and accuser, and party, and guilty, and then God is the judge, and his anger will be a fierce executioner, because we do the Lord's work deceitfully.

3. They are "deceitful in the Lord's work," that reserve one faculty for sin, or one sin for themselves; or one action to please their appetite, and many for religion.—Rabbi Kimchi taught his scholars, "Cogitationem pravam Deus non habet vice facti, nisi concepta fuerit in Dei fidem et religionem;" "That God is never angry with an evil thought, unless it be a thought of apostasy from the Jews' religion;" and therefore, provided that men be severe and close in their sect and party, they might roll in lustful thoughts; and the torches they light up in the temple, might smoke with anger at one end, and lust at the other, so they did not flame out in egressions of violence and injustice, in adulteries and fouler complications: nay, they would give leave to some degrees of evil actions; for R. Moses and Selomoh taught, that if the most part of a man's actions were holy and just, though in one he sinned often, yet the greater ingredient should prevail, and the number of good works should outweigh the lesser account of evil things; and this pharisaical righteousness is too frequent even among christians. For who almost is there that does not count fairly concerning himself, if he reckons many virtues upon the stock of his religion, and but one vice upon the stock of his infirmity; half a dozen to God, and one for his company or his friend, his education or his appetite? And if he hath parted from his folly, yet he will remember the flesh-pots, and please himself

with a fantastic sin, and call it home through the gates of his memory, and place it at the door of fancy, that there he may behold it, and consider concerning what he hath parted withal, out of the fears and terrors of religion, and a necessary unavoidable conscience. Do not many men go from sin to sin, even in their repentance? they go backward from sin to sin, and change their crime as a man changes his uneasy load, and shakes it off from one shoulder to support it with the other. How many severe persons, virgins and widows, are so pleased with their chastity, and their abstinence even from lawful mixtures, that by this means they fall into a worse pride? Insomuch that I remember St. Augustine said, "Audeo dicere superbis continentibus expedit cadere," "They that are chaste and proud, it is sometimes a remedy for them to fall into sin," and by the shame of lust to cure the devil of pride, and by the sin of the body to cure the worser evils of the spirit: and therefore he adds, that he did believe, God in a severe mercy did permit the barbarous nations, breaking in upon the Roman empire, to violate many virgins professed in cloisters and religious families to be as a mortification of their pride, lest the accidental advantages of a continent life should bring them into the certain miseries of a spiritual death, by taking away their humility, which was more necessary than their virgin-state; it is not a cure that men may use, but God permits it sometimes with greater safety through his wise conduct and overruling providence; St. Peter was safer by his fall (as it fell out in the event of things) than by his former confidence. Man must never cure a sin by a sin; but he that brings good out of our evil, he can when he please. But I speak it, to represent how deceitfully many times we do the work of the Lord. We reprove a sinning brother, but do it with a pompous spirit; we separate from scandal, and do it with glory, and a gaudy heart; we are charitable to the poor, but will not forgive our unkind enemies; or, we pour relief into their bags, but we please ourselves and drink drunk, and hope to commute with God, giving the fruit of our labours or effluxes of money for the sin of our souls: and upon this account it is, that two of the noblest graces of a christian are to very many persons made a savour of death, though they were intended for the beginning and the promotion of an eternal life; and those are faith and charity: some men think if they have faith, it is enough to answer all the accusations of sin, which our consciences or the devils make against us; if I be a wanton person, yet my faith shall hide it, and faith shall cover the follies of drunkenness, and I may all my life rely upon faith at last to quit my scores. For he that is most careful is not innocent, but must be saved by faith; and he that is least careful may have faith, and that will save him. But because these men mistake concerning faith, and consider not, that charity or a good life is a part of that faith that saves us, they hope to be saved by the word, they fill their bellies with the story of Trimalcion's banquet, and drink drunk with the news of wine; they eat shadows, and when they are drowning, catch at the image of the trees, which hang over the water, and are reflected from the bottom.

But thus many men do with charity; "Give alms and all things shall be clean unto you," said our blessed Saviour: and therefore, many keep a sin alive, and make account to pay for it, and God shall be put to relieve his own poor at the price of the sin of another of his servants; charity shall take lust or intemperance into protection, and men will not be kind to their brethren, unless they will be also at the same time unkind to God. I have understood concerning divers vicious persons, that none have been so free in their donatives and offerings to religion and the priest as they: and the hospitals that have been built, and the highways mended at the price of souls, are too many for christendom to boast of in behalf of charity. But as others mistake concerning faith, so these do concerning its twin-sister. The first had faith without charity, and these have charity without hope; "For every one that hath this hope," that is, the hope of receiving the glorious things of God promised in the gospel, "purifies himself even as God is pure:" faith, and charity too, must both suppose repentance; and repentance is the abolition of the whole body of sin, the purification of the whole man. But the sum of the doctrine and case of conscience in this particular is this,

1. Charity is a certain cure of sins that are past, not that are present.—He that repents and leaves his sin, and then relieves the poor, and pays for his folly by a diminution of his own estate, and the supplies of the poor, and his ministering to Christ's poor members, turns all his former crimes into holiness; he purges the stains and makes amends for his folly, and commutes for the baser pleasure with a more noble usage: so said Daniel to Nebuchadnezzar, "Break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor:"[t] first be just, and then be charitable; for it is pity, alms—which is one of the noblest services of God, and the greatest mercy to thy brother—should be spent upon sin, and thrown away upon folly.

2. Faith is the remedy of all our evils; but then, it is never of force, but when we either have endeavoured or undertaken to do all good; this in baptism, that after; faith and repentance at first, and faith and charity at last: and, because we fail often by infirmity and sometimes by inadvertency, sometimes by a surprise and often by omission; and all this even in the midst of a sincere endeavour to live justly and perfectly; therefore the passion of our Lord pays for this, and faith lays hold upon that. But without a hearty and sincere intent, and vigorous prosecution of all the parts of our duty, faith is but a word, not so much as a cover to a naked bosom, nor a pretence big enough to deceive persons, that are not willing to be cozened.

3. The bigger ingredient of virtue and evil actions will prevail, but it is only when virtue is habitual, and sins are single, interrupted, casual, and seldom, without choice and without affection; that is, when our repentance is so timely, that it can work for

[t] Dan. iv. 27.

God more than we served under the tyranny of sin; so that if you will account the whole life of man, the rule is good, and the greater ingredient shall prevail; and he shall certainly be pardoned and accepted, whose life is so reformed, whose repentance is so active, whose return is so early, that he hath given bigger portions to God, and to God's enemy. But if we account so, as to divide the measures in present possession, the bigger part cannot prevail; a small or a seldom sin spoils not the sea of piety; but when the affection is divided, a little ill destroys the whole body of good; the cup in a man's right hand must be ἄκρατος κεκερασμένος, it must be "pure, although it be mingled;" that is, the whole affection must be for God, that must be pure and unmingled; if sin mingles in seldom and unapproved instances, the drops of water are swallowed up with a whole vintage of piety, and the bigger ingredient is the prevailing; in all other cases it is not so: for one sin that we choose and love and delight in, will not be excused by twenty virtues: and as one broken link dissolves the union of the whole chain, and one jarring, untuned string spoils the whole music; so is every sin that seizes upon a portion of our affections; if we love one, that one destroys the acceptation of all the rest: and as it is in faith, so it is in charity. He that is a heretic in one article, hath no saving faith in the whole; and so does every vicious habit, or unreformed sin, destroy the excellency of the grace of charity; a wilful error in one article is heresy, and every vice in one instance is malice, and they are perfectly contrary, and a direct darkness to the two eyes of the soul, faith and charity.

4. There is one deceit more yet, in the matter of the extension of our duty, destroying the integrity of its constitution: for they do the work of God deceitfully, who think God sufficiently served with abstinence from evil, and converse not in the acquisition and pursuit of holy charity and religion. This Clemens Alexandrinus affirms of the Pharisees; they were μετὰ ἀποχὴν κακῶν δικαιούμενοι, they hoped to be "justified by abstinence from things forbidden;" but if we will be βασιλικοὶ, "sons of the kingdom," we must μετὰ τῆς ἐν τούτοις τελειώσεως καὶ τὸν πλησίον ἀγαπᾷν, καὶ εὐεργετεῖν; besides this, and "supposing a proportionable perfection in such an innocence, we must love our brother and do good to him," and glorify God by a holy religion, in the communion of saints, in faith and sacraments, in alms and counsel, in forgivenesses and assistances. "Flee from evil, and do the thing that is good, and dwell for evermore," said the Spirit of God in the Psalms: and St. Peter, "Having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust, give all diligence to add to your faith virtue, to virtue patience, to patience godliness, and brotherly-kindness, and charity:" many persons think themselves fairly assoiled, because they are no adulterers, no rebels, no drunkards, not of scandalous lives; in the mean time, like the Laodiceans, they are "naked and poor;" they have no catalogue of good things registered in heaven, no treasures in the repositories of the poor, neither have the poor often prayed concerning them, "Lord, remember thy servants for this thing at the day of judgment." A negative religion is in many things the effects of laws, and the appendage of sexes, the product of education, the issues of company and of the public, or the daughter of fear and natural modesty, or their temper and constitution, and civil relations, common fame, or necessary interest. Few women swear and do the debaucheries of drunkards; and they are guarded from adulterous complications by spies and shame, by fear and jealousy, by the concernment of families, and reputation of their kindred, and therefore they are to account with God beyond this civil and necessary innocence, for humility and patience, for religious fancies and tender consciences, for tending the sick and dressing the poor, for governing their house and nursing their children; and so it is in every state of life. When a prince or prelate, a noble and a rich person, hath reckoned all his immunities and degrees of innocence from those evils that are incident to inferior persons, or the worse sort of their own order, they do "the work of the Lord," and their own too, very "deceitfully," unless they account correspondences of piety to all their powers and possibilities: they are to reckon and consider concerning what oppressions they have relieved, what causes and what fatherless they have defended, how the work of God and of religion, of justice and charity, hath thrived in their hands. If they have made peace, and encouraged religion by their example and by their laws, by rewards and collateral encouragements, if they have been zealous for God and for religion, if they have employed ten talents to the improvement of God's bank, then they have done God's work faithfully; if they account otherwise, and account only by ciphers and negatives, they can expect only the rewards of innocent slaves; they shall escape the "furca" and the wheel, the torments of lustful persons, and the crown of flames that is reserved for the ambitious; or they shall be not gnawn with the vipers of the envious, or the shame of the ungrateful; but they can never upon this account hope for the crowns of martyrs, or the honourable rewards of saints, the coronets of virgins, and chaplets of doctors and confessors: and though murderers and lustful persons, the proud and the covetous, the heretic and schismatic, are to expect flames and scorpions, pains and smart ("pœnam sensus," the schools call it); yet the lazy and the imperfect, the harmless sleeper and the idle worker, shall have "pœnam damni," the loss of all his hopes, and the dishonours of the loss; and in the sum of affairs it will be no great difference whether we have loss or pain, because there can be no greater pain imaginable than to lose the sight of God to eternal ages.

5. Hither are to be reduced as deceitful workers, those that promise to God, but mean not to pay what they once intended; people that are confident in the day of ease, and fail in the danger; they that pray passionately for a grace, and if it be not obtained at that price go no further, and never contend in action for what they seem to contend in

prayer; such as delight in forms and outsides, and regard not the substance and design of every institution; that think it a great sin to taste bread before the receiving the holy sacrament, and yet come to communicate with an ambitious and revengeful soul; that make a conscience of eating flesh, but not of drunkenness; that keep old customs and old sins together; that pretend one duty to excuse another; religion against charity, or piety to parents against duty to God, private promises against public duty, the keeping of an oath against breaking of a commandment, honour against modesty, reputation against piety, the love of the world in civil instances to countenance enmity against God; these are the deceitful workers of God's work; they make a schism in the duties of religion, and a war in heaven worse than that between Michael and the dragon; for they divide the Spirit of God, and distinguish his commandments into parties and factions; by seeking an excuse, sometimes they destroy the integrity and perfect constitution of duty, or they do something whereby the effect and usefulness of the duty is hindered: concerning all which this only can be said, they who serve God with a lame sacrifice and an imperfect duty, a duty defective in its constituent parts, can never enjoy God; because he can never be divided: and though it be better to enter into heaven with one foot, and one eye, than that both should be cast into hell, because heaven can make recompence for this loss; yet nothing can repair his loss, who for being lame in his duty shall enter into hell, where nothing is perfect, but the measures and duration of torment, and they both are next to infinite.

SERMON XIII.

PART II.

2. THE next inquiry, is into the intention of our duty; and here it will not be amiss to change the word "fraudulenter," or "dolose," into that which some of the Latin copies do use, "Maledictus, qui facit opus Dei *negligenter*," "Cursed is he, that doth the work of the Lord *negligently*, or remissly; and it implies, that as our duty must be whole, so it must be fervent; for a languishing body may have all its parts, and yet be useless to many purposes of nature; and you may reckon all the joints of a dead man, but the heart is cold, and the joints are stiff and fit for nothing but for the little people that creep in graves: and so are very many men; if you sum up the accounts of their religion, they can reckon days and months of religion, various offices, charity and prayers, reading and meditation, faith and knowledge, catechism and sacraments, duty to God and duty to princes, paying debts and provision for children, confessions and tears, discipline in families, and love of good people; and, it may be, you shall not reprove their numbers, or find any lines unfilled in their tables of accounts; but when you have handled all this and considered, you will find at last you have taken a dead man by the hand, there is not a finger wanting, but they are stiff as icicles, and without flexure as the legs of elephants: such are they whom St. Bernard describes, "Whose spiritual joy is allayed with tediousness, whose compunction for sins is short and seldom, whose thoughts are animal and their designs secular, whose religion is lukewarm; their obedience is without devotion, their discourse without profit, their prayer without intention of heart, their reading without instruction, their meditation is without spiritual advantages, and is not the commencement and strengthening of holy purposes; and they are such whom modesty will not restrain, nor reason bridle, nor discipline correct, nor the fear of death and hell can keep from yielding to the imperiousness of a foolish lust, that dishonours a man's understanding, and makes his reason, in which he most glories, to be weaker than the discourse of a girl and the dreams of the night. In every action of religion God expects such a warmth and a holy fire to go along, that it may be able to enkindle the wood upon the altar, and consume the sacrifice; but God hates an indifferent spirit. Earnestness and vivacity, quickness and delight, perfect choice of the service, and a delight in the prosecution, is all that the spirit of a man can yield towards his religion: the outward work is the effect of the body; but if a man does it heartily and with all his mind, then religion hath wings and moves upon wheels of fire; and therefore, when our blessed Saviour made those capitulars and canons of religion, to "love God," and to "love our neighbour;" besides, that the material part of the duty, "love," is founded in the spirit, as its natural seat, he also gives three words to involve the spirit in the action, and but one for the body: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind;" and, lastly, "with all thy strength;" this brings in the body too; because it hath some strength, and some significations of its own; but heart and soul and mind mean all the same thing in a stronger and more earnest expression; that is, that we do it hugely, as much as we can, with a clear choice, with a resolute understanding, with strong affections, with great diligence: "Enerves animos odisse virtus solet," "Virtue hates weak and ineffective minds," and tame easy prosecutions; Loripides, people whose arm is all flesh, "whose foot is all leather," and an unsupporting skin; they creep like snakes, and pursue the noblest mysteries of religion, as Naaman did the mysteries of Rimmon, only in a compliment, or for secular regards; but without the mind, and therefore without zeal: "I would thou wert either hot or cold," said the Spirit of God to the angel or bishop of Laodicea. In feasts or sacrifices the ancients did use "apponere frigidam," or "calidam;" sometimes they drank hot drink, sometimes they poured cold upon their graves or in their wines, but no services of tables or altars were ever with lukewarm. God hates it worse than stark cold;

which expression is the more considerable, because in natural and superinduced progressions, from extreme to extreme, we must necessarily pass through the midst; and therefore it is certain, a lukewarm religion is better than none at all, as being the doing some parts of the work designed, and nearer to perfection than the utmost distance could be; and yet that God hates it more, must mean, that there is some appendant evil in this state which is not in the other, and that accidentally it is much worse: and so it is, if we rightly understand it; that is, if we consider it, not as a being in or passing through the middle way, but as a state and a period of religion. If it be in motion, a lukewarm religion is pleasing to God; for God hates it not for its imperfection, and its natural measures of proceeding; but if it stands still and rests there, it is a state against the designs, and against the perfection of God: and it hath in it these evils:

1. It is a state of the greatest imprudence in the world; for it makes a man to spend his labour for that which profits not, and to deny his appetite for an unsatisfying interest; he puts his monies in a napkin, and he that does so, puts them into a broken bag; he loses the principal for not increasing the interest. He that dwells in a state of life that is unacceptable, loses the money of his alms, and the rewards of his charity, his hours of prayer, and his parts of justice, he confesses his sins and is not pardoned, he is patient but hath no hope, and he that is gone so far out of his country, and stands in the middle way, hath gone so far out of his way; he had better have stayed under a dry roof, in the house of banishment, than to have left his Gyarus, the island of his sorrow, and to dwell upon the Adriatic; so is he that begins a state of religion, and does not finish it; he abides in the highway, and though he be nearer the place, yet is as far from the rest of his country as ever; and therefore, all that beginning of labour was in the prejudice of his rest, but nothing to the advantages of his hopes. He that hath never begun, hath lost no labour; "Jactura præteritorum," "the loss of all that he hath done," is the first evil of the negligent and lukewarm christian; according to the saying of Solomon: "He that is remiss or idle in his labour, is brother to him that scattereth his goods."[u]

2. The second appendant evil is, that lukewarmness is the occasion of greater evil;—because the remiss easy christian shuts the gate against the heavenly breathings of God's Holy Spirit; he thinks every breath, that is fanned by the wings of the holy Dove, is not intended to encourage his fires, which burn and smoke, and peep through the cloud already; it tempts him to security; and, if an evil life be a certain inlet to a second death, despair on one side, and security on the other, are the bars and locks to that door, he can never pass forth again while that state remains; whoever slips in his spiritual walking does not presently fall; but if that slip does not awaken his diligence, and his caution, then his ruin begins, "vel pravæ institutionis deceptus exordio, aut per longam mentis incuriam, et virtute animi decidente," as St. Austin observes; "either upon the pursuit of his first error, or by a careless spirit, or a decaying slackened resolution:" all which are the direct effects of lukewarmness. But so have I seen a fair structure begun with art and care, and raised to half its stature, and then it stood still by the misfortune or negligence of the owner, and the rain descended, and dwelt in its joints, and supplanted the contexture of its pillars, and having stood awhile, like the antiquated temple of a deceased oracle, it fell into a hasty age, and sunk upon its own knees, and so descended into ruin: so is the imperfect, unfinished spirit of a man; it lays the foundation of a holy resolution, and strengthens it with vows and arts of prosecution, it raises up the walls, sacraments, and prayers, reading, and holy ordinances; and holy actions begin with a slow motion, and the building stays, and the spirit is weary, and the soul is naked, and exposed to temptation, and in the days of storm take in every thing that can do it mischief; and it is faint and sick, listless and tired, and it stands till its own weight wearies the foundation, and then declines to death and sad disorder, being so much the worse, because it hath not only returned to its first follies, but hath superadded unthankfulness and carelessness, a positive neglect and a despite of holy things, a setting a low price to the things of God, laziness and wretchlessness: all which are evils superadded to the first state of coldness, whither he is with all these loads and circumstances of death easily revolved.

3. A state of lukewarmness is more incorrigible than a state of coldness; while men flatter themselves that their state is good, that they are rich and need nothing, that their lamps are dressed, and full of ornament. There are many, that think they are in their country as soon as ever they are weary, and measure not the end of their hopes by the possession of them, but by their precedent labour: which they overvalue, because they have easy and effeminate souls. St. Bernard complains of some that say, "Sufficit nobis, nolumus esse meliores quam patres nostri:" "It is enough for us to be as our forefathers," who were honest and useful in their generations, but be not over-righteous. These men are such as think they have knowledge enough to need no teacher, devotion enough to need no new fires, perfection enough to need no new progress, justice enough to need no repentance; and then because the spirit of a man and all the things of this world are in perpetual variety and change, these men decline when they have gone their period; they stand still, and then revert; like a stone returning from the bosom of a cloud, where it rested as long as the thought of a child, and fell to its natural bed of earth, and dwelt below for ever. He that says, he will take care he be no worse, and that he desires to be no better, stops his journey into heaven, but cannot be secure against his descending into hell: and Cassian spake a hard saying: "Frequenter vidimus de frigidis et carnalibus ad spiritualem venisse fervorem, de tepidis et animalibus omnino

[u] Prov. xviii. 9.

non vidimus:" "Many persons from vicious, and dead, and cold, have passed into life and an excellent grace, and a spiritual warmth, and holy fires; but from lukewarm and indifferent never any body came to an excellent condition, and state of holiness:" "rarissime," St. Bernard says, "very extremely seldom;" and our blessed Saviour said something of this. "The publicans and harlots go before you into the kingdom of heaven;" they are moved by shame, and punished by disgrace, and remarked by punishments, and frightened by the circumstances and notices of all the world, and separated from sober persons by laws and an intolerable character, and the sense of honour, and the care of their persons, and their love of civil society, and every thing in the world can invite them towards virtues. But the man that is accounted honest, and does justice, and some things of religion, unless he finds himself but upon his way, and feels his wants, and groans under the sense of his infirmities, and sighs under his imperfections, and accounts himself "not to have comprehended," but "still presses towards the mark of his calling," unless (I say) he still increases in his appetites of religion, as he does in his progression, he will think he needs no counsellor, and the Spirit of God whispers to an ear, that is already filled with noises, and cannot attend to the heavenly calling. The stomach that is already full, is next to loathing; and that is the prologue to sickness, and a rejecting the first wholesome nutriment, which was entertained to relieve the first natural necessities: "Qui non proficit, vult deficere," said St. Bernard: "He that goes not forward in the love of God, and of religion, does not stand still, but goes for all that;" but whither such a motion will lead him, himself without a timely care shall feel by an intolerable experiment.

In this sense and for these reasons it is, that although a lukewarm christian hath gone forward some steps towards a state of holiness, and is advanced beyond him that is cold, and dead, and unconcerned; and therefore, speaking absolutely and naturally, is nearer the kingdom of God than he that is not yet set out; yet accidentally, and by reason of these ill appendages, he is worse, in greater danger, in a state equally unacceptable, and therefore must either go forward, and still do the work of God carefully and diligently, with a fervent spirit and an active hand, with a willing heart and a cheerful eye, or it had been better he had never begun.

2. It concerns us next to inquire concerning the duty in its proper instances, that we may perceive to what parts and degrees of duty it amounts; we shall find it especially in the duties of faith, of prayer, and of charity.

1. Our faith must be strong, vigorous, active, confident, and patient, reasonable, and unalterable, without doubting, and fear, and partiality. For the faith of very many men seems a duty so weak and indifferent, is so often untwisted by violence, or ravelled and entangled in weak discourses, or so false and fallacious by its mixture of interest, that though men usually put most confidence in the pretences of faith, yet no pretences are more unreasonable.

1. Our faith and persuasion in religion is most commonly imprinted in us by our country, and we are christians at the same rate as we are English or Spaniards, or of such a family; our reason is first stained and spotted with the dye of our kindred and country, and our education puts it in grain, and whatsoever is against this we are taught to call a temptation: in the mean time, we call these accidental and artificial persuasions by the name of faith, which is only the air of the country, or an heir-loom of the family, or the daughter of a present interest. Whatever it was that brought us in, we are to take care, that when we are in, our faith be noble, and stand upon its most proper and most reasonable foundation; it concerns us better to understand that religion, which we call faith, and that faith whereby we hope to be saved.

2. The faith and the whole religion of many men is the production of fear. Men are threatened into their persuasions, and the iron rod of a tyrant converts whole nations to his principles, when the wise discourses of the religion seems dull as sleep, and unprevailing as the talk of childhood. That is but a deceitful faith, which our timorousness begot, and our weakness nurses, and brings up. The religion of a christian is immortal, and certain, and persuasive, and infallible, and unalterable, and therefore needs not be received by human and weak convoys, like worldly and mortal religions: that faith is lukewarm, and easy, and trifling, which is only a belief of that, which a man wants courage to disbelieve.

3. The faith of many men is such, that they dare not trust it: they will talk of it, and serve vanity, or their lust, or their company, or their interest by it, but when the matter comes to a pinch, they dare not trust it; when Antisthenes was initiated into the mysteries of Orpheus, the priest told him, that all that were of that religion, immediately after death should be perfectly happy;[x] the philosopher asked him, Why he did not die, if he believed what he said? Such a faith as that was fine to talk of at table, or eating the sacrifices of the religion, when the mystic man was ἔνθεος, full of wine and flesh, of confidence and religion; but to die, is a more material consideration, and to be chosen upon no grounds, but such a faith, which really comes from God, and can secure our reason, and our choice, and perfect our interest and designs. And it hath been long observed concerning those bold people, that use their reason against God that gave it, they have one persuasion in their health, and another in their sickness and fears; when they are well, they blaspheme; when they die, they are superstitious. It was Bias's case, when he was poisoned by the atheisms of Theodorus, no man died more like a coward and a fool; "as if the gods were to come and go

[x] His qui sacris visis abeunt ad inferos,
Homines beati sunt, solis quia vivere
Contingit illic istis; turba cætera
Omnium malorum generi incidit.

as Bias pleased to think and talk:" so one said of his folly. If God be to be feared when we die, he is also to be feared in all our life, for he can for ever make us die; he that will do it once, and that when he please, can always. And therefore, all those persuasions against God, and against religion, are only the production of vicious passions, of drink or fancy, of confidence and ignorance, of boldness or vile appetites, of vanity or fierceness, of pride or flatteries; and atheism is a proportion so unnatural and monstrous, that it can never dwell in a man's heart as faith does, in health and sickness, in peace and war, in company and alone, at the beginning and at the end of a design; but comes from weak principles, and leaves shallow and superficial impressions: but when men endeavour to strengthen and confirm it, they only strive to make themselves worse than they can. Naturally a man cannot be an atheist: for he that is so, must have something within him that is worse either than man or devil.

4. Some measure their faith by shows and appearances, by ceremonies and names, by professions and little institutions. Diogenes was angry at the silly priest, that thought he should be immortal because he was a priest, and would not promise so concerning Agesilaus and Epaminondas, two noble Greeks, that had preserved their country, and lived virtuously. The faith of a christian hath no signification at all but obedience and charity; if men be just, and charitable, and good, and live according to their faith, then only they are christians; whatsoever else is pretended is but a shadow, and the image of a grace; for since in all the sects and institutions of the world, the professors did, in some reasonable sort, conform to the rules of the profession, (as appears in all the schools of philosophers, and religions of the world, and the practices of the Jews, and the usages and the country-customs of the Turks,) it is a strange dishonour to christianity, that in it alone men should pretend to the faith of it, and do nothing of what it persuades and commands upon the account of those promises, which it makes us to believe. He that means to please God by his faith, must have his faith begotten in him by the Spirit of God, and proper arguments of religion; he must profess it without fear, he must dare to die for it, and resolve to live according to its institution; he must grow more confident and more holy, have fewer doubtings and more virtues, he must be resolute and constant, far from indifferency, and above secular regards; he must by it regulate his life, and value it above his life; he must "contend earnestly for the faith," by the most prevailing arguments, by the arguments of holy living and ready dying, by zeal and patience, by conformity and humility, by reducing words to actions, fair discourses to perfect persuasions, by loving the article, and increasing in the knowledge and love of God, and his Son Jesus Christ; and then his faith is not negligent, deceitful, artificial, and improper; but true, and holy, and reasonable, and useful, zealous and sufficient; and therefore can never be reproved.

2. Our prayers[y] and devotions must be fervent and zealous, not cold, patient, easy, and soon rejected; but supported by a patient spirit, set forwards by importunity, continued by perseverance, waited on by attention and a present mind, carried along with holy, but strong desires; and ballasted with resignation, and conformity to the Divine will; and then it is as God likes it, and does the work to God's glory and our interest effectively. He that asks with a doubting mind and a lazy desire, begs for nothing but to be denied; we must in our prayers be earnest and fervent, or else we shall have but a cold answer; for God gives his grace according as we can receive it; and whatsoever evil returns we meet in our prayers, when we ask for good things, is wholly by reason of our wandering spirits and cold desires; we have reason to complain that our minds wander in our prayers, and our diversions are more prevailing than all our arts of application and detention; and we wander sometimes even when we pray against wandering: and it is in some degrees natural and inevitable: but although the evil is not wholly to be cured, yet the symptoms are to be eased; and if our desires were strong and fervent, our minds would in the same proportion be present: we see it by a certain and regular experience; what we love passionately, we perpetually think on, and it returns upon us whether we will or no; and in a great fear, the apprehension cannot be shaken off; and therefore if our desires of holy things were strong and earnest, we should most certainly attend our prayers: it is a more violent affection to other things, that carries us off from this; and therefore, if we loved passionately what we ask for daily, we should ask with hearty desires, and an earnest appetite, and a present spirit; and however it be very easy to have our thoughts wander, yet it is our indifferency and lukewarmness that make it so natural; and you may observe it, that so long as the light shines bright, and the fires of devotion and desires flame out, so long the mind of a man stands close to the altar, and waits upon the sacrifice; but as the fires die, and desires decay, so the mind steals away, and walks abroad to see the little images of beauty and pleasure, which it beholds in the falling stars and little glow-worms of the world. The river that runs slow and creeps by the banks, and begs leave of every turf to let it pass, is drawn into little hollownesses, and spends itself in smaller portions, and dies with diversion; but when it runs with vigorousness and a full stream, and breaks down every obstacle, making it even as its own brow, it stays not to be tempted with little avocations and to creep into holes, but runs into the sea through full and useful channels; so is a man's prayer, if it moves upon the feet of an abated appetite; it wanders into the society of every trifling accident, and stays at the corners of the fancy, and talks with every object it meets, and cannot arrive at heaven; but when it is carried upon the wings of passion and strong desires, a swift motion and a hungry appetite, it passes on through all the intermedial regions of clouds, and stays not till it dwells at the foot of the throne, where mercy sits, and thence sends holy showers of refreshment. I deny

[y] See Sermons of the Return of Prayer, part 2.

not but some little drops will turn aside, and fall from the full channel by the weakness of the banks, and hollowness of the passage; but the main course is still continued; and although the most earnest and devout persons feel and complain of some looseness of spirit, and unfixed attentions, yet their love and their desire secure the main portions, and make the prayer to be strong, fervent, and effectual. Any thing can be done by him, that earnestly desires what he ought; secure but your affections and passions, and then no temptation will be too strong; "A wise man, and a full resolution, and an earnest spirit, can do any thing of duty;" but every temptation prevails, when we are willing to die; and we usually lend nothing to devotion but the offices that flatter our passions; we can desire and pray for any thing, that may serve our lust, or promote those ends which we covet, but ought to fear and flee from; but the same earnestness, if it were transplanted into religion and our prayers, would serve all the needs of the spirit, but for want of it we do "the Lord's work deceitfully."

3. Our charity also must be fervent: "Malus est miles qui ducem suum gemens sequitur;" "He that follows his general with a heavy march and a heavy heart, is but an ill soldier;" but our duty to God should be hugely pleasing, and we should rejoice in it; it must pass on to action, and do the action vigorously; it is called in Scripture κόπος ἀγάπης, "the labour" and travail "of love." "A friend at a sneeze and an alms-basket full of prayers," a love that is lazy, and a service that is useless, and a pity without support, are the images and colours of that grace, whose very constitution and design is, beneficence and well-doing. He that loves passionately, will not only do all that his friend needs, but all that himself can; for although the law of charity is fulfilled by acts of profit, and bounty, and obedience, and labour, yet it hath no other measures but the proportions and abundance of a good mind; and according to this, God requires that we be περισσεύοντες ἐν τῷ ἔργῳ τοῦ Κυρίου, "abounding," and that "always in the work of the Lord;" if we love passionately, we shall do all this; for love endures labour and calls it pleasure, it spends all and counts it a gain, it suffers inconveniences and is quickly reconciled to them; if dishonours and affronts be to be endured, love smiles and calls them favours, and wears them willingly.

——————— Alii jacuere ligati
Turpiter, atque aliquis de Diis non tristibus optat
Sic fieri turpis,———————

"It is the Lord," said David, and "I will yet be more vile, and it shall be honour unto me;" thus did the disciples of our Lord go "from tribunals, rejoicing that they were accounted worthy to suffer stripes for that beloved name;" and we are commanded "to rejoice in persecutions, to resist unto blood, to strive to enter in at the strait gate, not to be weary of well-doing;" do it hugely, and do it always. "Non enim votis neque suppliciis mulieribus auxilia Deorum parantur; sed vigilando, agendo, bene consulendo, omnia prospere cedunt." No man can obtain the favour of God by words and imperfect resolutions, by lazy actions and a remiss piety; but by severe counsels and sober actions, by watchfulness and prudence, by doing excellent things with holy intentions and vigorous prosecutions. "Ubi socordiæ et ignaviæ te tradideris, nequicquam Deos implorabis:" if your virtues be lazy, your vices will be bold and active: and therefore Democritus said well, that the painful and the soft-handed people in religion differ just as good men and bad; "nimirum, spe bonâ," the labouring charity hath "a good hope," but a cool religion hath none at all; and the distinction will have a sad effect to eternal ages.

These are the great scenes of duty, in which we are to be fervent and zealous; but because earnestness and zeal are circumstances of a great latitude, and the zeal of the present age is stark cold, if compared to the fervours of the apostles, and other holy primitives; and in every age a good man's care may turn into scruple, if he sees that he is not the best man, because he may reckon his own estate to stand in the confines of darkness, because his spark is not so great as his neighbour's fires, therefore it is fit that we consider concerning the degrees of the intention and forward heats; for when we have found out the lowest degrees of zeal, and a holy fervour, we know that duty dwells there, and whatsoever is above it, is a degree of excellence; but all that is less than it, is lukewarmness, and the state of an ungracious and an unaccepted person.

1. No man is fervent and zealous as he ought, but he that prefers religion before business, charity before his own ease, the relief of his brother before money, heaven before secular regards, and God before his friend or interest. Which rule is not to be understood absolutely, and in particular instances, but always generally; and when it descends to particulars, it must be in proportion to circumstances, and by their proper measures: for,

1. In the whole course of life it is necessary, that we prefer religion before any state that is either contrary to it, or a lessening of its duties.—He that hath a state of life, in which he cannot at all, in fair proportions, tend to religion, must quit great proportions of that, that he may enjoy more of this; this is that which our blessed Saviour calls "pulling out the right eye, if it offend thee."

2. In particular actions, when the necessity is equal, he, that does not prefer religion, is not at all zealous;—for although all natural necessities are to be served before the circumstances and order of religion, yet our belly and our back, our liberty and our life, our health and a friend, are to be neglected rather than a duty, when it stands in its proper place, and is required.

3. Although the things of God are by a necessary zeal to be preferred before the things of the world, yet we must take heed, that we do not reckon religion, and orders of worshipping, only to be "the things of God," and all other duties to be "the things of the world;" for it was a pharisaical de-

vice to cry *Corban*, and to refuse to relieve their aged parents: it is good to give to a church, but it is better to give to the poor; and though they must be both provided for, yet in cases of dispute mercy carries the cause against religion and the temple. And although Mary was commended for choosing the better part, yet Mary had done worse, if she had been at the foot of her Master when she should have relieved a perishing brother. Martha was troubled with much serving; that was "more than need," and therefore she was to blame; and sometimes hearing in some circumstances may be "more than needs;" and some women are "troubled with over-much hearing," and then they had better have been serving the necessities of their house.

4. This rule is not to be extended to the relatives of religion; for although the things of the Spirit are better than the things of the world, yet a spiritual man is not in human regards to be preferred before princes and noble personages. Because a man is called spiritual in several regards, and for various measures and manners of partaking of the Spirit of grace, or co-operating towards the works of the Spirit. A king and a bishop both have callings in order to godliness, and honesty, and spiritual effects, towards the advancement of Christ's kingdom, whose representatives severally they are. But whether of these two works more immediately, or more effectively, cannot at all times be known; and therefore from hence no argument can be drawn concerning doing them civil regards; and possibly, "the partaking the Spirit" is a nearer relation to him, than doing his ministries, and serving his ends upon others; and if relation to God and God's Spirit could bring an obligation of giving proportionable civil honour, every holy man might put in some pretence for dignities above some kings and some bishops. But as the things of the Spirit are in order to the affairs of another world, so they naturally can infer only such a relative dignity, as can be expressed in spiritual manners. But because such relations are subjected in men of this life, and we now converse especially in material and secular significations, therefore we are to express our regards to men of such relations by proportionable expressions: but because civil excellencies are the proper ground of receiving and exacting civil honours, and spiritual excellencies do only claim them accidentally and indirectly; therefore, in titles of honour and human regards, the civil preeminence is the appendix of the greatest civil power and employment, and is to descend in proper measures; and for a spiritual relation to challenge a temporal dignity, is as if the best music should challenge the best clothes, or a lutestring should contend with a rose for the honour of the greatest sweetness. Add to this, that although temporal things are in order to spiritual, and therefore are less perfect, yet this is not so naturally; for temporal things are properly in order to the felicity of man in his proper and present constitution; and it is by a supernatural grace, that now they are thrust forward to a higher end of grace and glory; and therefore temporal things, and persons, and callings, have properly the chiefest temporal regard; and Christ took nothing of this away from them, but put them higher, by sanctifying and ennobling them. But then the higher calling can no more suppose the higher man, than the richest trade can suppose the richest man. From callings to men, the argument is fallacious; and a smith is a more useful man than he that teaches logic, but not always to be more esteemed, and called to stand at the chairs of princes and nobles. Holy persons and holy things, and all great relations, are to be valued by general proportions to their correlatives; but if we descend to make minute and exact proportions, and proportion an inch of temporal to a minute of spiritual, we must needs be hugely deceived, unless we could measure the motion of an angel by a string, or the progressions of the Spirit by weight and measure of the staple. And yet if these measures were taken, it would be unreasonable that the lower of the higher kind should be preferred before the most perfect and excellent in a lower order of things. A man generally is to be esteemed above a woman, but not the meanest of her subjects before the most excellent queen; not always this man before this woman. Now kings and princes are the best in all temporal dignities; and therefore if they had in them no spiritual relations and consequent excellencies, (as they have very many,) yet are not to be undervalued to spiritual relations, which in this world are very imperfect, weak, partial; and must stay till the next world before they are in a state of excellency, propriety, and perfection; and then also all shall have them, according to the worth of their persons, not of their calling.

But, lastly, what men may not challenge, is not their just and proper due; but spiritual persons and the nearest relatives to God stand by him but so long as they dwell low and safe in humility, and rise high in nothing but in labours, and zeal of souls, and devotion. In proportion to this rule, a church may be pulled down to save a town, and the vessels of the church may be sold to redeem captives, when there is a great calamity imminent, and prepared for relief, and no other way to succour it.

But in the whole, the duty of zeal requires, that we neglect an ordinary visit rather than an ordinary prayer, and a great profit rather than omit a required duty. No excuse can legitimate a sin; and he that goes about to distinguish between his duty and his profit, and if he cannot reconcile them, will yet tie them together like a hyæna and a dog, this man pretends to religion but secures the world, and is indifferent and lukewarm towards that, so he may be warm and safe in the possession of this.

2. To that fervour and zeal that is necessary and a duty, it is required that we be constant and persevering. "Esto fidelis ad mortem," said the Spirit of God to the angel of the church of Smyrna, "Be faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." For he that is warm to-day and cold to-morrow, zealous in his resolution and weary in his practices, fierce in the beginning and slack and easy in his progress, hath not yet well chosen what side he will be of; he sees not reason enough for religion,

and he hath not confidence enough for its contrary; and therefore he is "duplicis animi," as St. James calls him; "of a doubtful mind." For religion is worth as much to-day as it was yesterday, and that cannot change though we do; and if we do, we have left God, and whither he can go that goes from God, his own sorrows will soon enough instruct him. This fire must never go out, but it must be like the fire of heaven, it must shine like the stars, though sometimes covered with a cloud, or obscured by a greater light; yet they dwell for ever in their orbs, and walk in their circles, and observe their circumstances, but go not out by day nor night, and set not when kings die, nor are extinguished when nations change their government: so must the zeal of a christian be, a constant incentive of his duty; and though sometimes his hand is drawn back by violence or need, and his prayers shortened by the importunity of business, and some parts omitted by necessities and just compliances, yet still the fire is kept alive; it burns within when the light breaks not forth, and is eternal as the orb of fire, or the embers of the altar of incense.

3. No man is zealous as he ought, but he that delights in the service of God:—without this no man can persevere, but must faint under the continual pressure of an uneasy load. If a man goes to his prayers as children go to school, or give alms as those that pay contribution, and meditate with the same willingness with which young men die, this man does "personam sustinere," "he acts a part" which he cannot long personate, but will find so many excuses and silly devices to omit his duty, such tricks to run from that which will make him happy; he will so watch the eyes of men, and be so sure to do nothing in private; he will so often distinguish and mince the duty into minutes and little particles, he will so tie himself to the letter of the law, and be so careless of the intention and spiritual design, he will be punctual in the ceremony and trifling in the secret, and he will be so well pleased when he is hindered by an accident not of his own procuring, and will have so many devices to defeat his duty, and to cozen himself, that he will certainly manifest, that he is afraid of religion, and secretly hates it; he counts it a burden, and an objection, and then the man is sure to leave it, when his circumstances are so fitted. But if we delight in it, we enter into a portion of the reward, as soon as we begin the work, and the very grace shall be stronger than the temptation in its very pretence of pleasure; and therefore it must needs be pleasing to God, because it confesses God to be the best master, religion the best work, and it serves God with choice and will, and reconciles our nature to it, and entertains our appetite; and then there is no "ansa" or "handle" left, whereby we can easily be drawn from duty, when all parties are pleased with the employment. But this delight is not to be understood as if it were always required that we should feel an actual cheerfulness and sensible joy; such as was that of Jonathan, when he had newly tasted honey, and the light came into his eyes, and he was refreshed and pleasant. This happens sometimes, when God pleases to entice, or reward a man's spirit, with little antepasts of heaven; but such a delight only is necessary, and a duty, that we always choose our duty regularly, and undervalue the pleasures of temptation, and proceed in the work of grace with a firm choice and unabated election; our joy must be a joy of hope, a joy at the least of confident sufferers, the joys of faith and expectation; "rejoicing in hope," so the apostle calls it; that is, a going forward upon such a persuasion as sees the joys of God laid up for the children of men: and so the sun may shine under a cloud; and a man may rejoice in persecution, and delight in losses; that is, though his outward man groans, and faints, and dies, yet his spirit, ὁ ἔσω ἄνθρωπος, "the inner man," is confident and industrious, and hath a hope by which it lives and works unto the end: it was the case of our blessed Saviour in his agony; his "soul was exceeding sorrowful unto death," and the load of his Father's anger crushed his shoulder, and bowed his knees to the ground; and yet he chose it, and still went forward, and resolved to die, and did so; and what we choose we delight in; and we think it to be eligible, and therefore amiable, and fit by its proper excellencies and appendages to be delighted in; it is not pleasant to the flesh at all times, for its dignity is spiritual and heavenly; but therefore it is proportioned to the spirit, which is as heavenly as the reward, and therefore can feel the joys of it, when the body hangs the head, and is uneasy and troubled.

These are the necessary parts of zeal; of which if any man fails, he is in a state of lukewarmness: and that is a spiritual death. As a banished man or a condemned person is dead civilly; he is "diminutus capite," he is not reckoned in the "census," nor partakes of the privileges, nor goes for a person, but is reckoned among things in the possession of others: so is a lukewarm person; he is "corde diminutus," he is spiritually dead, his heart is estranged from God, his affections are lessened, his hope diminished, and his title cancelled; and he remains so, unless, 1. He prefers religion before the world, and, 2. Spiritually rejoices in doing his duty, and, 3. Does it constantly, and with perseverance. These are the heats and warmth of life; whatsoever is less than this, is a disease, and leads to the coldness and dishonours of the grave.

SERMON XIV.

PART III.

3. So long as our zeal and forwardness in religion hath only these constituent parts, it hath no more than can keep the duty alive: but beyond this, there are many degrees of earnestness and vehemence, which are progressions towards the state of perfection, which every man ought to design and desire to be added to his portion: of this sort I

reckon frequency in prayer, and alms above our estate. Concerning which two instances, I have these two cautions to insert.

1. Concerning frequency in prayer, it is an act of zeal so ready and prepared for the spirit of a man, so easy and useful, so without objection, and so fitted for every man's affairs, his necessities and possibilities, that he that prays but seldom cannot in any sense pretend to be a religious person. For in Scripture there is no other rule for the frequency of prayer given us, but by such words which signify we should do it "always," "pray continually;" and, "men ought always to pray and not to faint." And then, men have so many necessities, that if we should esteem our needs to be the circumstances and positive determination of our times of prayer, we should be very far from admitting limitation of the former words, but they must mean, that we ought to pray frequently every day. For in danger and trouble, natural religion teaches us to pray; in a festival fortune, our prudence and our needs enforce us equally. For though we feel not a present smart, yet we are certain then is our biggest danger: and if we observe how the world treats her darlings, men of riches and honour, of prosperity and great success, we cannot but confess them to be the most miserable of all men, as being in the greatest danger of losing their biggest interest. For they are bigger than the iron hand of law, and they cannot be restrained with fear: the hand grasps a power of doing all that which their evil heart can desire, and they cannot be restrained with disability to sin; they are flattered by all mean, and base, and undiligent persons, which are the greatest part of mankind; but few men dare reprove a potent sinner; he shall every day be flattered and seldom counselled: and his great reflections and opinions of his condition make him impatient of reproof, and so he cannot be restrained with modesty: and therefore as the needs of the poor man, his rent-day, and the cries of his children, and the oppression he groans under, and his δυσκολόκοιτος μέριμνα, his uneasy, "ill-sleeping care,"—will make him run to his prayers, that in heaven a new decree may be passed every day for the provisions of his daily bread: so the greater needs of the rich, their temptations, and their dangers, the flattery and the vanity, the power and the pride, their business and evil estate of the whole world upon them, call upon them to be zealous in this instance, that they "pray often," that they "pray without ceasing;" for there is great reason they should do so, and great security and advantage, if they do; for he that prays well and prays often, must needs be a good and a blessed man; and truly he that does not, deserves no pity for his misery. For when all the troubles and dangers of his condition may turn into his good, if he will but desire they should; when upon such easy terms he may be happy, for there is no more trouble in it than this, "Ask and ye shall receive;" that is all that is required; no more turnings and variety in their road: when (I say) at so cheap a rate, a poor man may be provided for, and a rich man may escape damnation, he that refuses to apply himself to this remedy, quickly, earnestly, zealously, and constantly, deserves the smart of his poverty, and the care of it, and the scorn, if he be poor; and if he be rich, it is fit he should (because he desires it) die by the evils of his proper danger. It was observed by Cassian, "Orationibus maxime insidiantur dæmones;" "The devil is more busy to disturb our prayers, than to hinder any thing else." For else it cannot be imagined, why we should be brought to pray so seldom; and to be so listless to them, and so trifling at them. No, the devil knows upon what hard terms he stands with the praying man; he also knows, that it is a mighty emanation of God's infinite goodness and a strange desire of saving mankind, that he hath to so easy a duty promised such mighty blessings. For God knowing, that upon hard terms we would not accept of heaven itself, and yet hell was so intolerable a state, that God who loved us, would affix heaven to a state of prayer and devotion; this, because the devil knows to be one of the greatest arts of the Divine mercy, he labours infinitely to supplant; and if he can but make men unwilling to pray, or to pray coldly, or to pray seldom, he secures his interest, and destroys the man's; and it is infinitely strange, that he can and doth prevail so much in this so unreasonable temptation. "Opposuisti nubem, ne transiret oratio," the mourning prophet complained,[z] "there was a cloud passed between heaven and the prayer of Judah;" a little thing, God knows; it was a wall, which might have been blown down with a few hearty sighs, and a few penitential tears; or if the prayers had ascended in a full and numerous body, themselves would have broken through that little partition; but so the devil prevails often; "opponit nubem," "he claps a cloud between:" some little objection; "a stranger is come;" or, "my head aches;" or, "the church is too cold;" or, "I have letters to write;" or, "I am not disposed;" or, "it is not yet time;" or, "the time is past:" these, and such as these, are the clouds the devil claps between heaven and us; but these are such impotent objections, that they were as soon confuted as pretended, by all men that are not fools, or professed enemies of religion, but that they are clouds, which sometimes look like lions and bears, castles and walls of fire, armies and horses; and indeed are any thing that a man will fancy; and the smallest article of objection managed and conducted by the devil's arts, and meeting with a wretchless, careless, undevout spirit, is a lion in the way, and a deep river; it is impassable, and it is impregnable. Γίνονται πάνθ' ὅ, τι ἂν βούλονται νεφέλαι· λύκοι ἐὰν Σίμωνα εἰσίδωσι, ἐλαφοὶ τῷ Κλεωνύμῳ;[a] as the sophister said in the Greek comedy, "Clouds become any thing as they are represented; wolves to Simon, harts to Cleonymus;" for the devil fits us with clouds, according as we can be abused; and if we love affairs of the world, he can contrive its circumstances so, that they shall cross our prayers; and so it is in every instance: and the best way to cure this evil is prayer; pray often, and pray zealously, and the Sun of righteousness will scatter these

[z] Lam. iii. 44. [a] Arist. Νεφέλαι.

clouds, and warm our hearts with his holy fires: but it is in this as in all acquired habits; the habit makes the action easy and pleasant; but this habit cannot be gotten without frequent actions: habits are the daughters of action; but then they nurse their mother, and produce daughters after her image, but far more beautiful and prosperous. For in frequent prayer there is so much rest and pleasure, that as soon as ever it is perceived, the contrary temptation appears unreasonable; none are so unwilling to pray, as they that pray seldom; for they that do pray often, and with zeal, and passion, and desire, feel no trouble so great, as when they are forced to omit their holy offices and hours of prayers. It concerns the devil's interest to keep us from all the experience of the rewards of a frequent and holy prayer; and so long as you will not try and "taste how good and gracious the Lord is" to the praying man, so long you cannot see the evil of your coldness and lukewarm state; but if you would but try, though it be but for curiosity's sake, and inform yourselves in the vanity of things, and the truth of pretences, and the certainty of theological propositions, you should find yourselves taken in a golden snare, which will tie you to nothing but felicity, and safety, and holiness, and pleasure. But then the caution, which I intended to insert, is this; that frequency in prayers, and that part of zeal which relates to it, is to be upon no account but of a holy spirit, a wise heart, and reasonable persuasion; for if it begin upon passion or fear, in imitation of others, or desires of reputation, honour, and fantastic principles, it will be unblessed and weary, unprosperous, and without return of satisfaction; therefore if it happen to begin upon a weak principle, be very curious to change the motive, and with all speed let it be turned into religion and the love of holy things: then, let it be as frequent as it can prudently, it cannot be amiss.

When you are entered into a state of zealous prayer, and a regular devotion, whatever interruption you can meet with, observe their causes, and be sure to make them irregular, seldom, and contingent, that your omissions may be seldom and casual, as a bare accident; for which no provisions can be made: for if ever it come, that you take any thing habitually and constantly from your prayers, or that you distract from them very frequently, it cannot be but you will become troublesome to yourself; your prayers will be uneasy, they will seem hinderances to your more necessary affairs of passion and interest, and the things of the world: and it will not stand still, till it comes to apostasy, and a direct dispute and contempt of holy things. For it was an old rule, and of a sad experience, "Tepiditas, si callum obduxerit, fiet apostasia:" "If your lukewarmness be habitual and a state of life, if it once be hardened by the usages of many days, it changes the whole state of the man, it makes him an apostate to devotion." Therefore be infinitely careful in this particular, always remembering the saying of St. Chrysostom; "Docendi, prædicandi officia et alia cessant suo tempore, precandi autem nunquam;" "There are seasons for teaching, and preaching, and other outward offices; but prayer is the duty of all times, and of all persons, and in all contingencies: from other things, in many cases, we may be excused, but from prayer never." In this, therefore, καλὸν ζηλοῦσθαι, "it is good to be zealous."

2. Concerning the second instance I named, viz. To give alms above our estate, it is an excellent act of zeal, and needs no other caution to make it secure from illusion and danger, but that our egressions of charity do not prejudice justice. See that your alms do not other men wrong; and let them do what they can to thyself, they will never prejudice thee by their abundance; but then be also careful, that the pretences of justice do not cozen thyself of thy charity, and the poor of thine alms, and thy soul of the reward. He that is in debt, is not excused from giving alms till his debts are paid; but only from giving away such portions which should and would pay them, and such which he intended should do it: there are "lacernæ divitiarum," and crumbs from the table, and the gleanings of the harvest, and the scatterings of the vintage, which in all estates are the portions of the poor, which being collected by the hand of Providence, and united wisely, may become considerable to the poor, and are the necessary duties of charity; but beyond this also, every considerable relief to the poor is not a considerable diminution to the estate; and yet if it be, it is not always considerable in the accounts of justice; for nothing ought to be pretended against the zeal of alms, but the certain omissions, or the very probable retarding the doing that, to which we are otherwise obliged. He that is going to pay a debt, and in the way meets an indigent person that needs it all, may not give it to him, unless he knows by other means to pay the debt; but if he can do both, he hath his liberty to lay out his money for a crown. But then in the case of provision for children, our restraint is not so easy, or discernible; 1. Because we are not bound to provide for them in a certain portion, but may do it by the analogies and measures of prudence, in which there is a great latitude. 2. Because our zeal of charity is a good portion for them, and lays up a blessing for inheritance. 3. Because the fairest portions of charity are usually short of such sums, which can be considerable in the duty of provision for our children. 4. If we for them could be content to take any measure less than all, any thing under every thing that we can, we should find the portions of the poor made ready to our hands sufficiently to minister to zeal, and yet not to intrench upon this case of conscience; but the truth is, we are so careless, so unskilled, so unstudied, in religion,—that we are only glad to make an excuse, and to defeat our souls of the reward of the noblest grace: we are contented, if we can but make a pretence; for we are highly pleased if our conscience be quiet, and care not so much that our duty be performed, much less that our eternal interest be advanced in bigger portions. We care not, we strive not, we think not, of getting the greater rewards of heaven; and he whose desires are so indifferent for the greater, will not take pains to secure the smallest portion; and it is observable,

that ἐλάχιστος ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ, "the least in the kingdom of heaven,"[b] is as much as οὐδεὶς, "as good as none;" if a man will be content with his hopes of the lowest place there, and will not labour for something beyond it, he does not value it at all; and it is ten to one, but he will lose that for which he takes so little pains, and is content with so easy a security. He,—that does his alms, and resolves that in no case he will suffer inconvenience for his brother, whose case it may be is intolerable,—should do well to remember, that God, in some cases, requires a greater charity; and it may be, we shall be called to die for the good of our brother; and that although it always supposes a zeal, and a holy fervour, yet sometimes it is also a duty, and we lose our lives if we go to save them; and so we do with our estates, when we are such good husbands in our religion, that we will serve all our own conveniences before the great needs of a hungry and afflicted brother, God oftentimes takes from us that which with so much curiosity we would preserve, and then we lose our money and our reward too.

3. Hither is to be reduced the accepting and choosing the counsels evangelical: the virgin or widow estate in order to religion: selling all, and giving it to the poor: making ourselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven: offering ourselves to death voluntarily, in exchange or redemption of the life of a most useful person, as "Aquila and Priscilla, who ventured their lives for St. Paul:" the zeal of souls: St. Paul's preaching to the Corinthian church without wages: remitting of rights and forgiving of debts, when the obliged person could pay, but not without much trouble: protection of calamitous persons with hazard of our own interest and a certain trouble; concerning which and all other acts of zeal, we are to observe the following measures, by which our zeal will become safe and holy, and by them also we shall perceive the excesses of zeal, and its inordinations: which is the next thing I am to consider.

1. The first measure, by which our zeal may comply with our duty, and its actions become laudable, is charity to our neighbour. For since God receives all that glorification of himself, whereby we can serve and minister to his glory, reflected upon the foundation of his own goodness, and bounty, and mercy, and all the hallelujahs that are or ever shall be sung in heaven, are praises and thanksgivings; and that God himself does not receive glory from the acts of his justice, but then when his creatures will not rejoice in his goodness and mercy; it follows that we imitate this original excellency, and pursue God's own method; that is, glorify him "in via misericordiæ," "in the way of mercy" and bounty, charity and forgiveness, love and fair compliances: there is no greater charity in the world than to save a soul, nothing that pleases God better, nothing that can be in our hands greater or more noble, nothing that can be a more lasting and delightful honour, than that a perishing soul,—snatched from the flames of an intolerable hell, and borne to heaven upon the wings of piety and mercy by the ministry of angels, and the graces of the Holy Spirit,—shall to eternal ages bless God and bless thee; Him, for the author and finisher of salvation, and thee for the minister and charitable instrument: that bright star must needs look pleasantly upon thy face for ever, which was by thy hand placed there, and, had it not been for thy ministry, might have been a sooty coal in the regions of sorrow. Now, in order to this, God hath given us all some powers and ministries, by which we may by our charity promote this religion, and the great interest of souls: counsels and prayers, preaching and writing, passionate desires and fair examples, going before others in the way of godliness, and bearing the torch before them, that they may see the way and walk in it. This is a charity, that is prepared more or less for every one; and, by the way, we should do well to consider, what we have done towards it. For as it will be a strange arrest at the day of judgment to Dives, that he fed high and suffered Lazarus to starve, and every garment,—that lies by thee and perishes, while thy naked brother does so too for want of it,—shall be a bill of indictment against thy unmerciful soul; so it will be in every instance: in what thou couldst profit thy brother and didst not, thou art accountable; and then tell over the times, in which thou hast prayed for the conversion of thy sinning brother; and compare the times together, and observe, whether thou hast not tempted him or betrayed him to sin, or encouraged him in it, or didst not hinder him, when thou mightest, more frequently than thou hast, humbly, and passionately, and charitably, and zealously, bowed thy head, and thy heart, and knees, to God to redeem that poor soul from hell, whither thou seest him descending with as much indifferency as a stone into the bottom of the well. In this thing καλὸν ζηλοῦσθαι, "it is a good thing to be zealous," and put forth all your strength, for you can never go too far. But then be careful, that this zeal of thy neighbour's amendment be only expressed in ways of charity, not of cruelty, or importune justice. "He that strikes the prince for justice," as Solomon's expression is, "is a companion of murderers;" and he that, out of zeal of religion, shall go to convert nations to his opinion by destroying christians, whose faith is entire and summed up by the apostles, this man breaks the ground with a sword, and sows tares, and waters the ground with blood, and ministers to envy and cruelty, to errors and mistake, and there comes up nothing but poppies to please the eye and fancy, disputes and hypocrisy, new summaries of religion estimated by measures of anger, and accursed principles; and so much of the religion as is necessary to salvation, is laid aside, and that brought forth that serves an interest, not holiness; that fills the schools of a proud man, but not that which will fill heaven. Any zeal is proper for religion, but the zeal of the sword and the zeal of anger; this is πικρία ζήλου, "the bitterness of zeal;"[c] and it is a certain temptation to every man against his duty: for if the sword turns preacher, and dictates propositions by empire instead of arguments, and engraves

[b] Matt. v. 16.

[c] James iii. 14.

them in men's hearts with a poniard, that it shall be death to believe what I innocently and ignorantly am persuaded of, it must needs be unsafe to "try the spirits, to try all things," to make inquiry; and yet without this liberty, no man can justify himself before God and man, nor confidently say that his religion is best: since he cannot without a final danger make himself able to give a right sentence, and to follow that which he finds to be the best; this may ruin souls by making hypocrites, or careless and compliant against conscience or without it; but it does not save souls, though peradventure it should force them to a good opinion: this is inordination of zeal; for Christ,—by reproving St. Peter, drawing his sword, even in the cause of Christ, for his sacred, and yet injured person, *διδάσκει μὴ χρῆσθαι μαχαίρᾳ κἂν τόν Θεὸν δοκεῖ τις ἐκδικεῖν*, (saith Theophylact,)—"teaches us not to use the sword though in the cause of God, or for God himself;" because he will secure his own interest, only let him be served as himself is pleased to command: and it is like Moses's passion, it throws the tables of the law out of our hands, and breaks them in pieces out of indignation to see them broken. This is zeal that is now in fashion, and hath almost spoiled religion; men, like the zealots of the Jews, cry up their sect, and in it their interest; *ζηλοῦσι μαθητὰς, καὶ μαχαίρας ἀνασύρονται*; "they affect disciples and fight against the opponents;" and we shall find in Scripture, that when the apostles began to preach the meekness of the christian institution, salvations and promises, charity and humility, there was a zeal set up against them; the apostles were zealous for the gospel, the Jews were zealous for the law: and see what different effects these two zeals did produce; the zeal of the law came to this, *ἐθορύβουν τὴν πόλιν*, and *ἐδίωξαν μεχρὶ θανάτου*, and *ἀνασύρονται*, and *ὀχλοποιήσαντες*, "they stirred up the city, they made tumults, they persecuted this way unto the death, they got letters from the high priest, they kept Damascus with a garrison," they sent parties of soldiers to silence and to imprison the preachers, and thought they did God service, when they put the apostles to death, and they swore "neither to eat nor to drink, till they had killed Paul." It was an old trick of the Jewish zeal,

> Non monstrare vias, eadem nisi sacra colenti:
> Quæsitum ad fontem solos deducere verpos. JUV.

They would not show the way to a Samaritan, nor give a cup of cold water but to a circumcised brother; that was their zeal. But the zeal of the apostles was this, they preached publicly and privately, they prayed for all men, they wept to God for the hardness of men's hearts, they "became all things to all men, that they might gain some," they travelled through deeps and deserts, they endured the heat of the Sirian star, and the violence of Euroclydon, winds and tempests, seas and prisons, mockings and scourgings, fastings and poverty, labour and watching, they endured every man and wronged no man, they would do any good thing and suffer any evil, if they had but hopes to prevail upon a soul; they persuaded men meekly, they entreated them humbly, they convinced them powerfully, they watched for their good, but meddled not with their interest; and this is the christian zeal, the zeal of meekness, the zeal of charity, the zeal of patience, *ἐν τούτοις καλὸν ζηλοῦσθαι*, "In these it is good to be zealous," for you can never go far enough.

2. The next measure of zeal is prudence. For, as charity is the matter of zeal; so is discretion the manner. It must always be for good to our neighbour, and there need no rules for the conducting of that, provided the end be consonant to the design, that is, that charity be intended, and charity be done. But there is a zeal also of religion or worshipping, and this hath more need of measures and proper cautions. For religion can turn into a snare; it may be abused into superstition, it may become weariness in the spirit, and tempt to tediousness, to hatred, and despair: and many persons, through their indiscreet conduct, and furious marches, and great loads taken upon tender shoulders and inexperienced, have come to be perfect haters of their joy, and despisers of all their hopes; being like dark lanterns, in which a candle burns bright, but the body is encompassed with a crust and a dark cloud of iron; and these men keep the fires and light of holy propositions within them, but the darkness of hell, the hardness of a vexed heart, hath shaded all the light, and makes it neither apt to warm nor to enlighten others, but it turns to fire within, a fever and a distemper dwell there, and religion is become their torment.

1. Therefore our zeal must never carry us beyond that which is profitable. There are many institutions, customs, and usages, introduced into religion upon very fair motives, and adapted to great necessities; but to imitate those things, when they are disrobed of their proper ends, is an importune zeal, and signifies nothing but a froward mind, and an easy heart, and an imprudent head; unless these actions can be invested with other ends and useful purposes. The primitive church were strangely inspired with a zeal of virginity, in order to the necessities of preaching and travelling, and easing the troubles and temptations of persecution; but when the necessity went on, and drove the holy men into deserts, that made colleges of religious, and their manner of life was such, so united, so poor, so dressed, that they must love "more non seculari," "after the manner of men divorced from the usual intercourses of the world:" still their desire of single life increased, because the old necessity lasted, and a new one did supervene. Afterwards the case was altered, and then the single life was not to be chosen for itself, nor yet in imitation of the first precedents; for it could not be taken out from their circumstances and be used alone. He therefore that thinks he is a more holy person for being a virgin or a widower, or that he is bound to be so because they were so; or that he cannot be a religious person because he is not so; hath zeal indeed, but not according to knowledge. But now if the single state can be taken out and put to new appendages, and fitted to the end of another grace or essential duty of religion, it will well become a christian zeal

to choose it so long, as it can serve the end with advantage and security. Thus also a zealous person is to choose his fastings, while they are necessary to him, and are acts of proper mortification, while he is tempted, or while he is under discipline, while he repents, or while he obeys; but some persons fast in zeal, but for nothing else; fast when they have no need, when there is need they should not; but call it religion to be miserable or sick; here their zeal is folly, for it is neither an act of religion nor of prudence, to fast when fasting probably serves no end of the spirit; and therefore in the fasting-days of the church, although it is warrant enough to us to fast, if we had no end to serve in it but the mere obedience, yet it is necessary that the superiors should not think the law obeyed, unless the end of the first institution be observed: a fasting-day is a day of humiliation and prayer; and fasting being nothing itself, but wholly the handmaid of a further grace, ought not to be divested of its holiness and sanctification, and left like the walls of a ruinous church where there is no duty performed to God, but there remains something of that, which used to minister to religion. The want of this consideration hath caused so much scandal and dispute, so many snares and schisms, concerning ecclesiastical fasts. For when it was undressed and stripped of all the ornaments and useful appendages, when from a solemn day it grew to be common; from thence to be less devout by being less seldom and less useful; and then it passed from a day of religion to be a day of order, and from fasting till night to fasting till evening-song, and evening-song to be sung about twelve o'clock; and from fasting it was changed to a choice of food, from eating nothing to eating fish, and that the letter began to be stood upon, and no usefulness remained but what every of his own piety should put into it, but nothing was enjoined by the law, nothing of that exacted by the superiors, then the law fell into disgrace, and the design became suspected, and men were first insnared and then scandalized, and then began to complain without remedy, and at last took remedy themselves without authority; the whole affair fell into a disorder and mischief; and zeal was busy on both sides, and on both sides was mistaken, because they fell not upon the proper remedy, which was to reduce the law to the usefulness and advantages of its first intention. But this I intended not to have spoken.

2. Our zeal must never carry us beyond that which is safe. Some there are, who in their first attempts and entries upon religion, while the passion, that brought them in, remains, undertake things as great as their highest thoughts; no repentance is sharp enough, no charities expensive enough, no fastings afflictive enough, then "totis quinquatribus orant;" and finding some deliciousness at the first contest, and in that activity of their passion, they make vows to bind themselves for ever to this state of delicacies. The onset is fair: but the event is this. The age of a passion is not long, and the flatulent spirit being breathed out, the man begins to abate of his first heats, and is ashamed: but then he considers that all that was not necessary, and therefore he will abate something more; and from something to something, at last it will come to just nothing, and the proper effect of this is, indignation, and hatred of holy things, an impudent spirit, carelessness or despair. Zeal sometimes carries a man into temptation; and he that never thinks he loves God dutifully or acceptably, because he is not imprisoned for him or undone, or designed to martyrdom, may desire a trial that will undo him. It is like fighting of a duel to show our valour. Stay till the king commands you to fight and die, and then let zeal do its noblest offices. This irregularity and mistake was too frequent in the primitive church, when men and women would strive for death, and be ambitious to feel the hangman's sword; some miscarried in the attempt, and became sad examples of the unequal yoking a frail spirit with a zealous driver.

3. Let zeal never transport us to attempt any thing but what is possible. M. Teresa made a vow, that she would do always that, which was absolutely the best. But neither could her understanding always tell her which was so, nor her will always have the same fervours; and it must often breed scruples, and sometimes tediousness, and wishes that the vow were unmade. He that vows never to have an ill thought, never to commit an error, hath taken a course, that his little infirmities shall become crimes, and certainly be imputed by changing his unavoidable infirmity into vow-breach. Zeal is a violence to a man's spirit, and unless the spirit be secured by the proper nature of the duty, and the circumstances of the action, and the possibilities of the man; it is like a great fortune in the meanest person, it bears him beyond his limit, and breaks him into dangers and passions, transportations and all the furies of disorder, that can happen to an abused person.

4. Zeal is not safe, unless it be "in re probabili" too, it must be "in a likely matter." For we that find so many excuses to untie all our just obligations, and distinguish our duty into so much fineness, that it becomes like leaf-gold, apt to be gone at every breath; it cannot be prudent that we zealously undertake what is not probable to be effected: if we do, the event can be nothing but portions of the former evil, scruple and snares, shameful retreats and new fantastic principles. In all our undertakings we must consider what is our state of life, what our natural inclinations, what is our society, and what are our dependencies; by what necessities we are borne down, by what hopes we are biassed; and by these let us measure our heats and their proper business. A zealous man runs up a sandy hill; the violence of motion is his greatest hinderance: and a passion in religion destroys as much of our evenness of spirit, as it sets forward any outward work; and therefore, although it be a good circumstance and degree of a spiritual duty, so long as it is within, and relative to God and ourselves, so long it is a holy flame; but if it be in an outward duty, or relative to our neighbours, or in an instance not necessary, it sometimes spoils the action, and always endangers it. But I must remember, we live in an

age in which men have more need of new fires to be kindled within them and round about them, than of any thing to allay their forwardness: there is little or no zeal now but the zeal of envy, and killing as many as they can, and damning more than they can; πύρωσις and καπνὸς πυρώσεως, "smoke and lurking fires," do corrode and secretly consume: therefore this discourse is less necessary. A physician would have but small employment near the Riphæan mountains, if he could cure nothing but calentures; catarrhs, and dead palsies, colds and consumptions, are their evils, and so is lukewarmness and deadness of spirit the proper maladies of our age: for though some are hot when they are mistaken, yet men are cold in a righteous cause; and the nature of this evil is to be insensible; and the men are farther from a cure, because they neither feel their evil nor perceive their danger. But of this I have already given account; and to it I shall only add what an old spiritual person told a novice in religion, asking him the cause why he so frequently suffered tediousness in his religious offices; "Nondum vidisti requiem quam speramus, nec tormenta quæ timemus:"—"Young man, thou hast not seen the glories which are laid up for the zealous and devout, nor yet beheld the flames which are prepared for the lukewarm, and the haters of strict devotion." But the Jews tell, that Adam having seen the beauties and tasted the delicacies of paradise, repented and mourned upon the Indian mountains for three hundred years together: and we who have a great share in the cause of his sorrows, can by nothing be invited to a persevering, a great, a passionate religion, more than by remembering what he lost, and what is laid up for them whose hearts are burning lamps, and are all on fire with Divine love, whose flames are fanned with the wings of the Holy Dove, and whose spirits shine and burn with that fire which the Holy Jesus came to enkindle upon the earth.

SERMON XV.

THE HOUSE OF FEASTING; OR, THE EPICURE'S MEASURES.

PART I.

Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.—1 Cor. xv. 32. last part.

THIS is the epicure's proverb, begun upon a weak mistake, started by chance from the discourses of drink, and thought witty by the undiscerning company, and prevailed infinitely, because it struck their fancy luckily, and maintained the merry meeting; but as it happens commonly to such discourses, so this also, when it comes to be examined by the consultations of the morning, and the sober hours of the day, it seems the most witless and the most unreasonable in the world. When Seneca describes the spare diet of Epicurus and Metrodorus, he uses this expression: "Liberaliora sunt alimenta carceris: sepositos ad capitale supplicium, non tam anguste, qui occisurus est, pascit:" "The prison keeps a better table; and he that is to kill the criminal to-morrow-morning, gives him a better supper overnight." By this he intended to represent his meal to be very short; for as dying persons have but little stomach to feast high, so they that mean to cut their throat, will think it a vain expense to please it with delicacies, which, after the first alteration, must be poured upon the ground, and looked upon as the worst part of the accursed thing. And there is also the same proportion of unreasonableness, that because men shall "die to-morrow," and by the sentence and unalterable decree of God they are now descending to their graves, that therefore they should first destroy their reason, and then force dull time to run faster, that they may die sottish as beasts, and speedily as a fly: but they thought there was no life after this; or if there were, it was without pleasure, and every soul thrust into a hole, and a dorter of a span's length allowed for his rest and for his walk; and in the shades below no numbering of healths by the numeral letters of Philenium's name, no fat mullets, no oysters of Lucrinus, no Lesbian or Chian wines. Τοῦτο σαφῶς, ἄνθρωπε, μαθὼν εὔφραινε σεαυτόν. Therefore now enjoy the delicacies of nature, and feel the descending wines distilling through the limbeck of thy tongue and larynx, and suck the delicious juice of fishes, the marrow of the laborious ox, and the tender lard of Apulian swine, and the condited bellies of the scarus; but lose no time, for the sun drives hard, and the shadow is long, and "the days of mourning are at hand," but the number of the days of darkness and the grave cannot be told.

Thus they thought they discoursed wisely, and their wisdom was turned into folly; for all their arts of providence, and witty securities of pleasure, were nothing but unmanly prologues to death, fear and folly, sensuality and beastly pleasures. But they are to be excused rather than we. They placed themselves in the order of beasts and birds, and esteemed their bodies nothing but receptacles of flesh and wine, larders and pantries; and their soul the fine instrument of pleasure and brisk perception of relishes and gusts, reflections and duplications of delight; and therefore they treated themselves accordingly. But then, why we should do the same things, who are led by other principles, and a more severe institution, and better notices of immortality, who understand what shall happen to a soul hereafter, and know that this time is but a passage to eternity, this body but a servant to the soul, this soul a minister to the Spirit, and the whole man in order to God and to felicity; this, I say, is more unreasonable than to eat *aconita* to preserve our health, and to enter into the flood that we may die a dry death; this is a perfect contradiction to the state of good things, whither we are designed, and to all the principles of a wise philosophy, whereby

we are instructed that we may become "wise unto salvation." That I may therefore do some assistances towards the curing the miseries of mankind, and reprove the follies and improper motions towards felicity, I shall endeavour to represent to you—

1. That plenty and the pleasures of the world are no proper instruments of felicity.

2. That intemperance is a certain enemy to it; making life unpleasant, and death troublesome and intolerable.

3. I shall add the rules and measures of temperance in eating and drinking, that nature and grace may join to the constitution of man's felicity.

1. Plenty and the pleasures of the world are no proper instruments of felicity. It is necessary that a man have some violence done to himself, before he can receive them; for nature's bounds are, "non esurire, non sitire, non algere," "to be quit from hunger, and thirst, and cold," that is, to have nothing upon us that puts us to pain; against which she hath made provisions by the fleece of the sheep, and the skins of the beasts, by the waters of the fountain, and the herbs of the field, and of these no good man is destitute, for that share that he can need to fill those appetites and necessities, he cannot otherwise avoid; *τῶν ἀρκούντων οὐδεὶς πένης ἐστί.* For it is unimaginable that nature should be a mother, natural and indulgent to the beasts of the forest, and the spawn of fishes, to every plant and *fungus*, to cats and owls, to moles and bats, making her storehouses always to stand open to them; and that, for the Lord of all these, even to the noblest of her productions, she should have made no provisions, and only produced in us appetites sharp as the stomach of wolves, troublesome as the tiger's hunger, and then run away, leaving art and chance, violence and study, to feed us and to clothe us. This is so far from truth, that we are certainly more provided for by nature than all the world besides; for every thing can minister to us; and we can pass into none of nature's cabinets, but we can find our table spread; so that what David said to God, "Whither shall I go from thy presence? If I go to heaven, thou art there; if I descend to the deep, thou art there also; if I take the wings of the morning, and flee into the uttermost parts of the wilderness, even there thou wilt find me out, and thy right hand shall uphold me," we may say it concerning our table, and our wardrobe; if we go into the fields, we find them tilled by the mercies of heaven, and watered with showers from God to feed us, and to clothe us; if we go down into the deep, there God hath multiplied our stores, and filled a magazine which no hunger can exhaust; the air drops down delicacies, and the wilderness can sustain us, and all that is in nature, that which feeds lions, and that which the ox eats, that which the fishes live upon, and that which is the provision for the birds, all that can keep us alive; and if we consider that of the beasts and birds, for whom nature hath provided but one dish, it may be flesh or fish, or herbs or flies, and these also we secure with guards from them, and drive away birds and beasts from that provision which nature made for them, yet seldom can we find that any of these perish with hunger; much rather shall we find that we are secured by the securities proper for the more noble creatures by that Providence that disposes all things, by that mercy that gives us all things, which to other creatures are ministered singly; by that labour, that can procure what we need; by that wisdom, that can consider concerning future necessities; by that power, that can force it from inferior creatures; and by that temperance, which can fit our meat to our necessities. For if we go beyond what is needful, as we find sometimes more than was promised, and very often more than we need, so we disorder the certainty of our felicity, by putting that to hazard which nature hath secured. For it is not certain, that if we desire to have the wealth of Susa, or garments stained with the blood of the Tyrian fish, that if we desire to feed like Philoxenus, or to have tables loaden like the boards of Vitellius, that we shall never want. It is not nature that desires these things, but lust and violence; and by a disease we entered into the passion and the necessity, and in that state of trouble it is likely we may dwell for ever, unless we reduce our appetites to nature's measures.

> Si ventri bene, si lateri est pedibusque tuis, nil
> Divitiæ poterunt regales addere majus.—HORACE.

And therefore it is, that plenty and pleasures are not the proper instruments of felicity. Because felicity is not a jewel that can be locked in one man's cabinet. God intended that all men should be made happy, and he, that gave to all men the same natural desires, and to all men provision of satisfactions by the same meats and drinks, intended, that it should not go beyond that measure of good things, which corresponds to those desires which all men naturally have.

He that cannot be satisfied with common provision, hath a bigger need than he that can; it is harder, and more contingent, and more difficult, and more troublesome for him to be satisfied; *βρυάζω τῷ κατὰ τὸ σωμάτιον ἡδεῖ, ὕδατι καὶ ἄρτῳ χρώμενος, προσπτύω ταῖς ἐκ πολυτελείας ἡδοναῖς*, said Epicurus; "I feed sweetly upon bread and water, those sweet and easy provisions of the body, and I defy the pleasures of costly provisions;" and the man was so confident that he had the advantage over wealthy tables, that he thought himself happy as the immortal gods, *ἑτοῖμος ἔρχειν τῷ Διὶ ὑπὲρ εὐδαιμονίας διαγωνίζεσθαι, μάζαν ἔχων καὶ ὕδωρ*: for these provisions are easy, they are to be gotten without amazing cares; no man needs to flatter if he can live as nature did intend: "Magna pars libertatis est bene moratus venter:"[f] he need not swell his accounts, and intricate his spirit with arts of subtilty and contrivance; he can be free from fears, and the chances of the world cannot concern him. And this is true, not only in those severe and anchoretical and philosophical persons, who lived meanly as a sheep, and without variety as the Baptist, but in the same proportion it is also true in every man that can be contented with that which is honestly

[f] Senec.

sufficient. Maximus Tyrius considers concerning the felicity of Diogenes, a poor Sinopean, having not so much nobility as to be born in the better parts of Greece: but he saw that he was compelled by no tyrant to speak or do ignobly; he had no fields to till, and therefore took no care to buy cattle and to hire servants; he was not distracted when a rent-day came, and feared not when the wise Greeks played the fool and fought who should be lord of that field that lay between Thebes and Athens: he laughed to see men scramble for dirty silver, and spend ten thousand Attick talents for the getting the revenues of two hundred philippicks; he went with his staff and bag into the camp of Phocenses, and the soldiers reverenced his person and despised his poverty, and it was truce with him whosoever had wars; and the diadem of kings and the purple of the emperors, the mitre of high priests and the divining-staff of soothsayers, were things of envy and ambition, the purchase of danger, and the rewards of a mighty passion; and men entered into them by trouble and extreme difficulty, and dwelt under them as a man under a falling roof, or as Damocles under the tyrant's sword,

Nunc lateri incumbens—mox deinde supinus,
Nunc cubat in faciem, nunc recto pectore surgens,

sleeping like a condemned man; and let there be what pleasure men can dream of in such broken slumbers, yet the fear of waking from this illusion, and parting from this fantastic pleasure, is a pain and torment which the imaginary felicity cannot pay for. "Cui cum paupertate bene convenit, dives est: non qui parum habet, sed qui plus cupit, pauper est." All our trouble is from within us; and if a dish of lettuce and a clear fountain can cool all my heats, so that I shall have neither thirst nor pride, lust nor revenge, envy nor ambition, I am lodged in the bosom of felicity; and, indeed, no men sleep so soundly, as they that lay their head upon nature's lap. For a single dish, and a clean chalice lifted from the springs, can cure my hunger and thirst: but the meat of Ahasuerus's feast cannot satisfy my ambition and my pride. "Nullâ re egere, Dei proprium; quàm paucissimis autem, Deo proximum," said Socrates. He, therefore, that hath the fewest desires and the most quiet passions, whose wants are soon provided for, and whose possessions cannot be disturbed with violent fears, he that dwells next door to satisfaction, and can carry his needs and lay them down where he please,—this man is the happy man; and this is not to be done in great designs and swelling fortunes. "Dives jam factus desiit gaudere lente; cariùs edit et bibit, et lætatur dives, quàm pauper, qui in quolibet, in parato, inempto gaudet, et facile epulari potest; dives nunquam." For as it is in plants which nature thrusts forth from her navel, she makes regular provisions, and dresses them with strength and ornament, with easiness and full stature; but if you thrust a jessamine there where she would have had a daisy grow, or bring the tall fir from dwelling in his own country, and transport the orange or the almond-tree near the fringes of the north-star, nature is displeased, and becomes unnatural, and starves her sucklings, and renders you a return less than your charge and expectation: so it is in all our appetites; when they are natural and proper, nature feeds them and makes them healthful and lusty, as the coarse issue of the Scythian clown; she feeds them and makes them easy without cares and costly passion; but if you thrust an appetite into her, which she intended not, she gives you sickly and uneasy banquets, you must struggle with her for every drop of milk she gives beyond her own needs; you may get gold from her entrails, and at a great charge provide ornaments for your queens and princely women: but our lives are spent in the purchase; and when you have got them, you must have more: for these cannot content, nor nourish the spirit. "Ad supervacua sudatur;" "A man must labour infinitely to get more than he needs;" but to drive away thirst and hunger, a man needs not sit in the fields of the oppressed poor, nor lead armies, nor break his sleep, "et contumeliosam humanitatem pati," "and to suffer shame," and danger, and envy, and affront, and all the retinue of infelicity.

——————Quis non Epicurum
Suspicit, exigui lætum plantaribus horti?—JUV.

If men did but know what felicity dwells in the cottage of a virtuous poor man, how sound his sleeps, how quiet his breast, how composed his mind, how free from care, how easy his provision, how healthful his morning, how sober his night, how moist his mouth, how joyful his heart, they would never admire the noises and the diseases, the throng of passions, and the violence of unnatural appetites, that fill the houses of the luxurious and the heart of the ambitious.

Nam neque divitibus contingunt gaudia solis.—HOR.

These which you call pleasures, are but the imagery and fantastic appearances, and such appearances even poor men may have. It is like felicity, that the king of Persia should come to Babylon in the winter, and to Susa in the summer; and be attended with all the servants of one hundred and twenty-seven provinces, and with all the princes of Asia. It is like this, that Diogenes went to Corinth in the time of vintage, and to Athens when winter came; and instead of courts, visited the temples and the schools, and was pleased in the society of scholars and learned men, and conversed with the students of all Asia and Europe. If a man loves privacy, the poor fortune can have that when princes cannot; if he loves noises, he can go to markets and to courts, and may glut himself with strange faces, and strange voices, and stranger manners, and the wild designs of all the world: and when that day comes in which we shall die, nothing of the eating and drinking remains, nothing of the pomp and luxury, but the sorrow to part with it, and shame to have dwelt there where wisdom and virtue seldom come, unless it be to call men to sober counsels, to a plain, and a severe, and a more natural way of living; and when Lucian derides the dead princes and generals, and says that in hell they go up and down selling salt

meats and crying muscles, or begging; and he brings in Philip of Macedon, *ἐν γωνιδίῳ τινὶ μισθοῦ ἀκούμενον τὰ σαθρὰ τῶν ὑποδημάτων*, "mending of shoes in a little stall;" he intended to represent, that in the shades below, and in the state of the grave, the princes and voluptuous have a being different from their present plenty; but that their condition is made contemptible and miserable by its disproportion to their lost and perishing voluptuousness. The result is this, that Tiresias told the ghost of Menippus, inquiring what state of life was nearest to felicity, *Ὁ τῶν ἰδιωτῶν ἄριστος βίος, καὶ σωφρονέστερος*, "The private life, that which is freest from tumult and vanity," noise and luxury, business and ambition, nearest to nature and a just entertainment to our necessities; that life is nearest to felicity. *Τοιαῦτα λῆρον ἡγησάμενος, τοῦτο μόνον ἐξ ἅπαντος θηράσῃ, ὅπως, τὸ παρὸν εὖ θέμενος, παραδράμῃς γελῶν τὰ πολλὰ καὶ περὶ μηδὲν ἐσπουδακώς*, therefore despise the swellings and the diseases of a disordered life and a proud vanity; be troubled for no outward thing beyond its merit, enjoy the present temperately, and you cannot choose but be pleased to see that you have so little share in the follies and miseries of the intemperate world.

2. Intemperance in eating and drinking is the most contrary course to the epicure's design in the world; and the voluptuous man hath the least of pleasure; and upon this proposition, the consideration is more material and more immediately reducible to practice, because in eating and drinking, men please themselves so much, and have the necessities of nature to usher in the inordination of gluttony and drunkenness, and our need leads in vice by the hand, that we know not how to distinguish our friend from our enemy; and St. Austin is sad upon this point; "Thou, O Lord, hast taught me that I should take my meat as I take my physic; but while I pass from the trouble of hunger to the quietness of satisfaction, in the very passage I am insnared by the cords of my own concupiscence. Necessity bids me pass, but I have no way to pass from hunger to fulness, but over the bridge of pleasure; and although health and life be the cause of eating and drinking, yet pleasure, a dangerous pleasure, thrusts herself into attendance, and sometimes endeavours to be the principal; and I do that for pleasure's sake which I would only do for health; and yet they have distinct measures, whereby they can be separated, and that which is enough for health is too little for delight, and that which is for my delight destroys my health, and still it is uncertain for what end I do indeed desire; and the worst of the evil is this, that the soul is glad because it is uncertain, and that an excuse is ready, that under the pretence of health, 'obumbret negotium voluptatis,' 'the design of pleasure may be advanced and protected.'" How far the ends of natural pleasure may lawfully be enjoyed, I shall afterwards consider: in the mean time, if we remember that the epicure's design is pleasure principally, we may the better reprove his folly by considering, that intemperance is a plain destruction to all that which can give real and true pleasure.

1. It is an enemy to health, without which it is impossible to feel any thing of corporal pleasure. 2. A constant full table hath in it less pleasure than the temperate provisions of the hermit, or the philosophical table of scholars, and the just pleasures of the virtuous. 3. Intemperance is an impure fountain of vice, and a direct nurse of uncleanness. 4. It is a destruction of wisdom. 5. It is a dishonour and disreputation to the person and the nature of the man.

1. It is an enemy to health; which is, as one calls it, "ansa voluptatum et condimentum vitæ;" it is "that handle by which we can apprehend, and perceive pleasures, and that sauce that only makes life delicate;" for what content can a full table administer to a man in a fever? And he that hath a sickly stomach, admires at *his* happiness, that can feast with cheese and garlic, unctuous beverages, and the low-tasted spinach: health is the opportunity of wisdom, the fairest scene of religion, the advantages of the glorifications of God, the charitable ministries to men; it is a state of joy and thanksgiving, and in every of its periods feels a pleasure from the blessed emanations of a merciful Providence. The world does not minister, does not feel, a greater pleasure, than to be newly delivered from the racks of the gratings of the stone, and the torments and convulsions of a sharp colic: and no organs, no harp, no lute, can sound out the praises of the Almighty Father so spritefully, as the man that rises from his bed of sorrows, and considers what an excellent difference he feels from the groans and intolerable accents of yesterday. Health carries us to church, and makes us rejoice in the communion of saints: and an intemperate table makes us to lose all this. For this is one of those sins, which St. Paul affirms to be *πρόδηλοι, προάγουσαι εἰς κρίσιν*, "manifest, leading before unto judgment." It bears part of its punishment in this life, and hath this appendage, like the sin against the Holy Ghost, that it is not remitted in this world, nor in the world to come: that is, if it be not repented of, it is punished here and hereafter, which the Scripture does not affirm concerning all sins, and all cases.

But in this the sinner gives sentence with his mouth, and brings it to execution with his hands;

> Pœna tamen præsens, cum tu deponis amictum
> Turgidus, et crudum pavonem in balnea portas. JUV.

The old gluttons among the Romans, Heliogabalus, Tigellius, Crispus, Montanus, "notæque per oppida buccæ,"[g] famous epicures, mingled their meats with vomitings; so did Vitellius, and entered into their baths to digest their pheasants, that they might speedily return to the mullet and the eels of Syëne, and then they went home and drew their breath short till the morning, and it may be not at all before night:

> Hinc subitæ mortes, atque intestata senectus. JUV.

Their age is surprised at a feast, and gives them not time to make their will, but either they are choked with a large morsel, and there is no room for the

[g] Juvenal.

breath of the lungs, and the motions of the heart; or a fever burns their eyes out, or a quinsey punishes that intemperate throat that had no religion, but the eating of the fat sacrifices, the portions of the poor and of the priest; or else they are condemned to a lethargy if their constitutions be dull; and, if active, it may be they are wild with watching.

> Plurimus hinc æger moritur vigilando: sed illum
> Languorem peperit cibus imperfectus, et hærens
> Ardenti stomacho———— JUV.

So that the epicure's genial proverb may be a little altered, and say, "Let us eat and drink, for by this means to-morrow we shall die;" but that is not all, for these men live a healthless life; that is, are long, are every day dying, and at last die with torment. Menander was too short in his expression, *μόνος οὗτος φαίνεται εὐθάνατος*; that it is indeed death, but gluttony is "a pleasant death."

> ———Ἔχοντα πολλὴν τὴν χολάδα παχύν,
> Καὶ μόλις λαλοῦντα, καὶ τὸ πνεῦμ' ἔχοντα πᾶν ἄνω,
> Ἐσθίοντα καὶ λεγοντα, Σήπομ' ὑπὸ τῆς ἡδονῆς.

For this is the glutton's pleasure, "To breathe short and difficultly, scarce to be able to speak, and when he does, he cries out, I die and rot with pleasure." But the folly is as much to be derided as the men to be pitied, that we daily see men afraid of death with a most intolerable apprehension, and yet increase the evil of it, the pain, and the trouble, and the suddenness of its coming, and the appendage of an insufferable eternity.

> Rem struere exoptant cæso bove, Mercuriumque
> Arcessunt fibra———— PERS.

They pray for herds of cattle, and spend the breeders upon feasts and sacrifices. For why do men go to temples and churches, and make vows to God and daily prayers, that God would give them a healthful body, and take away their gout and their palsies, their fevers and apoplexies, the pains of the head and the gripings of the belly, and arise from their prayers, and pour in loads of flesh and seas of wine, lest there should not be matter enough for a lusty disease?

> Poscis opem nervis, corpusque fidele senectæ:
> Esto age: sed grandes patinæ fruticetaque crassa
> Annuere his superos vetuere, Jovemque morantur. PERS.

But this is enough that the rich glutton shall have his dead body condited and embalmed; he may be allowed to stink and suffer corruption while he is alive: these men are for the present living sinners and walking rottenness, and hereafter will be dying penitents and perfumed carcasses, and their whole felicity is lost in the confusions of their unnatural disorder. When Cyrus had espied Astyages and his fellows coming drunk from a banquet loaden with variety of follies and filthiness, their legs failing them, their eyes red and staring, cozened with a moist cloud and abused by a doubled object, their tongues full of sponges, and their heads no wiser, he thought they were poisoned, and he had reason: for what malignant quality can be more venomous and hurtful to a man than the effect of an intemperate goblet and a full stomach? It poisons both the soul and the body. All poisons do not kill presently, and this will in process of time, and hath formidable effects at present.

But therefore methinks the temptations, which men meet withal from without, are in themselves most unreasonable and soonest confuted by us. He that tempts me to drink beyond my measure, civilly invites me to a fever; and to lay aside my reason as the Persian women did their garments and their modesty at the end of feasts: and all the question then will be, Which is the worse evil, to refuse your uncivil kindness, or to suffer a violent head-ach, or to lay up heaps big enough for an English surfeit? Creon in the tragedy said well;

> Κρεῖσσον δὲ μοὶ νῦν πρὸς σ' ἀπεὶθεσθαι, ξένε,
> Ἢ μαλακίσθένθ' ὕστερον μέγα στένειν, EURIP.

"It is better for me to grieve thee, O stranger, or to be affronted by thee, than to be tormented by thy kindness the next day and the morrow after;" and the freedman of Domitius, the father of Nero, suffered himself to be killed by his lord: and the son of Praxaspes by Cambyses, rather than they would exceed their own measures up to a full intemperance, and a certain sickness and dishonour. For, as Plutarch said well, to avoid the opinion of an uncivil man, or being clownish, to run into a pain of thy sides or belly, into madness or a head-ach, is the part of a fool and a coward, and of one that knows not how to converse with men, "citra pocula et nidorem," in any thing but in the famelic smells of meat and vertiginous drinkings.

> Ebrius et petulans, qui nullum forte ceeidit,
> Dat pœnas, noctem patitur, lugentis amicum,
> Pelidæ———— JUV.

"A drunkard and a glutton feels the torments of a restless night, although he hath not killed a man;" that is, just like murderers, and persons of an affrighted conscience; so wakes the glutton, so broken, and sick, and disorderly are the slumbers of the drunkard. Now let the epicure boast his pleasures, and tell how he hath swallowed the price of provinces, and gobbets of delicious flesh, purchased with the reward of souls; let him brag "furorem illum conviviorum, et fœdissimum patrimoniorum exitium culinam," "of the madness of delicious feasts, and that his kitchen hath destroyed his patrimony;" let him tell that he takes in every day,[h]

> Quantum Sauseia bibebat,

As much wine as would refresh the sorrows of forty languishing prisoners; or let him set up his vainglorious triumph,

> Ut quod 'multi Damalin meri
> 'Bassum Threicia' vicit 'amystide'; HOR.

That he hath knocked down Damalis with the twenty-fifth bottle, and hath outfeasted Antony or Cleopatra's luxury; it is a goodly pleasure, and himself shall bear the honour.

[h] Juvenal.

——————Rarum et memorabile magni
Gutturis exemplum, conducendusque magister. JUV.

But for the honour of his banquet he hath some ministers attending that he did not dream of, and in the midst of his loud laughter, the gripes of the belly, and the fevers of the brain, "Pallor et genæ pendulæ, oculorum ulcera, tremulæ manus, furiales somni, inquies nocturna," as Pliny reckons them, "paleness and hanging cheeks, ulcers of the eyes, and trembling hands, dead or distracted sleeps," these speak aloud, that to-day you "eat and drink, that to-morrow you die," and die for ever.

It is reported concerning Socrates, that when Athens was destroyed by the plague, he in the midst of all the danger escaped untouched by sickness, because by a spare and severe diet, he had within him no tumult of disorderly humours, no factions in his blood, no loads of moisture prepared for charnel-houses, or the sickly hospitals: but a vigorous heat, and a well-proportioned radical moisture; he had enough for health and study, philosophy and religion, for the temples and the academy, but no superfluities to be spent in groans and sickly nights; and all the world of gluttons is hugely convinced of the excellency of temperance in order to our temporal felicity and health, because when themselves have left virtue, and sober diet, and counsels, and first lost their temperance, and then lost their health, they are forced to run to temperance and abstinence for their cure. "Vilis enim tenuisque mensa (ut loquuntur pueri) sanitatis mater est"[i] then a thin diet and an humble body, fasting and emptiness, and arts of scattering their sin and sickness, is in season; but by the same means they might preserve their health, by which they do restore it; but when they are well, if they return to their full tables and oppressing meals, their sickness was but like Vitellius' vomiting, that they might eat again; but so they may entail a fit of sickness upon every full moon, till both their virtue and themselves decrease into the corruptions and rottenness of the grave. But if they delight in sharp fevers and horrid potions, in sour palates and heaps of that which must be carried forth, they may reckon their wealthy pleasures to be very great and many, if they will but tell them one by one with their sicknesses, and the multitude of those evils they shall certainly feel, before they have thrown their sorrows forth. "These men (as St. Paul's expression is) heap up wrath against the day of wrath, and the revelation of the day of God's most righteous judgments." Strange therefore it is, that for the stomach, which is scarce a span long, there should be provided so many furnaces and ovens, huge fires, and an army of cooks, cellars swimming with wine, and granaries sweating with corn; and that into one belly should enter the vintage of many nations, the spoils of distant provinces, and the shell-fishes of several seas. When the heathens feasted their gods, they gave nothing but a fat ox, a ram, or a kid; they poured a little wine upon the altar, and burned a handful of gum: but when they feasted themselves, they had many vessels filled with Campanian wine, turtles of Liguria, Sicilian beeves, and wheat from Egypt, wild boars from Illyrium, and Grecian sheep, variety, and load, and cost, and curiosity: and so do we. It is so little we spend in religion, and so very much upon ourselves, so little to the poor, and so without measure to make ourselves sick, that we seem to be in love with our own mischief, and so passionate for necessity and want, that we strive all the ways we can to make ourselves need more than nature intended. I end this consideration with the saying of the cynic: It is to be wondered at, that men eat so much for pleasure's sake; and yet for the same pleasure should not give over eating, and betake themselves to the delights of temperance, since to be healthful and holy is so great a pleasure. However, certain it is, that no man ever repented, that he arose from the table sober, healthful, and with his wits about him; but very many have repented, that they sat so long, till their bellies swelled, and their health, and their virtue, and their God, is departed from them.

[i] Chrysost.

SERMON XVI.

PART II.

2. A CONSTANT full table is less pleasant than the temperate provisions of the virtuous, or the natural banquets of the poor. Χάρις τῇ μακαρίᾳ φύσει, ὅτι τὰ ἀναγκαῖα ἐποίησεν εὐπόριστα, τὰ δὲ δυσπόριστα οὐκ ἀναγκαῖα, said Epicurus; "Thanks be to the God of nature that he hath made that which is necessary to be ready at hand, and easy to be had; and that which cannot easily be obtained, is not necessary it should be at all;" which in effect is to say, It cannot be constantly pleasant: for necessity and want makes the appetite, and the appetite makes the pleasure; and men are infinitely mistaken when they despise the poor man's table, and wonder how he can endure that life, that is maintained without the exercise of pleasure, and that he can suffer his day's labour, and recompense it with unsavoury herbs, and potent garlic, with water-cresses, and bread coloured like the ashes that gave it hardness: he hath a hunger that gives it deliciousness; and we may as well wonder that a lion eats raw flesh, or that a wolf feeds upon the turf; they have an appetite proportionable to this meat; and their necessity, and their hunger, and their use, and their nature, are the cooks that dress their provisions, and make them delicate: and yet if water and pulse, natural provision, and the simple diet, were not pleasant, as indeed they are not to them who have been nursed up and accustomed to the more delicious, ἔπειτα πλουτῶν οὐκ ἐθ' ἥδεται φακῶν, yet it is a very great pleasure to reduce our appetites to nature, and to make our reason rule our stomach, and our desires comply with our fortunes, and our fortunes be proportionable to our persons.

"Non est voluptas aqua et polenta (said a philosopher); sed summa voluptas est, posse ex his capere voluptatem," "It is an excellent pleasure to be able to take pleasure in worts and water," in bread and onions; for then a man can never want pleasure when it is so ready for him, that nature hath spread it over all its provisions. Fortune and art give delicacies; nature gives meat and drink; and what nature gives, fortune cannot take away; but every change can take away what only is given by the bounty of a full fortune; and if in satisfaction and freedom from care, and security and proportions to our own natural appetite, there can be pleasure, then we may know how to value the sober and natural tables of the virtuous and wise, before that state of feastings which a war can lessen, and a tyrant can take away, or the pirates may intercept, or a blast may spoil, and is always contingent, and is so far from satisfying, that either it destroys the appetite, and capacity of pleasure, or increases it beyond all the measures of good things.

He that feasts every day, feasts no day; *ἐτρύφησεν, ὥστε μὴ πολὺν τρυφᾷν χρόνον.* And however you treat yourselves, sometimes you will need to be refreshed beyond it; but what will you have for a festival, if you wear crowns every day? even a perpetual fulness will make you glad to beg pleasure from emptiness, and variety from poverty or an humble table.

Plerumque gratæ principibus vices.
Mundæque parvo sub lare pauperum
Cœnæ, sine aulæis, et ostro,
Sollicitam explicuere frontem. HOR.

But, however, of all things in the world a man may best and most easily want pleasure, which if you have enjoyed, it passes away at the present, and leaves nothing at all behind it, but sorrow and sour remembrances. No man felt a greater pleasure in a goblet of wine than Lysimachus, when he fought against the Getæ, and himself and his whole army were compelled by thirst to yield themselves to bondage; but when the wine was sunk as far as his navel, the pleasure was gone, and so was his kingdom and his liberty: for though the sorrow dwells with a man pertinaciously, yet the pleasure is swift as lightning, and more pernicious; but the pleasures of a sober and temperate table are pleasures till the next day, *καὶ τῇ ὑστεραίᾳ ἡδέως γίνονται,* as Timotheus said of Plato's scholars; they converse sweetly, and "are of perfect temper and delicacy of spirit even the next morning:" whereas the intemperate man is forced to lie long in bed, and forget that there is a sun in the sky; he must not be called till he hath concocted, and slept his surfeit into a truce and a quiet respite; but whatsoever this man hath suffered, certain it is that the poor man's head did not ache, neither did he need the juice of poppies, or costly cordials, physicians or nurses, to bring him to his right shape again, like Apuleius's ass, with eating roses: and let him turn his hour-glass, he will find his head aches longer than his throat was pleased; and, which is worst, his glass runs out with joggings and violence, and every such concussion with a surfeit makes his life look nearer its end, and ten to one but it will, before its natural period, be broken in pieces. If these be the pleasures of an epicure's table, I shall pray that my friends may never feel them; but he that sinneth against his Maker, shall fall into the calamities of intemperance.

3. Intemperance is the nurse of vice; *Ἀφροδίτης γάλα,* "Venus-milk," so Aristophanes calls wine; *πάντων δεινῶν μητρόπολις,* "the mother of all grievous things;" so Pontianus. For by the experience of all the world, it is the bawd to lust: and no man must ever dare to pray to God for a pure soul in a chaste body, if himself does not live temperately, if himself "make provisions for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts of it;" for in this case he shall find "that which enters into him, shall defile him" more than he can be cleansed by those vain prayers, that come from his tongue, and not from his heart. Intemperance makes rage and choler, pride and fantastic principles; it makes the body a sea of humours, and those humours the seat of violence: by faring deliciously every day, men become senseless of the evils of mankind, inapprehensive of the troubles of their brethren, unconcerned in the changes of the world, and the cries of the poor, the hunger of the fatherless, and the thirst of widows: *οὐκ ἐκ τῶν μαζοφάγων οἱ τύραννοι, ἀλλ' ἐκ τῶν τρυφωμένων,* said Diogenes; "Tyrants never come from the cottages of them that eat pulse and coarse fare, but from the delicious beds and banquets of the effeminate and rich feeders." For, to maintain plenty and luxury, sometimes wars are necessary, and oppressions and violence: but no landlord did ever grind the face of his tenants, no prince ever sucked blood from his subjects for the maintenance of a sober and a moderate proportion of good things. And this was intimated by St. James, "Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment-seat?"[a] For all men are passionate to live according to that state in which they were born, or to which they are devolved, or which they have framed to themselves; those therefore that love to live high and deliciously,

Et quibus in solo vivendi causa palato. JUV.

who live not to God but to their belly, not to sober counsels but to an intemperate table, have framed to themselves a manner of living, which oftentimes cannot be maintained but by injustice and violence, which coming from a man whose passions are made big with sensuality and an habitual folly, by pride and forgetfulness of the condition and miseries of mankind, are always unreasonable and sometimes intolerable.

——regustatum digito terebrare salinum
Contentus perages, si vivere cum Jove tendis. PERS.

Formidable is the state of an intemperate man, whose sin begins with sensuality, and grows up in folly and weak discourses, and is fed by violence, and applauded by fools and parasites, full bellies and empty heads, servants and flatterers, whose

[a] James ii. 6.

hands are full of flesh and flood, and their hearts empty of pity and natural compassion; where religion cannot inhabit, and the love of God must needs be a stranger; whose talk is loud and trifling, injurious and impertinent; and whose employment is the same with the work of the sheep or the calf, always to eat; their loves are the lusts of the lower belly; and their portion is in the lower regions to eternal ages, where their thirst, and their hunger, and their torment, shall be infinite.

4. Intemperance is a perfect destruction of wisdom. Παχεῖα γαστὴρ λεπτὸν οὐ τίκτει νόον, "A full-gorged belly never produced a sprightly mind:" and therefore these kind of men are called γαστέρες ἀργαὶ, "slow bellies," so St. Paul concerning the intemperate Cretans out of their own poet: they are like the tigers of Brazil, which when they are empty, are bold and swift, and full of sagacity; but being full, sneak away from the barking of a village dog. So are these men, wise in the morning, quick and fit for business; but when the sun gives the sign to spread the tables, and intemperance brings in the messes, and drunkenness fills the bowls, then the man falls away, and leaves a beast in his room; nay, worse, νεκύας μεσαύχενας, they are dead all but their throat and belly, so Aristophanes hath fitted them with a character, "Carcasses above half way." Plotinus descends one step lower yet; affirming such persons, ἀποδενδρωθῆναι, "to be made trees," whose whole employment and life is nothing but to feed and suck juices from the bowels of their nurse and mother; and indeed commonly they talk as trees in a wind and tempest, the noise is great and querulous, but it signifies nothing but trouble and disturbance. A full meal is like Sisera's banquet, at the end of which there is a nail struck into a man's head: ὡς συγκολλῶσα καὶ οἷον καθηλοῦσα τὴν ψυχὴν πρὸς τὴν τοῦ σώματος ἀπόλαυσιν, so Porphyry; "it knocks a man down, and nails his soul to the sensual mixtures of the body." For what wisdom can be expected from them, whose soul dwells in clouds of meat, and floats up and down in wine, like the spilled cups which fell from their hands, when they could lift them to their heads no longer? πολλάκις γὰρ ἐν οἴνου κύμασι τὶς ναναγεῖ: it is a perfect shipwreck of a man, the pilot is drunk, and the helm dashed in pieces, and the ship first reels, and by swallowing too much is itself swallowed up at last. And therefore the Navis Agrigentina, the madness of the young fellows of Agrigentum, who being drunk, fancied themselves in a storm, and the house the ship, was more than the wild fancy of their cups; it was really so, they were all cast away, they were broken in pieces by the foul disorder of the storm.

Hinc Vini atque somni degener socordia,
Libido sordens, inverecundus lepos,
Variæque pestes languidorum sensuum.
Hinc et frequenti marcida oblectamine
Scintilla mentis *intorpescit* nobilis,
Animusque pigris stertit in præcordiis.[z]
PRUDENT. hym. de Jejun.

"The senses languish, the spark of Divinity that dwells within is quenched; and the mind snorts, dead with sleep and fulness in the fouler regions of the belly."

So have I seen the eye of the world looking upon a fenny bottom, and drinking up too free draughts of moisture, gathered them into a cloud, and that cloud crept about his face, and made him first look red, and then covered him with darkness and an artificial night: so is our reason at a feast,

Putrem resudans crapulam
Obstrangulatæ mentis ingenium premit.

The clouds gather about the head, and according to the method and period of the children, and productions of darkness, it first grows red, and that redness turns into an obscurity, and a thick mist, and reason is lost to all use and profitableness of wise and sober discourses; ἀναθυμίασις ζολωδεστέρα οὖσα ἐπισκοτεῖ τῇ ψυχῇ,[b] "a cloud of folly and distraction darkens the soul," and makes it crass and material, polluted and heavy, clogged and laden like the body: ψυχὴ κάθυδρος ταῖς ἐκ τοῦ οἴνου ἀναθυμιάσεσι καὶ νεφέλαις δίκην σώματος ποιουμένη. "And there cannot be any thing said worse, reason turns into folly, wine and flesh into a knot of clouds, the soul itself into a body," and the spirit into corrupted meat; there is nothing left but the rewards and portions of a fool to be reaped and enjoyed there, where flesh and corruption shall dwell to eternal ages; and therefore in Scripture such men are called βαρυκάρδιοι. "Hesternis vitiis animum quoque prægravant:" Their heads are gross, their souls are emerged in matter, and drowned in the moistures of an unwholesome cloud; they are dull of hearing, slow in apprehension, and to action they are as unable as the hands of a child, who too hastily hath broken the enclosures of his first dwelling.

But temperance is reason's girdle and passion's bridle; σόα φρόνησις, so Homer in Stobæus; that is σωφροσύνη; "prudence is safe" while the man is temperate; and therefore σώφρον is opposed τῷ χαλίφρονι, "A temperate man is no fool;" for temperance is the σωφρονιστήριον, such as Plato appointed to night-walkers, a prison to restrain their inordinations; it is ῥώμη ψυχῆς, as Pythagoras calls it; κρηπὶς ἀρετῆς, so Socrates; κόσμος ἀγαθῶν πάντων, so Plato; ἀσφάλεια τῶν καλλίστων ἕξεων, so Jamblichus; it is "the strength of the soul, the foundation of virtue, the ornament of all good things, and the corroborative of all excellent habits."

5. After all this, I shall the less need to add, that intemperance is a dishonour, and disreputation to the nature, and the person, and the manners of a man. But naturally men are ashamed of it, and the needs of nature shall be the veil for their gluttony, and the night shall cover their drunkenness; τέγγε πνεύμονα οἴνῳ, τὸ γὰρ ἄστρον περιστέλλεται,[c] which the apostle rightly renders, "They that are drunk, are drunk in the night;" but the priests of Heliopolis never did sacrifice to the sun with wine; meaning, that this is so great a dishonour, that the sun ought not to see it; and they that think there is no other eye but the sun that sees them, may cover their shame by choosing their time; just as children do

[b] Clem. Alexand.

[c] Alcæus.

their danger by winking hard, and not looking on. Σκυθίζειν, καὶ ζωρότερον πιεῖν, καὶ δεινῶς φαγεῖν, "To drink sweet drinks and hot, to quaff great draughts, and to eat greedily;" Theophrastus makes them characters of a clown.[d]

3. And now that I have told you the foulness of the epicure's feasts and principles, it will be fit that I describe the measures of our eating and drinking, that the needs of nature may neither become the cover to an intemperate dish, nor the freer refreshment of our persons be changed into scruples, that neither our virtue nor our conscience fall into an evil snare.

1. The first measure of our eating and drinking, is our "natural needs," μήτε ἀλγεῖν κατὰ σῶμα, μήτε ταράττεσθαι κατὰ ψυχήν; these are the measures of nature, "that the body be free from pain, and the soul from violence." Hunger, and thirst, and cold, are the natural diseases of the body; and food and raiment are their remedies, and therefore are the measures.

> In quantum sitis atque fames et frigora poscunt,
> Quantum, Epicure, tibi parvis suffecit in hortis.—JUV.

But in this there are two cautions. 1. Hunger and thirst are only to be extinguished while they are violent and troublesome, and are not to be provided for to the utmost extent and possibilities of nature; a man is not hungry so long till he can eat no more, but till its sharpness and trouble is over, and he that does not leave some reserves for temperance, gives all that he can to nature, and nothing at all to grace; for God hath given a latitude in desires and degrees of appetite; and when he hath done, he laid restraint upon it in some whole instances, and of some parts in every instance; that man might have something to serve God of his own, and something to distinguish him from a beast in the use of their common faculties. Beasts cannot refrain, but fill all the capacity when they can; and if a man does so, he does what becomes a beast, and not a man. And therefore there are some little symptoms of this inordination, by which a man may perceive himself to have transgressed his measures; "ructation, uneasy loads, singing, looser pratings, importune drowsiness, provocation of others to equal and full chalices;" and though in every accident of this signification it is hard for another to pronounce that the man hath sinned, yet by these he may suspect himself, and learn the next time to hold the bridle harder.

2. "This hunger must be natural," not artificial and provoked; for many men make necessities to themselves, and then think they are bound to provide for them. It is necessary to some men to have garments made of the Calabrian fleece, stained with the blood of the *murex*, and to get money to buy pearls round and orient; "scelerata hoc fecit culpa;" but it is the man's luxury that made it so; and by the same principle it is, that in meats, what is abundant to nature is defective and beggarly to art; and when nature willingly rises from table, when the first course of flesh plain and natural is done, then art, and sophistry, and adulterate dishes, invite him to taste and die, μέχρί τινος ἐσμὲν σάρκες, μέχρί τίνος τῆς γῆς κύπτομεν;[e] well may a sober man wonder that men should be so much in love with earth and corruption, the parent of rottenness and a disease, that even then, when by all laws witches and enchanters, murderers and man-stealers, are chastised and restrained with the iron hands of death; yet that men should at great charges give pensions to an order of men, whose trade it is to rob them of their temperance, and wittily to destroy their health; κατωφερεῖς καὶ χαμαιζήλους καὶ τοὺς ἐκ τῆς γῆς κενολογοῦντας, the Greek fathers call such persons;

> ——curvæ in terris animæ et cœlestium inanes;

people bowed down to the earth; "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God:" "Aretinas mentes," so Antidamus calls them, men framed in the furnaces of Etruria, "Aretine spirits,"[f] beginning and ending in the flesh and filthiness; dirt and clay all over. But go to the crib, thou glutton, and there it will be found that when the charger is clean, yet nature's rules were not prevaricated; the beast eats up all his provisions because they are natural and simple; or if he leaves any, it is because he desires no more than till his needs be served; and neither can a man (unless he be diseased in body or in spirit, in affection or in habit) eat more of natural and simple food than to the satisfaction of his natural necessities. He that drinks a draught or two of water and cools his thirst, drinks no more till his thirst returns; but he that drinks wine, drinks again longer than it is needful, even so long as it is pleasant. Nature best provides for herself when she spreads her own table; but when men have gotten superinduced habits, and new necessities, art that brought them in must maintain them, but "wantonness and folly wait at the table, and sickness and death take away."

2. Reason is the second measure, or rather the rule whereby we judge of intemperance; for whatsoever loads of meat and drink make the reason useless or troubled, are effects of this deformity; not that reason is the adequate measure; for a man may be intemperate upon other causes, though he do not force his understanding, and trouble his head. Some are strong to drink, and can eat like a wolf, and love to do so, as fire to destroy the stubble; such were those harlots in the comedy, "Quæ cum amatore suo cum cœnant, liguriunt:[g] these persons are to take their accounts from the measures of religion, and the Spirit: though they can talk still or transact the affairs of the world, yet if they be not fitted for the things of the spirit, they are too full of flesh or wine, and cannot, or care not to attend to the things of God. But reason is the limit, beyond which temperance never wanders; and in every degree in which our discourse is troubled, and

[d] Cap. 4. [e] Chrysost.

[f] Viz. ab Areto, unde sicut ex aliis Etruriæ figulinis, testacea vasa Romam deferebant.

[g] Eunuch. 5. 4. 14.

our soul is lifted from its wheels, in the same degree the sin prevails. "Dum sumus in quâdam delinquendi libidine, nebulis quibusdam insipientiæ mens obducitur," saith St. Ambrose; when the flesh-pots reek, and the uncovered dishes send forth a nidor and hungry smells, that cloud hides the face, and puts out the eye of reason; and then tell them, "Mors in ollâ," that "Death is in the pot," and folly is in the chalice; that those smells are fumes of brimstone, and vapours of Egypt; that they will make their heart easy, and their head sottish, and their colour pale, and their hands trembling, and their feet tormented.

> Mullorum, leporumque et suminis exitus hic est,
> Sulphureusque color, carnificesque pedes. MART.

For that is the end of delicacies, δυσωδία, λευκὸς ἰδεῖν, ἐντρυφερὸς, αἰδρίας καὶ πόνων ἄπειρος, as Dio Chrysostom, "paleness, and effeminacy, and laziness, and folly;" yet under the dominion of the pleasures of sensuality, men are so stripped of the use of reason, that they are not only useless in wise counsels and assistances, but they have not reason enough to avoid the evils of their own throat and belly; when once their reason fails, we must know, that their temperance and their religion went before.

3. Though reason be so strictly to be preserved at our tables as well as at our prayers, and we can never have leave to do any violence to it; yet the measures of nature may be enlarged beyond the bounds of prime and common necessity. For besides hunger and thirst, there are some labours of the body, and others of the mind, and there are sorrows and loads upon the spirit by its communications with the indispositions of the body; and as the labouring man may be supplied with bigger quantities, so the student and contemplative man with more delicious and sprightful nutriment: for as the tender and more delicate easily-digested meats will not help to carry burdens upon the neck, and hold the plough in society and yokes of the laborious oxen; so neither will the pulse and the leeks, Lavinian sausages, and the Cisalpine suckets or gobbets of condited bull's-flesh, minister such delicate spirits to the thinking man; but his notion will be flat as the noise of the Arcadian porter, and thick as the first juice of his country lard, unless he makes his body a fit servant to the soul, and both fitted for the employment.

But in these cases necessity, and prudence, and experience, are to make the measures and the rule; and so long as the just end is fairly designed, and aptly ministered to, there ought to be no scruple concerning the quantity or quality of the provision: and he that would stint a swain by the commons of a student, and give Philotas the Candian the leavings of Plato, does but ill serve the ends of temperance, but worse of prudence and necessity.

4. Sorrow and a wounded spirit may as well be provided for in the quantity and quality of meat and drink, as any other disease; and this disease by this remedy as well as by any other. For, great sorrow and importune melancholy may be as great a sin as great anger; and if it be a sin in its nature, it is more malignant and dangerous in its quality; as naturally tending to murmur and despair, weariness of religion and hatred of God, timorousness and jealousies, fantastic images of things, and superstition; and therefore, as it is necessary to restrain the fevers of anger, so also to warm the freezings and dulness of melancholy by prudent and temperate, but proper and apportioned diets; and if some meats and drinks make men lustful, or sleepy, or dull, or lazy, or sprightly, or merry; so far as meats and drinks can minister to the passion, and the passion ministers to virtue, so far by this means they may be provided for. "Give strong drink to him that is ready to perish, and wine to those that be of heavy hearts; let him drink and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more,"[g] said King Lemuel's mother. But this is not intended to be an habitual cure, but single and occasional; for he that hath a pertinacious sorrow, is beyond the cure of meat and drink, and if this becomes every day's physic, it will quickly become every day's sin. Then, it must always keep within the bounds of reason, and never seize upon any portions of affection: the Germans used to mingle music with their bowls, and drink by the measures of the six notes of music;

> Ut relevet miserum fatum solitosque labores:

But they sing so long, that they forget not their sorrow only, but their virtue also, and their religion: and there are some men that fall into drunkenness, because they would forget a lighter calamity, running into the fire to cure a calenture, and beating their brains out to be quit of the aching of their heads. A man's heaviness is refreshed long before he comes to drunkenness; for when he arrives thither, he hath but changed his heaviness, and taken a crime to boot.

5. Even when a man hath no necessity upon him, no pungent sorrow, or natural or artificial necessity, it is lawful in some cases of eating and drinking to receive pleasure and intend it. For whatsoever is natural and necessary, is therefore not criminal, because it is of God's procuring; and since we eat for need, and the satisfaction of our need is a removing of a pain, and that in nature is the greatest pleasure, it is impossible that in its own nature it should be a sin. But in this case of conscience these cautions are to be observed:

1. So long as nature ministers the pleasure and not art, it is materially innocent. "Si tuo veniat jure, luxuria est:"[h] but it is safe while it enters upon nature's stock; for it is impossible that the proper effect of health, and temperance, and prudent abstinence, should be vicious; and yet these are the parents of the greatest pleasure, in eating and drinking. "Malum panem expecta, bonus fiet; etiam illum tenerum tibi et siligineum fames reddet:" "If you abstain and be hungry, you shall turn the meanest provision into delicate and desirable."

2. Let all the pleasure of meat and drink be such as can minister to health, and be within the

[g] Prov. xxxi. 6.

[h] Seneca.

former bounds. For since pleasure in eating and drinking is its natural appendage, and like a shadow follows the substance, as the meat is to be accounted, so is the pleasure; and if these be observed, there is no difference whether nature or art be the cook. For some constitutions, and some men's customs, and some men's educations, and necessities, and weaknesses, are such, that their appetite is to be invited, and their digestion helped, but all this while we are within the bounds of nature and need.

3. It is lawful when a man needs meat to choose the pleasanter, even merely for their pleasures; that is, because they are pleasant, besides that they are useful; this is as lawful as to smell of a rose, or to lie in feathers, or change the posture of our body in bed for ease, or to hear music, or to walk in gardens rather than the highways; and God hath given us leave to be delighted in those things, which he made to that purpose, that we may also be delighted in him that gives them. For so as the more pleasant may better serve for health, and directly to refreshment, so collaterally to religion; always provided, that it be in its degree moderate, and we temperate in our desires, without transportation and violence, without unhandsome usages of ourselves, or taking from God and from religion any minutes and portions of our affections. When Eicadastes, the epicure, saw a goodly dish of hot meat served up, he sung the verse of Homer,

Τοῦ δ' ἐγὼ ἄντιος εἶμι, καὶ ἐν πυρὶ χεῖρας ἔοικε,

and swallowed some of it greedily, till by its hands of fire it curled his stomach, like parchment in the flame, and he was carried from his banquet to his grave.

Non poterat letho nobiliore mori: MART.

It was fit he should die such a death, but that death bids us beware of that folly.

4. Let the pleasure, as it came with meat, so also pass away with it. Philoxenus was a beast; ἠύξατο ποτὲ τὴν γεράνου αὐχένα ἔχειν, "he wished his throat as long as a crane's," that he might be long in swallowing his pleasant morsels; "Mœret quod magna pars felicitatis exclusa esset corporis angustiis;" "he mourned because the pleasure of eating was not spread over all his body," that he might have been an epicure in his hands; and indeed, if we consider it rightly, great eating and drinking is not the greatest pleasure of the taste, but of the touch; and Philoxenus might feel the unctuous juice slide softly down his throat, but he could not taste it in the middle of the long neck; and we see that they who mean to feast exactly, or delight the palate, do "libare," or "pitissare," take up little proportions and spread them upon the tongue or palate; but full morsels and great draughts are easy and soft to the touch; but so is the feeling of silk, or handling of a melon, or a mole's skin, and as delicious too as eating when it goes beyond the appetites of nature, and the proper pleasures of taste, which cannot be perceived but by a temperate man. And therefore let not the pleasure be intended beyond the taste; that is, beyond those little natural measures in which God intended that pleasure should accompany your tables. Do not run to it beforehand, nor chew the cud when the meal is done; delight not in fancies, and expectations, and remembrances of a pleasant meal; but let it descend "in latrinam," together with the meals whose attendant pleasure is.

5. Let pleasure be the less principal, and used as a servant; it may be modest and prudent to strew the dish with sugar, or to dip thy bread in vinegar; but to make thy meal of sauces, and to make the accessory become the principal, and pleasure to rule the table, and all the regions of thy soul, is to make a man less and lower than an oglio, of a cheaper value than a turbot; a servant and a worshipper of sauces, and cooks, and pleasure, and folly.

6. Let pleasure, as it is used in the regions and limits of nature and prudence, so also be changed into religion and thankfulness. "Turtures cum bibunt, non resupinant colla," say naturalists; "Turtles when they drink, lift not up their bills;" and if we swallow our pleasures without returning the honour and the acknowledgment to God that gave them, we may "large bibere, jumentorum modo," "drink draughts as large as an ox," but we shall die like an ox, and change our meats and drinks into eternal rottenness. In all religions it hath been permitted to enlarge our tables in the days of sacrifices and religious festivity.

Qui Veientanum festis potare diebus
Campana solitus trulla, vappamque profestis. HOR.

For then the body may rejoice in fellowship with the soul, and then a pleasant meal is religious, if it be not inordinate. But if our festival-days, like the gentile sacrifices, end in drunkenness,[i] and our joys in religion pass into sensuality and beastly crimes, we change the holy-day into a day of death, and ourselves become a sacrifice as in the day of slaughter.

To sum up this particular; there are, as you perceive, many cautions to make our pleasure safe, but any thing can make it inordinate, and then scarce any thing can keep it from becoming dangerous.

Habet omnis hoc voluptas:
Stimulis agit furentes.
Apiumque par volantum,
Ubi grata mella fudit,
Fugit, et nimis tenaci
Ferit icta corda morsu. BOETIUS, l. 3. Metr. 7.

And the pleasure of the honey will not pay for the smart of the sting. "Amores enim et deliciæ maturè et celeriter deflorescunt, et in omnibus rebus, voluptatibus maximis fastidium finitimum est:" "Nothing is so soon ripe and rotten as pleasure; and upon all possessions and states of things, loathing looks as being not far off; but it sits upon the skirts of pleasure."

Ὁ δὲ τραπέζας
Ἐπορεξάμενος μελικρῶν ἔθιγεν,
Ἢ μέγα κλαύσει πικρὰν μερίδα,
Τῶν ἀντίξων συνεφαλκομένων.

"He that greedily puts his hand to a delicious table,

[i] Μεθύειν, μετὰ τὸ θύειν.

shall weep bitterly when he suffers the convulsions and violence by the divided interests of such contrary juices :"

"Οδε γὰρ χθονίας θέσμος ἀνάγκας
Διχόθεν θνάτοις βίον οἰνοχεῖ.

"For this is the law of our nature and fatal necessity; life is always poured forth from two goblets."

And now, after all this, I pray consider, what a strange madness and prodigious folly possess many men, that they love to swallow death and diseases and dishonour, with an appetite which no reason can restrain. We expect our servants should not dare to touch what we have forbidden to them; we are watchful that our children should not swallow poisons, and filthiness, and unwholesome nourishment; we take care that they should be well-mannered, and civil, and of fair demeanour; and we ourselves desire to be, or at least to be accounted, wise, and would infinitely scorn to be called fools; and we are so great lovers of health, that we will buy it at any rate of money or observance; and then for honour, it is that which the children of men pursue with passion, it is one of the noblest rewards of virtue, and the proper ornament of the wise and valiant; and yet all these things are not valued or considered, when a merry meeting, or a looser feast, calls upon the man to act a scene of folly and madness, and healthlessness and dishonour. We do to God what we severely punish in our servants; we correct our children for their meddling with dangers, which themselves prefer before immortality; and though no man think himself fit to be despised, yet he is willing to make himself a beast, a sot, and a ridiculous monkey, with the follies and vapours of wine; and when he is high in drink or fancy, proud as a Grecian orator in the midst of his popular noises, at the same time he shall talk such dirty language, such mean low things, as may well become a changeling and a fool, for whom the stocks are prepared by the laws, and the just scorn of men. Every drunkard clothes his head with a mighty scorn; and makes himself lower at that time than the meanest of his servants; the boys can laugh at him when he is led like a cripple, directed like a blind man, and speaks like an infant imperfect noises, lisping with a full and spongy tongue, and an empty head, and a vain and foolish heart: so cheaply does he part with his honour for drink or loads of meat; for which honour he is ready to die, rather than hear it to be disparaged by another: when himself destroys it, as bubbles perish with the breath of children. Do not the laws of all wise nations mark the drunkard for a fool, with the meanest and most scornful punishment? and is there any thing in the world so foolish as a man that is drunk? But, good God! what an intolerable sorrow hath seized upon great portions of mankind, that this folly and madness should possess the greatest spirits, and the wittiest men, the best company, the most sensible of the word honour, and the most jealous of loosing the shadow, and the most careless of the thing! Is it not a horrid thing, that a wise or a crafty, a learned or a noble person, should dishonour himself as a fool, destroy his body as a murderer, lessen his estate as a prodigal, disgrace every good cause that he can pretend to by his relation, and become an appellative of scorn, a scene of laughter or derision, and all for the reward of forgetfulness and madness? for there are in immoderate drinking no other pleasures.

Why do valiant men and brave personages fight and die rather than break the laws of men, or start from their duty to their prince, and will suffer themselves to be cut in pieces rather than deserve the name of a traitor, or perjured? and yet these very men, to avoid the hated name of glutton or drunkard, and to preserve their temperance, shall not deny themselves one luscious morsel, or pour a cup of wine on the ground, when they are invited to drink by the laws of the circle or wilder company.

Methinks it were but reason, that if to give life to uphold a cause be not too much, they should not think it too much to be hungry and suffer thirst for the reputation of that cause; and, therefore, much rather that they would think it but duty to be temperate for its honour, and eat and drink in civil and fair measures, that themselves might not lose the reward of so much suffering, and of so good a relation, nor that which they value most be destroyed by drink.

There are in the world a generation of men that are engaged in a cause which they glory in, and pride themselves in its relation and appellative: but yet for that cause they will do nothing but talk and drink; they are valiant in wine, and witty in healths, and full of stratagem to promote debauchery; but such persons are not considerable in wise accounts; that which I deplore is, that some men prefer a cause before their life, and yet prefer wine before that cause, and by one drunken meeting set it more backward in its hopes and blessings, than it can be set forward by the counsels and arms of a whole year. God hath ways enough to reward a truth without crowning it with success in the hands of such men. In the mean time they dishonour religion, and make truth be evil spoken of, and innocent persons to suffer by their very relation, and the cause of God to be reproached in the sentences of erring and abusing people; and themselves lose their health and their reason, their honour and their peace, the rewards of sober counsels, and the wholesome effects of wisdom.

Arcanum neque tu scrutaberis illius unquam;
Commissumque teges, et vino tortus et irâ. HOR.

Wine discovers more than the rack, and he that will be drunk is not a person fit to be trusted: and though it cannot be expected men should be kinder to their friend, or their prince, or their honour, than to God, and to their own souls, and to their own bodies; yet when men are not moved by what is sensible and material, by that which smarts and shames presently, they are beyond the cure of religion, and the hopes of reason; and therefore they must "lie in hell like sheep, death gnawing upon them, and the righteous shall have dominion over them in the morning" of the resurrection.

Seras tutior ibis ad lucernas:
Hæc hora est tua, cum furit Lyæus,
Cum regnant rosæ, cum madent capilli. MART.

Much safer it is to go to the severities of a watchful and a sober life; for all that time of life is lost, when wine, and rage, and pleasure, and folly, steal away the heart of a man, and make him go singing to his grave.

I end with the saying of a wise man: He is fit to sit at the table of the Lord, and to feast with saints, who moderately uses the creatures which God hath given him: but he that despises even lawful pleasures, *οὐ μόνον συμπότης τῶν Θεῶν αλλὰ καὶ συνάρχων*, "shall not only sit and feast with God, but reign together with him," and partake of his glorious kingdom.

SERMON XVII.

THE MARRIAGE RING; OR, THE MYSTERIOUSNESS AND DUTIES OF MARRIAGE.

PART I.

This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.—Ephes. v. 32, 33.

THE first blessing God gave to man, was society: and that society was a marriage, and that marriage was confederate by God himself, and hallowed by a blessing: and at the same time, and for very many descending ages, not only by the instinct of nature, but by a superadded forwardness, (God himself inspiring the desire,) the world was most desirous of children, impatient of barrenness, accounting single life a curse, and a childless person hated by God.[a] The world was rich and empty, and able to provide for a more numerous posterity than it had.

———"Εξεις, Νουμήνιε, τέκνα,
Χάλκον ἔχων· πτωχὸς δ' οὐδὲ τὰ τέκνα φιλεῖ. BRUNCK.

You that are rich, Numenius, you may multiply your family; poor men are not so fond of children, but when a family could drive their herds, and set their children upon camels, and lead them till they saw a fat soil watered with rivers, and there sit down without paying rent, they thought of nothing but to have great families, that their own relations might swell up to a patriarchate, and their children be enough to possess all the regions that they saw, and their grandchildren become princes, and themselves build cities, and call them by the name of a child, and become the fountain of a nation. This was the consequent of the first blessing, "increase and multiply." The next blessing was, "the promise of the Messias," and that also increased in men and women a wonderful desire of marriage: for as soon as God had chosen the family of Abraham to be the blessed line, from whence the world's Redeemer should descend according to the flesh, every of his daughters hoped to have the honour to be his mother, or his grandmother, or something of his kindred: and to be childless in Israel was a sorrow to the Hebrew women great as the slavery of Egypt, or their dishonours in the land of their captivity.[b]

But when the Messias was come, and the doctrine was published, and his ministers but few, and his disciples were to suffer persecution, and to be of an unsettled dwelling, and the nation of the Jews, in the bosom and society of which the church especially did dwell, were to be scattered and broken all in pieces with fierce calamities, and the world was apt to calumniate and suspect and dishonour christians upon pretences and unreasonable jealousies, and that to all these purposes the state of marriage brought many inconveniences; it pleased God in this new creation to inspire into the hearts of his servants a disposition and strong desires to live a single life, lest the state of marriage should in that conjunction of things become an accidental impediment to the dissemination of the gospel, which called men from a confinement in their domestic charges, to travel, and flight, and poverty, and difficulty, and martyrdom: upon this necessity the apostles and apostolical men published doctrines, declaring the advantages of single life, not by any commandment of the Lord, but by the spirit of prudence, *διὰ τὴν ἐνεστῶσαν ἀνάγκην*, "for the present and then incumbent necessities," and in order to the advantages which did accrue to the public ministries and private piety.[c] "There are some (said our blessed Lord) who make themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven," that is, for the advantages and the ministry of the Gospel, "non ad vitæ bonæ meritum" (as St. Austin in the like case); not that it is a better service of God in itself,[d] but that it is useful to the first circumstances of the gospel and the infancy of the kingdom, because the unmarried person does *μεριμνᾷν τὰ τοῦ κυρίου*, "is apt to spiritual and ecclesiastical employments;" first *ἅγιος*, and then *ἁγιαζόμενος*, "holy in his own person, and then sanctified to public ministries;" and it was also of ease to the christians themselves, because, as then it was, when they were to flee, and to flee for aught they

[a] Quemlibet hominem cui non est uxor, minimè esse hominem; cum etiam in scripturâ dicatur, "Masculum et fœminam creavit eos, et vocavit nomen eorum Adam seu hominem." R. Eliezer dixit in Gen. Bab. Quicunque negligit præceptum de multiplicatione humani generis, habendum esse velut homicidam.

[b] Christiani et apud Athenas, *τὰς τοῦ ἀγαμίου καὶ ὀψιγαμίου δίκας*, refert Julius Pollux l. 3. *περὶ ἀγάμων*. Idem etiam Lacedæmone et Romæ. Vide Festum verb. Uxorium atque ibi Jos. Scal.

[c] Etiam Judæi, qui præceptum esse viris *παιδοποιεῖν* aiunt, uno ore concedunt, tamen dispensatum esse cum iis qui assiduo legis studio vacare volunt, alias etiam immunibus ab acriori carnis stimulo.—MAIMON. 15. Halach. Ishoth.

[d] *Οὐ ψέγω δὲ τοὺς λοιποὺς μακαρίους, ὅτι γάμοις προσωμίλησαν ὧν ἐμνήσθην ἄρτι· εὔχόμαι γὰρ ἄξιος Θεοῦ εὑρεθεὶς πρὸς τοῖς ἴχνεσιν αὐτῶν εὑρεθῆναι ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ ὡς Ἀβραὰμ, καὶ Ἰσαὰκ, καὶ Ἰακὼβ, ὡς Ἰώσηφ, καὶ Ἰεσαΐου καὶ τῶν ἄλλων προφητῶν, ὡς Πέτρου καὶ Παύλου, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἀποστόλων*, &c.—Epist. ad Philadelph.

knew in winter, and they were persecuted to the four winds of heaven; and the nurses and the women with child were to suffer a heavier load of sorrow because of the imminent persecutions; and above all, because of the great fatality of ruin upon the whole nation of the Jews, well it might be said by St. Paul, θλίψιν τῇ σαρκὶ ἕξουσιν οἱ τοιοῦτοι, "such shall have trouble in the flesh," that is, they that are married shall, and so at that time they had: and therefore it was an act of charity to the christians to give that counsel, ἐγὼ δὲ ὑμῖν φείδομαι, "I do this to spare you," and θέλω ὑμᾶς ἀμερίμνους εἶναι: for when the case was altered, and that storm was over, and the first necessities of the gospel served, and "the sound was gone out into all nations;" in very many persons it was wholly changed, and not the married but the unmarried had θλίψιν ἐν σαρκὶ, "trouble in the flesh;" and the state of marriage returned to its first blessing, "et non erat bonum homini esse solitarium," "and it was not good for man to be alone."

But in this first interval, the public necessity and the private zeal mingling together did sometimes overact their love of single life, even to the disparagement of marriage, and to the scandal of religion; which was increased by the occasion of some pious persons renouncing their contract of marriage, not consummate, with believers. For when Flavia Domitilla being converted by Nereus and Achilleus the eunuchs, refused to marry Aurelianus, to whom she was contracted; if there were not some little envy and too sharp hostility in the eunuchs to a marriage state, yet Aurelianus thought himself an injured person, and caused St. Clemens, who veiled her, and his spouse both, to die in the quarrel. St. Thecla being converted by St. Paul, grew so in love with virginity, that she leaped back from the marriage of Tamyris, where she was lately engaged. St. Iphigenia denied to marry king Hyrtacus, and it is said to be done by the advice of St. Matthew. And Susanna, the niece of Dioclesian, refused the love of Maximianus the emperor; and these all had been betrothed; and so did St. Agnes, and St. Felicula, and divers other then and afterward: insomuch, that it was reported among the gentiles, that the christians did not only hate all that were not of their persuasion, but were enemies of the chaste laws of marriage; and indeed some that were called christians were so; "forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats." Upon this occasion it grew necessary for the apostle to state the question right, and to do honour to the holy rite of marriage, and to snatch the mystery from the hands of zeal and folly, and to place it in Christ's right hand, that all its beauties might appear, and a present convenience might not bring in a false doctrine, and a perpetual sin, and an intolerable mischief. The apostle, therefore, who himself[e] had been a married man, but was now a widower, does explicate the mysteriousness of it, and describes its honours, and adorns it with rules and provisions of religion, that, as it begins with honour, so it may proceed with piety, and end with glory.

For although single life hath in it privacy and simplicity of affairs, such solitariness and sorrow, such leisure and inactive circumstances of living, that there are more spaces for religion if men would use them to these purposes; and because it may have in it much religion and prayers, and must have in it a perfect mortification of our strongest appetites, it is therefore a state of great excellency; yet concerning the state of marriage, we are taught from Scripture and the sayings of wise men, great things and honourable. "Marriage is honourable in all men;" so is not single life; for in some it is a snare and a πύρωσις, "a trouble in the flesh," a prison of unruly desires, which is attempted daily to be broken. Celibate or single life is never commanded; but in some cases marriage is; and he that burns, sins often if he marries not; he that cannot contain must marry, and he that can contain is not tied to a single life, but may marry and not sin. Marriage was ordained by God, instituted in Paradise, was the relief of a natural necessity, and the first blessing from the Lord; he gave to man not a friend, but a wife, that is, a friend and a wife too (for a good woman is in her soul the same that a man is, and she is a woman only in her body; that she may have the excellency of the one, and the usefulness of the other, and become amiable in both): it is the seminary of the church, and daily brings forth sons and daughters unto God: it was ministered to by angels, and Raphael waited upon a young man that he might have a blessed marriage, and that that marriage might repair two sad families, and bless all their relatives. Our blessed Lord, though he was born of a maiden, yet she was veiled under the cover of marriage, and she was married to a widower; for Joseph the supposed father of our Lord had children by a former wife. The first miracle that ever Jesus did, was to do honour to a wedding; marriage was in the world before sin, and is in all ages of the world the greatest and most effective antidote against sin, in which all the world had perished, if God had not made a remedy: and although sin hath soured marriage, and stuck the man's head with cares, and the woman's bed with sorrows in the production of children; yet these are but throes of life and glory, and "she shall be saved in child-bearing, if she be found in faith and righteousness." Marriage is a school and exercise of virtue; and though marriage hath cares, yet the single life hath desires, which are more troublesome and more dangerous, and often end in sin, while the cares are but instances of duty and exercises of piety: and therefore, if single life hath more privacy of devotion, yet marriage hath more necessities and more variety of it, and is an exercise of more graces. In two virtues, celibate or single life may have the advantage of degrees ordinarily and commonly,—that is, in chastity and devotion: but as in some

[e] Ὡς Πέτρου καὶ Παύλου καὶ τῶν Ἀποστόλων τῶν γάμοις προσομιλησάντων οὐκ ὑπὸ προθυμίας τῆς περὶ τὸ πραγμα, ἀλλ' ἐπ' ἐννοίας ἑαυτῶν τοῦ γένους ἔσχον ἐκείνους. Ignatius epistol. ad Philadelph. Et Clemens idem ait apud Eusebium Hist. Eccles. lib. 3. sed tamen eam non circumduxit sicut Petrus: probat autem ex Philip. 4.

persons this may fail, and it does in very many, and a married man may spend as much time in devotion as any virgins or widows do; yet as in marriage even those virtues of chastity and devotion are exercised; so in other instances, this state hath proper exercises and trials for those graces, for which single life can never be crowned; here is the proper scene of piety and patience, of the duty of parents and the charity of relatives;[f] here kindness is spread abroad, and love is united and made firm as a centre: marriage is the nursery of heaven; the virgin sends prayers to God, but she carries but one soul to him; but the state of marriage fills up the numbers of the elect, and hath in it the labour of love, and the delicacies of friendship, the blessing of society, and the union of hands and hearts; it hath in it less of beauty, but more of safety, than the single life; it hath more care, but less danger; it is more merry, and more sad; is fuller of sorrows, and fuller of joys; it lies under more burdens, but is supported by all the strengths of love and charity, and those burdens are delightful. Marriage is the mother of the world,[g] and preserves kingdoms, and fills cities, and churches, and heaven itself. Celibate, like the fly in the heart of an apple, dwells in a perpetual sweetness, but sits alone, and is confined and dies in singularity; but marriage, like the useful bee, builds a house and gathers sweetness from every flower, and labours and unites into societies and republics, and sends out colonies, and feeds the world with delicacies, and obeys their king, and keeps order, and exercises many virtues, and promotes the interest of mankind, and is that state of good things to which God hath designed the present constitution of the world.

Τοὔνεκεν ἐνθέσμως ἄλοχον λαβὲ, καὶ τινα κόσμῳ
Δὸς βροτὸν ἀντὶ σέθεν. φεῦγε δὲ μαχλοσύνην. BRUN.

Single life makes men in one instance to be like angels, but marriage in very many things makes the chaste pair to be like to Christ. "This is a great mystery," but it is the symbolical and sacramental representation of the greatest mysteries of our religion. Christ descended from his Father's bosom, and contracted his divinity with flesh and blood, and married our nature, and we became a church, the spouse of the Bridegroom, which he cleansed with his blood, and gave her his Holy Spirit for a dowry, and heaven for a jointure; begetting children unto God by the gospel. This spouse he hath joined to himself by an excellent charity, he feeds her at his own table, and lodges her nigh his own heart, provides for all her necessities, relieves her sorrows, determines her doubts, guides her wanderings, he is become her head, and she as a signet upon his right hand; he first indeed was betrothed to the synagogue and had many children by her, but she forsook her love, and then he married the church of the gentiles, and by her as by a second venter had a more numerous issue, "atque una domus est omnium filiorum ejus," "all the children dwell in the same house," and are heirs of the same promises, entitled to the same inheritance. Here is the eternal conjunction, the indissoluble knot, the exceeding love of Christ, the obedience of the spouse, the communicating of goods, the uniting of interests, the fruit of marriage, a celestial generation, a new creature: "Sacramentum hoc magnum est;" "This is the sacramental mystery," represented by the holy rite of marriage; so that marriage is divine in its institution, sacred in its union, holy in the mystery, sacramental in its signification, honourable in its appellative, religious in its employments: it is advantage to the societies of men, and it is "holiness to the Lord." "Dico autem in Christo et ecclesiâ," "It must be in Christ and the church."

If this be not observed, marriage loses its mysteriousness: but because it is to effect much of that which it signifies, it concerns all that enter into those golden fetters to see that Christ and his church be in at every of its periods, and that it be entirely conducted and overruled by religion; for so the apostle passes from the sacramental rite to the real duty; "Nevertheless," that is, although the former discourse were wholly to explicate the conjunction of Christ and his church by this similitude, yet it hath in it this real duty, "that the man love his wife, and the wife reverence her husband;" and this is the use we shall now make of it, the particulars of which precept I shall thus dispose:

1. I shall propound the duty as it generally relates to man and wife in conjunction. 2. The duty and power of the man. 3. The rights and privileges and the duty of the wife.

1. "In Christo et ecclesiâ;" that begins all, and there is great need it should be so: for they that enter into the state of marriage, cast a die of the greatest contingency, and yet of the greatest interest in the world, next to the last throw for eternity.

Νῦν γὰρ δὴ πάντεσσιν ἐπὶ ξυροῦ ἵσταται ἀκμῆς,
Ἢ μαλὰ λυγρὸς ὄλεθρος Ἀχαιοῖς, ἠὲ βιῶναι. Iliad.

Life or death, felicity or a lasting sorrow, are in the power of marriage. A woman indeed ventures most, for she hath no sanctuary to retire to from an evil husband; she must dwell upon her sorrow, and hatch the eggs which her own folly or infelicity hath produced; and she is more under it, because her tormentor hath a warrant of prerogative, and the woman may complain to God as subjects do of tyrant princes, but otherwise she hath no appeal in the causes of unkindness. And though the man can run from many hours of his sadness, yet he must return to it again, and when he sits among his

[f] Χρὴ τῆς ἀειγένους φύσεως ἀντέχεσθαι τῷ παῖδας παίδων καταλείποντι ἀεὶ τῷ θεῷ ὑπηρέτας ἀνθ' αὐτοῦ παραδιδόναι. —PLATO.

Adde quod Eunuchus nulla pietate movetur,
Nec generi natisve cavet: clementia cunctis
In similes, animosque ligant consortia damni.
CLAUDIAN.

[g] Καλὰ τὰ παρθενίης κειμήλια· παρθενίη δὲ
Τὸν βιὸν ὤλεσεν ἂν πᾶσι φυλαττομένη. — BRUNCK.
Siquis patriam majorem parentem extinguit, in eo culpa est, quod facit pro sua parte qui se eunuchat aut aliqua liberos producit, i. e. differt eorum procreationem. Varro in "lege Mænia."

neighbours, he remembers the objection that lies in his bosom, and he sighs deeply.

> Ah tum te miserum, malique fati,
> Quem, attractis pedibus, patente portâ,
> Percurrent mugilesque raphanique. CATULL.

The boys, and the pedlars, and the fruiterers, shall tell of this man, when he is carried to his grave, that he lived and died a poor wretched person. The stags in the Greek epigram, whose knees were clogged with frozen snow upon the mountains, came down to the brooks of the valleys, *χλιῆναι νοτεροῖς νάμασιν ὠκὺ γόνυ*, "hoping to thaw their joints with the waters of the stream;"[h] but there the frost overtook them, and bound them fast in ice, till the young herdsmen took them in their stranger snare. It is the unhappy chance of many men, finding many inconveniences upon the mountains of single life, they descend into the valleys of[i] marriage to refresh their troubles, and there they enter into fetters, and are bound to sorrow by the cords of a man's or woman's peevishness: and the worst of the evil is, they are to thank their own follies; for they fell into the snare by entering an improper way: Christ and the church were no ingredients in their choice: but as the Indian women enter into folly for the price of an elephant, and think their crime warrantable; so do men and women change their liberty for a rich fortune, (like Eriphyle the Argive, *Ἡ χρυσὸν φίλου ἀνδρὸς ἐδέξατο τιμήεντα*, "she preferred gold before a good man,") and show themselves to be less than money, by overvaluing that to all the content and wise felicity of their lives; and when they have counted the money and their sorrows together, how willingly would they[k] buy, with the loss of all that money, modesty, or sweet nature, to their relative! the odd thousand pounds would gladly be allowed in good nature and fair manners. As very a fool is he that chooses for beauty[l] principally; "cui sunt eruditi oculi, et stulta mens," (as one said,) "whose eyes are witty, and their souls sensual;" it is an ill band of affections to tie two hearts together by a little thread of red and white.

> Οὐδεμίαν (φησὶν ἡ τραγῳδία)
> Ὤνησε κάλλος εἰς πόσιν ξυνάορον.

And they can love no longer but until the next ague comes; and they are fond of each other but at the chance of fancy, or the small-pox, or child-bearing, or care, or time, or any thing that can destroy a pretty flower.[m] But it is the basest of all, when lust is the paranymph, and solicits the suit, and makes the contract, and joins the hands; for this is commonly the effect of the former, according to the Greek proverb;

> Ἀλλ ἤτοι πρώτιστα λέων γένετ' ἠϋγένειος,
> Αὖτὰρ ἔπειτα δράκων, ἠ πάρδαλις, ἠδὲ μέγας σῦς. Odys.

At first for his fair cheeks and comely beard, "the beast is taken for a lion, but at last he is turned to a dragon, or a leopard, or a swine." That which is at first beauty on the face, may prove lust in the manners.

> *Αὐτοῖς δὲ τοῖς θεοῖσι τὴν κέρκον μόνην*
> *Καὶ μηρὸν, ὥσπερ παιδερασταῖς, θύετε.*

So Eubulus wittily reprehended such impure contracts: they offer in their marital sacrifices nothing but the thigh, and that which the priests cut from the goats, when they were laid to bleed upon the altars. *Ἐὰν εἰς κάλλος σώματος βλέψῃ τὶς, (ὁ λόγος φησὶ,) καὶ αὐτῷ ἡ σάρξ εἶναι κατ' ἐπιθυμίαν δόξῃ καλὴ, σαρκικῶς ἰδὼν, καὶ ἁμαρτηκὼς δι' οὗ τεθαύμακε, κρίνεται*, said St. Clement: "He or she that looks too curiously upon the beauty of the body, looks too low, and hath flesh and corruption in his heart, and is judged sensual and earthly in his affections and desires." Begin therefore with God; Christ is the president of marriage, and the Holy Ghost is the fountain of purities and chaste loves, and he joins the hearts; and therefore let our first suit be in the court of heaven, and with designs of piety, or safety, or charity; let no impure spirit defile the virgin purities and "castifications of the soul" (as St. Peter's phrase is); let all such contracts begin with religious affections.

> Conjugium petimus, partumque uxoris; at illis
> Notum, qui pueri, qualisve futura sit uxor. JUV.

"We sometimes beg of God for a wife or a child; and he alone knows what the wife shall prove, and by what dispositions and manners, and into what fortune that child shall enter:" but we shall not need to fear concerning the event of it, if religion, and fair intentions, and prudence, manage and conduct it all the way. The preservation of a family, the production of children, the avoiding fornication, the refreshment of our sorrows by the comforts of society; all these are fair ends of marriage, and hallow the entrance; but in these there is a special order; society was the first designed, "It is not good for man to be alone;"—children was the next, "Increase and multiply;"—but the avoiding fornication came in by the superfœtation of the evil accidents of the world. The first makes marriage delectable, the second necessary to the public, the third necessary to the particular; this is for safety, for life, and heaven itself;

> Nam simulac venas inflavit tetra libido,
> Huc juvenes æquum est descendere;—— HOR.

The other have in them joy and a portion of immortality: the first makes the man's heart glad; the second is the friend of kingdoms, and cities, and families; and the third is the enemy to hell, and an

[h] Brunck. An. 2. 135.

[i] *Ἄχρις ἂν ᾖς ἄγαμος, Νουμήνιε, πάντα δοκεῖ σοὶ*
Ἐν τῷ ζῆν εἶναι τάγαθὰ τῶν ἀγαθῶν.
Εἶθ' ὅταν εἰσέλθῃ γαμετὴ, πάλιν εὐθὺ δοκεῖ σοι
Ἐν τῷ ζῆν εἶναι πάντα κακῶν τὰ κακά.
Ἀλλὰ χάριν τέκνων, &c.

[k] Non ego illam mihi dotem duco esse, quæ dos dicitur;
Sed pudicitiam, et pudorem, et sedatum cupidinem,
Deûm metum, parentum amorem, et cognatûm concordiam. PLAUT. in Amphit. 2. 2. 209.

[l] Facies, non uxor amatur.

[m] Tres rugæ subeant, et se cutis arida laxet,
Fiant obscuri dentes, oculique minores,
"Collige sarcinulas (dicet libertus) et exi."
JUVEN. Sat. 6

antidote of the chiefest inlet to damnation; but of all these the noblest end is the multiplying children. "Mundus cum patet, Deorum tristium atque inferûm quasi patet janua; propterea uxorem, liberorum quærendorum causâ, ducere religiosum est," said Varro; "it is religion to marry for children;"[n] and Quintilian put it into the definition of a wife, "est enim uxor quam jungit, quam diducit utilitas; cujus hæc reverentia est, quod videtur inventa in causa liberorum;" and therefore St. Ignatius, when he had spoken of Elias, and Titus, and Clement, with an honourable mention of their virgin-state, lest he might seem to have lessened the married apostles, at whose feet in Christ's kingdom he thought himself unworthy to sit, he gives this testimony,—they were τοῖς γάμοις προσομιλήσαντες οὐχ ὑπὸ προθυμίας τῆς περὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα, ἀλλ' ὑπ' ἐννοίας ἑαυτῶν τοῦ γένους ἔσχον ἐκείνους, "that they might not be disparaged in their great names of holiness and severity, they were secured by not marrying to satisfy their lower appetites, but out of desire of children."[o] Other considerations, if they be incident and by way of appendage, are also considerable in the accounts of prudence: but when they become principals, they defile the mystery, and make the blessing doubtful: "Amabit sapiens, cupient cæteri," said Afranius; "Love is a fair inducement, but desire and appetite are rude, and the characterisms of a sensual person:"—"Amare justi et boni est, cupere impotentis;" "To love, belongs to a just and a good man; but to lust, or furiously and passionately to desire, is the sign of impotency and an unruly mind."

2. Man and wife are equally concerned to avoid all offences of each other in the beginning of their conversation: every little thing can blast an infant blossom; and the breath of the south can shake the little rings of the vine, when first they begin to curl like the locks of a new-weaned boy; but when by age and consolidation they stiffen into the hardness of a stem, and have, by the warm embraces of the sun and the kisses of heaven, brought forth their clusters, they can endure the storms of the north, and the loud noises of a tempest, and yet never be broken: so are the early unions of an unfixed marriage; watchful and observant, jealous and busy, inquisitive and careful, and apt to take alarm at every unkind word. For infirmities do not manifest themselves in the first scenes, but in the succession of a long society; and it is not chance or weakness when it appears at first, but it is want of love or prudence, or it will be so expounded; and that which appears ill at first, usually affrights the inexperienced man or woman, who makes unequal conjectures, and fancies mighty sorrows by the proportions of the new and early unkindness. It is a very great passion, or a huge folly, or a certain want of love, that cannot preserve the colours and beauties of kindness, so long as public honesty requires a man to wear their sorrows for the death of a friend. Plutarch compares a new marriage to a vessel before the hoops are on; μετὰ ἀρχὰς μὲν ὑπὸ τῆς τυχούσης ῥαδίως διασπᾶται προφάσεως, "every thing dissolves their tender compaginations;" χρόνῳ τῶν ἁρμῶν σύμπηξιν λαβόντων, μόγις ὑπὸ πυρὸς καὶ σιδήρου διαλύεται, "but when the joints are stiffened and are tied by a firm compliance and proportioned binding, scarcely can it be dissolved without fire or the violence of iron." After the hearts of the man and the wife are endeared and hardened by a mutual confidence, and experience longer than artifice and pretence can last, there are a great many remembrances, and some things present, that dash all little unkindnesses in pieces. The little boy in the Greek epigram,[p] that was creeping down a precipice, was invited to his safety by the sight of his mother's pap, when nothing else could entice him to return: and the bond of common children, and the sight of her that nurses what is most dear to him, and the endearments of each other in the course of a long society, and the same relation, is an excellent security to redintegrate and to call that love back, which folly and trifling accidents would disturb.

> ———Tormentum ingens nubentibus hæret,
> Quæ nequeunt parere, et partu retinere maritos. JUV.

When it is come thus far, it is hard untwisting the knot; but be careful in its first coalition, that there be no rudeness done; for, if there be, it will for ever after be apt to start and to be diseased.

3. Let man and wife be careful to stifle little things,[q] that, as fast as they spring, they be cut down and trod upon; for if they be suffered to grow by numbers, they make the spirit peevish, and the society troublesome, and the affections loose and easy by an habitual aversation. Some men are more vexed with a fly than with a wound; and when the gnats disturb our sleep, and the reason is disquieted but not perfectly awakened, it is often seen that he is fuller of trouble than if, in the daylight of his reason, he were to contest with a potent enemy. In the frequent little accidents of a family, a man's reason cannot always be awake; and when his discourses are imperfect, and a trifling trouble makes him yet more restless, he is soon betrayed to the violence of passion. It is certain that the man or woman are in a state of weakness and folly then, when they can be troubled with a trifling accident; and therefore, it is not good to tempt their affections, when they are in that state of danger. In this case the caution is, to subtract fuel from the sudden flame; for stubble, though it be quickly kindled, yet it is as soon extinguished, if it be not blown by a pertinacious breath, or fed with new materials. Add no new provocations to the accident, and do not inflame this, and peace will soon return, and the discontent will pass away soon, as the sparks from the collision of a flint: ever remembering, that discontents proceeding from daily little things, do breed a secret undiscernible disease, which is more dangerous than a fever proceeding from a discerned notorious surfeit.

[n] Macrobius ex Varrone.
[o] Epist. ad Philadelph.
[p] Μαζὸν τοῦ λοιμοῦ λύτορα καὶ θανάτου.—BRUNCK.
[q] Quædam parva quidem, sed non toleranda maritis.—JUV.

4. Let them be sure to abstain from all those things, which by experience and observation they find to be contrary to each other. They that govern elephants, never appear before them in white; and the masters of bulls keep from them all garments of blood and scarlet, as knowing that they will be impatient of civil usages and discipline, when their natures are provoked by their proper antipathies. The ancients in their marital hieroglyphics used to depict Mercury standing by Venus, to signify, that by fair language and sweet entreaties, the minds of each other should be united; and hard by them, "Suadam et Gratias descripserunt," they would have all deliciousness of manners, compliance, and mutual observance to abide.[z]

5. Let the husband and wife infinitely avoid a curious distinction of mine and thine; for this hath caused all the laws, and all the suits, and all the wars, in the world; let them, who have but one person, have also but one interest. The husband and wife are heirs to each other (as Dionysius Halicarnasseus relates from Romulus) if they die without children; but if there be children, the wife is τοῖς παισὶν ἰσόμοιρος, "a partner in the inheritance." But during their life, the use and employment is common to both their necessities, and in this there is no other difference of right, but that the man hath the dispensation of all, and may keep it from his wife, just as the governor of a town may keep it from the right owner; he hath the power, but no right, to do so. And when either of them begins to impropriate, it is like a tumour in the flesh, it draws more than its share: but what it feeds on, turns to a bile; and therefore, the Romans forbade any donations to be made between man and wife, because neither of them could transfer a new right of those things, which already they had in common; but this is to be understood only concerning the uses of necessity and personal conveniences; for so all may be the woman's, and all may be the man's, in several regards. Corvinus dwells in a farm and receives all its profits, and reaps and sows as he please, and eats of the corn and drinks of the wine—it is his own: but all that also is his lord's, and for it Corvinus pays acknowledgment; and his patron hath such powers and uses of it as are proper to the lord's; and yet, for all this, it may be the king's too, to all the purposes that he can need, and is all to be accounted in the census and for certain services and times of danger: so are the riches of a family; they are a woman's as well as a man's: they are hers for need, and hers for ornament, and hers for modest delight, and for the uses of religion and prudent charity; but the disposing them into portions of inheritance, the assignation of charges and governments, stipends and rewards, annuities and greater donatives, are the reserves of the superior right, and not to be invaded by the under-possessors. But in those things, where they ought to be common, if the spleen or the belly swells and draws into its capacity much of that which should be spent upon those parts, which have an equal right to be maintained,—it is a dropsy or a consumption of the whole, something that is evil because it is unnatural and monstrous. Macarius, in his thirty-second Homily, speaks fully in this particular; a woman betrothed to a man bears all her portion, and with a mighty love pours it into the hands of her husband, and says, ἐμὸν οὐδὲν ἔχω, "I have nothing of my own;" my goods, my portion, my body, and my mind, are yours. Νόμῳ γὰρ ἅπαντα γίγνεται τοῦ γεγαμηκότος, τὸν πλοῦτον, τὴν δόξαν, τοὺς ἐπαίνους, "All that a woman hath, is reckoned to the right of her husband; not her wealth and her person only, but her reputation and her praise;" so Lucian.[s] But as the earth, the mother of all creatures here below, sends up all its vapours and proper emissions at the command of the sun, and yet requires them again to refresh her own needs, and they are deposited between them both in the bosom of a cloud, as a common receptacle, that they may cool his flames, and yet descend to make her fruitful; so are the proprieties of a wife to be disposed of by her lord; and yet all are for her provisions, it being a part of his need to refresh and supply hers, and it serves the interest of both while it serves the necessities of either.

These are the duties of them both, which have common regards and equal necessities and obligations; and, indeed, there is scarce any matter of duty, but it concerns them both alike, and is only distinguished by names, and hath its variety by circumstances and little accidents: and what in one is called "love," in the other is called "reverence;" and what in the wife is "obedience," the same in the man is "duty." He provides, and she dispenses; he gives commandments, and she rules by them; he rules her by authority, and she rules him by love; she ought by all means to please him, and he must by no means displease her. For as the heart is set in the midst of the body, and though it strikes to one side by the prerogative of nature, yet those throbs and constant motions are felt on the other side also, and the influence is equal to both: so it is in conjugal duties; some motions are to the one side more than to the other, but the interest is on both, and the duty is equal in the several instances. If it be otherwise, the man enjoys a wife as Periander did his dead Melissa, by an unnatural union, neither pleasing nor holy, useless to all the purposes of society, and dead to content.

SERMON XVIII.

PART II.

The next inquiry is more particular, and considers the power and duty of the man; "Let every one of you so love his wife even as himself;" she is as

[z] —— Hujus enim rari summique voluptas
Nulla boni, quoties animo corrupta superbo
Plus aloes quàm mellis habet— Juven. Sat. 6.

[s] Ῥητόρων διδάσκαλος.

himself, the man hath power over her as over himself, and must love her equally. A husband's power over his wife is paternal and friendly, not magisterial and despotic. The wife is in "perpetua tutela," under conduct and counsel; for the power a man hath, is founded in the understanding, not in the will or force; it is not a power of coercion, but a power of advice, and that government that wise men have over those, who are fit to be conducted by them: "Et vos in manu et in tutelâ non in servitio debetis habere eas; et malle patres vos, et viros, quam dominos dici," said Valerius in Livy; "husbands should rather be fathers than lords." Homer adds more soft appellatives to the character of a husband's duty; *πατὴρ μὲν γὰρ ἐστὶ αὐτῇ καὶ πότνια μητὴρ, ἠδὲ κασίγνητος*, "Thou art to be a father and a mother to her, and a brother:" and great reason, unless the state of marriage should be no better than the condition of an orphan. For she that is bound to leave father, and mother, and brother for thee, either is miserable like a poor fatherless child, or else ought to find all these, and more, in thee. Medea in Euripides had cause to complain when she found it otherwise.

> Πάντων δ', ὅσ' ἔστ' ἔμψυχα, καὶ γνώμην ἔχει,
> Γυναῖκές ἐσμὲν ἀθλιώτατον φυτόν.
> Ἂς πρῶτα μὲν δεῖ χρημάτων ὑπερβολῇ
> Πόσιν πρίασθαι, δεσπότην τε σώματος
> Λαβεῖν. MED.

Which St. Ambrose[a] well translates: "It is sad, when virgins are with their own money sold to slavery; and that services are in better state than marriages; for they receive wages, but these buy their fetters, and pay dear for their loss of liberty;" And therefore the Romans expressed the man's power over his wife but by a gentle word; "Nec vero mulieribus præfectus reponatur, qui apud Græcos creari solet, sed sit censor qui viros doceat moderari uxoribus;" said Cicero; "Let there be no governor of the woman appointed, but a censor of manners, one to teach the men to moderate their wives," that is, fairly to induce them to the measures of their own proportions. It was rarely observed of Philo, *Εὖ τὸ μὴ φάναι, ἡ γυνὴ ἣν ἔδωκας ἐμοὶ, ἀλλὰ, μετ' ἐμοῦ· οὐ γὰρ ἐμοὶ ὡς κτῆμα τὴν ἄϊσθησιν ἔδωκας, ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὴν ἀφῆκας ἄνετον καὶ ἐλεύθερον*· "When Adam made that fond excuse for his folly in eating the forbidden fruit, he said, 'The woman thou gavest to be *with* me, she gave me.' He says not, 'The woman which thou gavest *to* me,' no such thing; she is none of his goods, none of his possessions, not to be reckoned amongst his servants; God did not give her to him so; but 'The woman thou gavest to be with me,' that is, to be my partner, the companion of my joys and sorrows, thou gavest her for use, not for dominion." The dominion of a man over his wife is no other than as the soul rules the body; for which it takes a mighty care, and uses it with a delicate tenderness, and cares for it in all contingencies, and watches to keep it from all evils, and studies to make for it fair provisions, and very often is led by its inclinations and desires, and does never contradict its appetites, but when they are evil, and then also not without some trouble and sorrow; and its government comes only to this, it furnishes the body with light and understanding, and the body furnishes the soul with hands and feet; the soul governs, because the body cannot else be happy, but the government is no other than provision; as a nurse governs a child, when she causes him to eat, and to be warm, and dry, and quiet: and yet even the very government itself is divided; for man and wife in the family, are as the sun and moon in the firmament of heaven; he rules by day, and she by night, that is, in the lesser and more proper circles of her affairs, in the conduct of domestic provisions and necessary offices, and shines only by his light, and rules by his authority; and as the moon in opposition to the sun shines brightest, that is, then, when she is in her own circles and separate regions; so is the authority of the wife then most conspicuous, when she is separate and in her proper sphere; in "gynæceo," in the nursery and offices of domestic employment: but when she is in conjunction with the sun her brother, that is, in that place and employment in which his care and proper offices are employed, her light is not seen, her authority hath no proper business; but else there is no difference: for they were barbarous people, among whom wives were instead of servants, said Spartianus in Caracalla; and it is a sign of impotency and weakness, to force the camels to kneel for their load, because thou hast not spirit and strength enough to climb; to make the affections and evenness of a wife bend by the flexures of a servant, is a sign the man is not wise enough to govern when another stands by. So many differences as can be in the appellatives of "dominus" and "domina," governor and governess, lord and lady, master and mistress, the same difference there is in the authority of man and woman, and no more; "Si tu Caius, ego Caia," was publicly proclaimed upon the threshold of the young man's house when the bride entered into his hands and power; and the title of "domina" in the sense of the civil law was among the Romans given to wives.

> Hi Dominam Ditis thalamo deducere adorti,

said Virgil:[b] where, though Servius says it was spoken after the manner of the Greeks, who called the wife *Δέσποιναν*, "lady" or "mistress," yet it was so amongst both the nations.

> "Ac domus Dominam voca," says Catullus;[c]
> "Hærebit Dominæ vir comes ipse suæ," so Martial;

and therefore, although there is just measure of subjection and obedience due from the wife to the husband (as I shall after explain,) yet nothing of this expressed is in the man's character, or in his duty; he is not commanded to rule, nor instructed how, nor bidden to exact obedience, or to defend his privilege; all his duty is signified by love, "by nourishing and cherishing,"[d] by being joined with her in all the unions of charity, by "not being bitter to her,"[e] by "dwelling with her according to knowledge, giving honour to her:"[f] so that it seems to be with

[a] Exhor. ad virg. [b] Æneid. 6. [c] Epithal. Juliæ.
[d] Ephes. v. 25. [e] Col. iii. 19. [f] 1 Pet. iii. 7.

husbands, as it is with bishops and priests, to whom much honour is due, but yet so that if they stand upon it, and challenge it, they become less honourable: and as amongst men and women humility is the way to be preferred; so it is in husbands, they shall prevail by cession, by sweetness and counsel, and charity and compliance. So that we cannot discourse of the man's right, without describing the measures of his duty; that therefore follows next.

"Let him love his wife even as himself:"—that is his duty, and the measure of it too; which is so plain, that if he understands how he treats himself, there needs nothing be added concerning his demeanour towards her, save only that we add the particulars, in which Holy Scripture instances this general commandment.

Μὴ πικραίνετε. That is the first. "Be not bitter against her:" and this is the least index and signification of love; a civil man is never bitter against a friend or a stranger, much less to him that enters under his roof, and is secured by the laws of hospitality. But a wife does all that and more; she quits all her interest for his love, she gives him all that she can give, she is as much the same person as another can be the same, who is conjoined by love, and mystery, and religion, and all that is sacred and profane.

> Non equidem hoc dubites, amborum fœdere certo
> Consentire dies, et ab uno sidere duci. PERS.

They have the same fortune, the same family, the same children, the same religion, the same interest, "the same flesh," "erunt duo in carnem unam;" and therefore this the apostle urges for his μὴ πικραίνετε, "no man hateth his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it;" and he certainly is strangely sacrilegious and a violator of the rights of hospitality and sanctuary, who uses her rudely, who is fled for protection, not only to his house, but also to his heart and bosom. A wise man will not wrangle with any one, much less with his dearest relative; and if it is accounted indecent to embrace in public, it is extremely shameful to brawl in public: for the other is in itself lawful; but this never, though it were assisted with the best circumstances of which it is capable. Marcus Aurelius said, that "a wise man ought often to admonish his wife, to reprove her seldom, but never to lay his hands upon her:"[g] "neque verberibus neque maledictis exasperandam uxorem," said the doctors of the Jews; and Homer brings in Jupiter sometimes speaking sharply to Juno, (according to the Greek liberty and empire,) but made a pause at striking her,

> Οὐ μὰν οἶδ', εἰ αὖτε κακορράφιης ἀλεγεινῆς
> Πρώτη ἐπαύρηαι, καὶ σε πληγῆσιν ἰμάσσω. Iliad. O'.

And the ancients use to sacrifice to Juno γαμήλιος, or "the president of marriage," without gall; and St. Basil observes and urges it, by way of upbraiding quarrelling husbands; "Etiam vipera virus ob nuptiarum venerationem evomit," "The viper casts all his poison, when he marries his female;" "Tu duritiam animi, tu feritatem, tu crudelitatem ob unionis reverentiam non deponis?"[h] He is worse than a viper, who for the reverence of this sacred union will not abstain from such a poisonous bitterness; and how shall he embrace that person whom he hath smitten reproachfully; for those kindnesses are indecent which the fighting-man pays unto his wife. St. Chrysostom preaching earnestly against this barbarous inhumanity of striking the wife, or reviling her with evil language, says, it is as if a king should beat his viceroy and use him like a dog; from whom most of that reverence and majesty must needs depart, which he first put upon him, and the subjects shall pay him less duty, how much his prince hath treated him with less civility; but the loss redounds to himself; and the government of the whole family shall be disordered, if blows be laid upon that shoulder which together with the other ought to bear nothing but the cares and the issues of a prudent government. And it is observable, that no man ever did this rudeness for a virtuous end; it is an incompetent instrument, and may proceed from wrath and folly, but can never end in virtue and the unions of a prudent and fair society. "Quod si verberaveris, exasperabis morbum" (saith St. Chrysostom): "asperitas enim mansuetudine, non aliâ asperitate, dissolvitur;" "If you strike, you exasperate the wound," and (like Cato at Utica in his despair) tear the wounds in pieces; and yet he that did so ill to himself whom he loved well, he loved not women tenderly, and yet would never strike; and if the man cannot endure her talking, how can she endure his striking? But this caution contains a duty in it which none prevaricates, but the meanest of the people, fools and bedlams, whose kindness is a curse, whose government is by chance and violence, and their families are herds of talking cattle.

> Sic alternos reficit cursus
> Alternus Amor, sic astrigeris
> Bellum discors exulat oris.
> Hæc concordia temperat æquis
> Elementa modis, ut pugnantia
> Vicibus cedant humida siccis,
> Jungantque fidem frigora flammis.

The marital love is infinitely removed from all possibility of such rudenesses: it is a thing pure as light, sacred as a temple, lasting as the world; "Amicitia, quæ desinere potuit, nunquam vera fuit," said one; "That love, that can cease, was never true:" it is ὁμιλία, so Moses called it; it is εὔνοια, so St. Paul; it is φιλότης, so Homer; it is φιλοφροσύνη, so Plutarch; that is, it contains in it all "sweetness," and all "society," and "felicity," and all "prudence," and all "wisdom." For there is nothing can please a man

[g] Ah lapis est ferrumque, suam quicunque puellam
Verberat: e cœlo deripit ille Deos.
Sit satis e membris tenuem præscindere vestem:
Sit satis ornatus dissoluisse comæ:
Sit lacrymas movisse satis; quater ille beatus,
Quo tenera irato flere puella potest.
Sed manibus qui sævus erit, scutumque sudemque
Is gerat, et miti sit procul a Venere.—TIBULL.

[h] Homil. 7. Hexam.

without love; and if a man be weary of the wise discourses of the apostles, and of the innocency of an even and a private fortune, or hates peace or a fruitful year, he hath reaped thorns and thistles from the choicest flowers of paradise; "for nothing can sweeten felicity itself, but love;"[e] but when a man dwells in love, then the breasts of his wife are pleasant as the droppings upon the hill of Hermon, her eyes are fair as the light of heaven, she is a fountain sealed, and he can quench his thirst, and ease his cares, and lay his sorrow down upon her lap, and can retire home as to his sanctuary and refectory, and his gardens of sweetness and chaste refreshments. No man can tell but he that loves his children, how many delicious accents make a man's heart dance in the pretty conversation of those dear pledges; their childishness, their stammering, their little angers, their innocence, their imperfections, their necessities, are so many little emanations of joy and comfort to him that delights in their persons and society; but he that loves not his wife and children, feeds a lioness at home, and broods a nest of sorrows; and blessing itself cannot make him happy; so that all the commandments of God enjoining a man to "love his wife," are nothing but so many necessities and capacities of joy. "She that is loved is safe, and he that loves is joyful." Love is a union of all things excellent; it contains in it proportion and satisfaction, and rest and confidence; and I wish that this were so much proceeded in, that the heathens themselves could not go beyond us in this virtue, and its proper and its appendant happiness. Tiberius Gracchus chose to die for the safety of his wife; and yet methinks for a christian to do so should be no hard thing; for many servants will die for their masters, and many gentlemen will die for their friend; but the examples are not so many of those that are ready to do it for their dearest relatives, and yet some there have been. Baptista Fregosa tells of a Neapolitan, that gave himself a slave to the Moors that he might follow his wife; and Dominicus Catalusius, the prince of Lesbos, kept company with his lady when she was a leper: and these are greater things than to die.

But the cases in which this can be required are so rare and contingent, that Holy Scripture instances not the duty in this particular; but it contains in it, that the husband should nourish and cherish her, that he should refresh her sorrows and entice her fears into confidence and pretty arts of rest; for even the fig-trees that grew in paradise had sharp-pointed leaves, and harshnesses fit to mortify the too-forward lusting after the sweetness of the fruit. But it will concern the prudence of the husband's love to make the cares and evils as simple and easy as he can, by doubling the joys and acts of a careful friendship, by tolerating her infirmities,[k] (because by so doing, he either cures her, or makes himself better,) by fairly expounding all the little traverses of society and communication, "by taking every thing by the right handle," as Plutarch's expression is; for there is nothing but may be misinterpreted, and yet if it be capable of a fair construction, it is the office of love to make it.

——Εὖ λέγειν
Δ', ὅτ' ἄν τι λέξῃ, χρὴ δοκεῖν, κἂν μὴ λέγῃ.
——Κακπονεῖν,
Ἂν τὸ ξυνόντι πρὸς χάριν μέλλῃ λέγειν.—EURIP.

Love will account that to be well said, which, it may be, was not so intended; and then it may cause it to be so another time.

3. Hither also is to be referred that he secure the interest of her virtue and felicity by a fair example; for a wife to a husband is a line or superficies, it hath dimensions of its own, but no motion or proper affections; but commonly puts on such images of virtues or vices as are presented to her by her husband's idea: and if thou beest vicious, complain not that she is infected that lies in thy bosom; the interest of whose loves ties her to transcribe thy copy, and write after the characters of thy manners. Paris was a man of pleasure, and Helena was an adulteress, and she added covetousness upon her own account. But Ulysses was a prudent man, and a wary counsellor, sober and severe; and he efformed his wife into such imagery as he desired; and she was chaste as the snows upon the mountains, diligent as the fatal sisters, always busy, and always faithful; γλῶσσαν μὲν ἀργὴν, χεῖρα δ' εἶχεν ἐργάτην· "she had a lazy tongue, and a busy hand."

4. Above all the instances of love let him preserve towards her an inviolable faith, and an unspotted chastity;[l] for this is the marriage ring, it ties two hearts by an eternal band; it is like the cherubim's flaming sword, set for the guard of paradise; he that passes into that garden, now that it is immured by Christ and the church, enters into the shades of death. No man must touch the forbidden tree, that in the midst of the garden, which is the tree of knowledge and life. Chastity is the security of love, and preserves all the mysteriousness like the secrets of a temple. Under this lock is deposited security of families, the union of affections, the repairer of accidental breaches.

——Καὶ σφ' ἄκριτα νείκεα λύσω·
Εἰς εὐνὴν ἀνέσαιμι ὁμωθῆναι φιλότητι.—Iliad. ξ

This is a grace that is shut up and secured by all arts of heaven, and the defence of laws, the locks and bars of modesty, by honour and reputation, by fear and shame, by interest and high regards; and that contract that is intended to be for ever, is yet dissolved, and broken by the violation of this; nothing but death can do so much evil to the holy rites of marriage, as unchastity and breach of faith can. The shepherd Cratis falling in love with a she-goat, had his brains beaten out with a buck as he lay asleep; and by the laws of the Romans, a man might kill his daughter or his wife, if he surprised her in the breach of her holy vows, which

[e] Felices ter et amplius,
Quos irrupta tenet copula, nec malis
Divulsos querimoniis,
Supremâ citius solvet amor die.—HORAT. Od.

[k] Uxoris vitium tollas opus est, aut feras;
Qui tollit vitium, uxorem commodiusculam sibi præstat;
Qui fert, sese meliorem facit.—VARRO.

[l] Καὶ ἀνόθευτον τηροῦσι τὸν γάμον.

are as sacred as the threads of life, secret as the privacies of the sanctuary, and holy as the society of angels. "Nullæ sunt inimicitiæ nisi amoris acerbæ;" and God that commanded us to forgive our enemies, left it in our choice, and hath not commanded us to forgive an adulterous husband or a wife; but the offended party's displeasure may pass into an eternal separation of society and friendship. Now in this grace it is fit that the wisdom and severity of the man should hold forth a pure taper, that his wife may, by seeing the beauties and transparency of that crystal, dress her mind and her body by the light of so pure reflections; it is certain he will expect it from the modesty and retirement, from the passive nature and colder temper, from the humility and fear, from the honour and love, of his wife, that she be pure as the eye of heaven: and therefore it is but reason that the wisdom and nobleness, the love and confidence, the strength and severity, of the man, should be as holy and certain in this grace, as he is a severe exactor of it at her hands, who can more easily be tempted by another, and less by herself.

These are the little lines of a man's duty, which, like threads of light from the body of the sun, do clearly describe all the regions of his proper obligations. Now concerning the woman's duty, although it consists in doing whatsoever her husband commands, and so receives measures from the rules of his government, yet there are also some lines of life depicted upon her hands, by which she may read and know how to proportion out her duty to her husband.

1. The first is obedience; which, because it is no where enjoined that the man should exact of her, but often commanded to her to pay, gives demonstration that it is a voluntary cession that is required; such a cession as must be without coercion and violence on his part, but upon fair inducements, and reasonableness in the thing, and out of love and honour on her part. When God commands us to love him, he means we should obey him; "This is love, that ye keep my commandments;" and "if ye love me" (saith our Lord) "keep my commandments:" now as Christ is to the church, so is man to the wife: and therefore obedience is the best instance of her love; for it proclaims her submission, her humility, her opinion of his wisdom, his preeminence in the family, the right of his privilege, and the injunction imposed by God upon her sex, that although in sorrow she bring forth children, yet with love and choice she should obey. The man's authority is love, and the woman's love is obedience; and it was not rightly observed of him that said, when the woman fell, "God made her timorous, that she might be ruled," apt and easy to obey; for this obedience is no way founded in fear, but in love and reverence. "Receptæ reverentiæ est, si mulier viro subsit," said the law;[m] unless also that we will add, that it is an effect of that modesty which like rubies adorns the necks and cheeks of women. "Pudicitia est, pater, eos magnificare, qui nos socias sumpserunt sibi,"[n] said the maiden in the comedy: "it is modesty to advance and highly to honour them, who have honoured us by making us to be the companions" of their dearest excellencies; for the woman, that went before the man in the way of death, is commanded to follow him in the way of love; and that makes the society to be perfect, and the union profitable, and the harmony complete.

> Inferior matrona suo sit, Sexte, marito;
> Non aliter fuerint fœmina virque pares. MART.

For then the soul and body make a perfect man, when the soul commands wisely, or rules lovingly, and cares profitably, and provides plentifully, and conducts charitably that body which is its partner, and yet the inferior. But if the body shall give laws, and, by the violence of the appetite, first abuse the understanding, and then possess the superior portion of the will and choice, the body and the soul are not apt company, and the man is a fool, and miserable. If the soul rules not, it cannot be a companion; either it must govern, or be a slave; never was king deposed and suffered to live in the state of peerage and equal honour, but made a prisoner, or put to death; and those women, that had rather lead the blind than follow prudent guides, rule fools and easy men than obey the powerful and wise, never made a good society in a house: a wife never can become equal but by obeying; but so her power, while it is in minority, makes up the authority of the man integral, and becomes one government, as themselves are one man. "Male and female created he them, and called their name Adam," saith the Holy Scripture;[o] they are but one: and therefore, the several parts of this one man must stand in the place where God appointed, that the lower parts may do their office in their own station, and promote the common interest of the whole. A ruling woman is intolerable.

> ——— Faicunt graviora coactæ
> Imperio sexus. JUVENAL.

But that is not all; for she is miserable too: for,

> Τὰ δευτερεῖα τὴν γυναῖκα δεῖ λέγειν,
> Τὴν δ' ἡγεμονίαν τῶν ὅλων τὸν ἄνδρ' ἔχειν.—STOB.

It is a sad calamity for a woman to be joined to a fool or a weak person; it is like a guard of geese to keep the capitol; or as if a flock of sheep should read grave lectures to their shepherd, and give him orders where he shall conduct them to pasture. "O vere Phrygiæ, neque enim Phryges:" it is a curse that God threatened sinning persons; "Devoratum est robur eorum, facti sunt quasi mulieres. Effœminati dominabuntur eis;"[p] "to be ruled by weaker people;" δοῦλον γενέσθαι παραφρονοῦντος δεσπότου,[q] "to have a fool to one's master," is the fate of miserable and unblessed people: and the wife can be no ways happy, unless she be governed by a prudent lord, whose commands are sober counsels, whose authority is paternal, whose orders are provisions, and whose sentences are charity.

[m] C. alia D. se. lut. Matrim.
[n] Plautus in Sticho.
[o] Gen. v. 2.
[p] Isa. iii. 4.
[q] Arist. Plut.

But now concerning the measures and limits of this obedience, we can best take accounts from Scripture: ἐν παντὶ, saith the apostle, "in all things;"[r] "ut Domino," "as to the Lord;" and that is large enough; "as unto a lord," "ut ancilla domino;" so St. Jerome understands it, who neither was a friend to the sex, nor to marriage; but his mistake is soon confuted by the text; it is not "ut dominis," be subject to your husbands "as unto lords," but ὡς τῷ Κυρίῳ, that is, "in all religion," in reverence and in love, in duty and zeal, in faith and knowledge; or else ὡς τῷ Κυρίῳ may signify, "wives be subject to your husbands; but yet so, that at the same time ye be subject *to the Lord*." For that is the measure of ἐν παντὶ, "in all things;" and it is more plain in the parallel place, ὡς ἀνῆκεν ἐν Κυρίῳ, "as it is fit in the Lord:"[s] religion must be the measure of your obedience and subjection: "intra limites disciplinæ;" so Tertullian expresses it. Πάντα μὲν τῷ ἀνδρὶ πειθομένη, ὡς μηδὲν, ἄκοντος ἐκείνου, πράξαι ποτὲ, πλὴν ὅσα εἰς ἀρετὴν καὶ σοφίαν διαφέρειν νομίζεται· so Clemens Alex.[t] "In all things let the wife be subject to the husband, so as to do nothing against his will; those only things excepted, in which he is impious or refractory in things pertaining to wisdom and piety."

But in this also there is some peculiar caution. For although in those things which are of the necessary parts of faith and holy life, the woman is only subject to Christ, who only is and can be Lord of consciences, and commands alone where the conscience is instructed and convinced: yet as it is part of the man's office to be a teacher, and a prophet, and a guide, and a master; so also it will relate very much to the demonstration of their affections to obey his counsels, to imitate his virtues, to be directed by his wisdom, to have her persuasion measured by the lines of his excellent religion: οὐχ ἧττον δὲ σεμνὸν ἀκούσαι γαμετῆς λεγούσης, ἀνὴρ σύ μοι ἐσσὶ καθηγητὴς καὶ φιλόσοφος καὶ διδάσκαλος τῶν καλλίστων καὶ θειοτάτων· "It were hugely decent," saith Plutarch, "that the wife should acknowledge her husband for her teacher and her guide;" for then when she is what he please to efform her, he hath no cause to complain if she be no better: τὰ δὲ τοιαῦτα μαθήματα πρῶτον ἀφίστησι τῶν ἀτόπων τὰς γυναῖκας; "his precept and wise counsels can draw her off from vanities;" and, as he said of geometry, that, if she be skilled in that, she will not easily be a gamester or a dancer, may perfectly be said of religion. If she suffers herself to be guided by his counsel, and efformed by his religion; either he is an ill master in his religion, or he may secure in her and for his advantage an excellent virtue. And although in matters of religion the husband hath no empire and command, yet if there be a place left to persuade, and entreat, and induce by arguments, there is not in a family a greater endearment of affections than the unity of religion: and anciently "it was not permitted to a woman to have a religion by herself:" "Eosdem quos maritus, nôsse Deos et colere solos uxor debet," said Plutarch. And the rites which a woman performs severally from her husband, are not pleasing to God; and therefore Pomponia Græcina, because she entertained a stranger religion, was permitted to the judgment of her husband Plantius: and this whole affair is no stranger to christianity, for the christian woman was not suffered to marry an unbelieving man; and although this is not to be extended to different opinions within the limits of the common faith: yet thus much advantage is won or lost by it; that the compliance of the wife, and submission of her understanding to the better rule of her husband in matters of religion, will help very much to warrant her, though she should be mispersuaded in a matter less necessary; yet nothing can warrant her in her separate rites and manners of worshippings, but an invincible necessity of conscience, and a curious infallible truth: and if she be deceived alone, she hath no excuse; if with him, she hath much pity, and some degrees of warranty under the protection of humility, and duty, and dear affections; and she will find that it is part of her privilege and right to partake of the mysteries and blessings of her husband's religion. Γυναῖκα γαμετὴν μετὰ νόμους ἱεροὺς συνελθοῦσαν ἀνδρὶ κοινωνὸν ἁπάντων εἶναι, χρημάτων τε καὶ ἱερῶν, said Romulus: "A woman by the holy laws hath right to partake of her husband's goods, and her husband's sacrifices, and holy things." Where there is a schism in one bed, there is a nursery of temptations, and love is persecuted and in perpetual danger to be destroyed; there dwell jealousies, and divided interests, and differing opinions, and continual disputes,[u] and we cannot love them so well, whom we believe to be less beloved of God; and it is ill uniting with a person, concerning whom my persuasion tells me, that he is like to live in hell to eternal ages.

2. The next line of the woman's duty is compliance, which St. Peter calls, "the hidden man of the heart, the ornament of a meek and a quiet spirit,"[w] and to it he opposes "the outward and pompous ornament of the body;" concerning which, as there can be no particular measure set down to all persons, but the proportions were to be measured by the customs of wise people, the quality of the woman, and the desires of the man; yet it is to be limited by christian modesty, and the usages of the more excellent and severe matrons. Menander in the comedy brings in a man turning his wife from his house, because she stained her hair yellow, which was then the beauty.

Νῦν δ' ἔρπ' ἀπ' οἴκων τῶνδε· τὴν γυναῖκα γὰρ
Τὴν σώφρον' οὐ δεῖ τὰς τρίχας ξανθὰς ποιεῖν. CLERIC.

A wise woman should not paint. A studious gallantry in clothes cannot make a wise man love his wife the better.[x] Εἰς τοὺς τραγώδους χρήσιμ', οὐκ εἰς τὸν βιὸν, said the comedy; "Such gaieties are

[r] Ephes. v. 24. [s] Col. iii. 18. [t] Stromat. 7.

[u] ——Quis deditus autem
Usque adeò est, ut non illam, quam laudibus effert,
Horreat, inque diem septenis oderit horis?—JUV. Sat. 6.

[w] 1 Pet. iii. 4.

[x] Quid juvat ornato procedere, vitta, capillo,
Teque peregrinis vendere muneribus,
Naturæ decus mercato perdere cultu,
Nec sinere in propriis membra nitere bonis?
PROPERT. l. 1. el. 1.

fit for tragedies, but not for the uses of life:" "Decor occultus, et tecta venustas," that is the christian woman's fineness: "the hidden man of the heart," sweetness of manners, humble comportment, fair interpretation of all addresses, ready compliances, high opinion of him and mean of herself.[y]

Ἐν κοινῷ λύπης ἡδονῆς τ' ἔχειν μέρος, "To partake secretly, and in her heart, of all his joys and sorrows," to believe him comely and fair,[z] though the sun hath drawn a cypress over him; for as marriages are not to be contracted by the hands and eyes, but with reason and the hearts; so are these judgments to be made by the mind, not by the sight: and diamonds cannot make the woman virtuous, nor him to value her who sees her put them off then, when charity and modesty are her brightest ornaments.

Οὐ κόσμος, οὐκ, ὦ τλήμον, ἀλλ' ἀκοσμία
Φαίνοιτ' ἂν εἶναι σῶν μαργαρίτης φρενῶν, &c.

And, indeed, those husbands that are pleased with indecent gaieties of their wives, are like fishes taken with ointments and intoxicating baits, apt and easy for sport and mockery, but useless for food; and when Circe had turned Ulysses's companions into hogs and monkeys, by pleasures and the enchantments of her bravery and luxury, they were no longer useful to her, she knew not what to do with them; but on wise Ulysses she was continually enamoured. Indeed, the outward ornament is fit to take fools, but they are not worth the taking; but she that hath a wise husband, must entice him to an eternal dearness by the veil of modesty and the grave robes of chastity, the ornament of meekness and the jewels of faith and charity; she must have no fucus but blushings, her brightness must be purity, and she must shine round about with sweetnesses and friendship, and she shall be pleasant while she lives, and desired when she dies. If not,

——— Κατθανοῦσα δὲ κείσεαι,
Οὐδέ τις μνημοσύνα σέθεν ἔσσεται,
Οὐ γὰρ πεδέχεις ῥόδων τῶν ἐκ Πιερίης·

Her grave shall be full of rottenness and dishonour, and her memory shall be worse after she is dead: "after she is dead;" for that will be the end of all merry meetings; and I choose this to be the last advice to both.

3. "Remember the days of darkness, for they are many;" the joys of the bridal chambers are quickly past, and the remaining portion of the state is a dull progress, without variety of joys, but not without the change of sorrows; but that portion that shall enter into the grave, must be eternal. It is fit that I should infuse a bunch of myrrh into the festival goblet, and, after the Egyptian manner, serve up a dead man's bones at a feast; I will only show it, and take it away again; it will make the wine bitter, but wholesome. But those married pairs that live, as remembering that they must part again, and give an account how they treat themselves and each other, shall, at that day of their death, be admitted to glorious espousals; and when they shall live again, be married to their Lord, and partake of his glories, with Abraham and Joseph, St. Peter and St. Paul, and all the married saints.

Θνητὰ τὰ τῶν θνητῶν, καὶ πάντα παρέρχεται ἡμᾶς·
Ἦν δὲ μὴ, ἀλλ' ἡμεῖς αὐτὰ παρερχόμεθα.—BRUNCK.

"All those things that now please us shall pass from us, or we from them;" but those things that concern the other life, are permanent as the numbers of eternity; and although at the resurrection there shall be no relation of husband and wife, and no marriage shall be celebrated but the marriage of the Lamb; yet then shall be remembered how men and women passed through this state which is a type of that, and from this sacramental union all holy pairs shall pass to the spiritual and eternal, where love shall be their portion, and joys shall crown their heads, and they shall lie in the bosom of Jesus, and in the heart of God to eternal ages. Amen.

SERMON XIX.

APPLES OF SODOM; OR, THE FRUITS OF SIN.

PART I.

What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.—Romans vi. 21.

THE son of Sirach did prudently advise concerning making judgments of the felicity or infelicity of men; "Judge none blessed before his death; for a man shall be known in his children."[a] Some men raise their fortunes from a cottage to the chairs of princes, from a sheep-cote to a throne, and dwell in the circles of the sun, and in the lap of prosperity; their wishes and success dwell under the same roof, and Providence brings all events into their design, and ties both ends together with prosperous successes; and even the little conspersions and intertextures of evil accidents in their lives, are but like a feigned note of music, by an artificial discord making the ear covetous, and then pleased with the harmony into which the appetite was enticed by passion, and a pretty restraint; and variety does but adorn prosperity, and make it of a sweeter relish, and of more advantages; and some of these men descend into their graves without a change of fortune.

Eripitur persona, manet res.

[y] Malo Venusinam, quàm te, Cornelia mater
Gracchorum, si cum magnis virtutibus affers
Grande supercilium, et numeras in dote triumphos.
JUVEN. Sat. 6.

[z] Πρῶτα μέν γε τοῦθ' ὑπάρχειν· κἂν ἄμορφος ᾖ ποσις, χρὴ δοκεῖν εὔμορφον εἶναι τῇ γενοὺν κεκτημένῃ· οὐ γὰρ ὀφθαλμὸς τὸ κρίνειν ἐστὶν ἀλλὰ νοῦς.

[a] Ecclus. xi. 28.

Indeed, they cannot longer dwell upon the estate, but that remains unrifled, and descends upon their heir, and all is well till the next generation; but if the evil of his death, and the change of his present prosperity, for an intolerable danger of an uncertain eternity, does not sour his full chalice; yet if his children prove vicious or degenerous, cursed or unprosperous, we account the man miserable, and his grave to be strewed with sorrows and dishonours. The wise and valiant Chabrias grew miserable by the folly of his son Ctesippus; and the reputation of brave Germanicus began to be ashamed, when the base Caligula entered upon his scene of dishonourable crime. Commodus, the wanton and feminine son of wise Antoninus, gave a check to the great name of his father; and when the son of Hortensius Corbio was prostitute, and the heir of Q. Fabius Maximus was disinherited by the sentence of the city prætor, as being unworthy to enter into the fields of his glorious father, and young Scipio the son of Africanus was a fool and a prodigal; posterity did weep afresh over the monuments of their brave progenitors, and found that infelicity can pursue a man, and overtake him in his grave.

This is a great calamity when it falls upon innocent persons; and that Moses died upon mount Nebo, in the sight of Canaan, was not so great an evil, as that his sons Eliezer and Gerson were unworthy to succeed him; but that priesthood was devolved to his brother, and the principality to his servant; and to Samuel, that his sons proved corrupt, and were exauthorated for their unworthiness, was an allay to his honour and his joys, and such as proclaims to all the world, that the measures of our felicity are not to be taken by the lines of our own person, but of our relations too; and he that is cursed in his children, cannot be reckoned among the fortunate.

This which I have discoursed concerning families in general, is most remarkable in the retinue and family of sin; for it keeps a good house and is full of company and servants, it is served by the possessions of the world, it is courted by the unhappy, flattered by fools, taken into the bosom by the effeminate, made the end of human designs, and feasted all the way of its progress: wars are made for its interest, and men give or venture their lives that their sin may be prosperous; all the outward senses are its handmaids, and the inward senses are of its privy chamber; the understanding is its counsellor, the will its friend, riches are its ministers, nature holds up its train, and art is its emissary to promote its interest and affairs abroad: and, upon this account, all the world is enrolled in its taxing-tables, and are subjects or friends of its kingdom, or are so kind to it as to make too often visits, and to lodge in its borders; because all men stare upon its pleasures, and are enticed to taste of its wanton delicacies. But then if we look what are the children of this splendid family, and see what issue sin produces, ἐστὶ γὰρ τέκνα καὶ τῷδε,—it may help to untie the charm. Sin and concupiscence marry together, and riot and feast it high, but their fruits, the children and production of their filthy union, are ugly and deformed, foolish and ill natured; and the apostle calls them by their name, "shame" and "death." These are the fruits of sin, "the apples of Sodom," fair outsides, but if you touch them, they turn to ashes and a stink; and if you will nurse these children, and give them whatsoever is dear to you, then you may be admitted into the house of feasting and chambers of riot, where sin dwells; but if you will have the mother, you must have the daughters; the tree and the fruits go together; and there is none of you all that ever entered into this house of pleasure, but he left the skirts of his garment in the hands of shame, and had his name rolled in the chambers of death. "What fruit had ye then?" That is the question.

In answer to which question we are to consider, 1. What is the sum total of the pleasure of sin? 2. What fruits and relishes it leaves behind by its natural efficiency? 3. What are its consequents by its demerit, and the infliction of the superadded wrath of God, which it hath deserved? Of the first St. Paul gives no account; but by way of upbraiding asks, "what they had?" that is, nothing that they dare own, nothing that remains: and where is it? show it; what is become of it? Of the second he gives the sum total: all its natural effects are "shame" and its appendages. The third, or the superinduced evils by the just wrath of God, he calls "death," the worst name in itself, and the greatest of evils that can happen.

1. Let us consider what pleasures there are in sin; most of them are very punishments. I will not reckon or consider concerning envy, which one in Stobæus[b] calls κάκιστον καὶ δικαιότατον θεὸν, "the basest spirit, and yet very just;" because it punishes the delinquent in the very act of sin, doing as Ælian says of the polypus, εἴτις αὐτῷ γένηται ἀθηρία, τῶν ἑαυτοῦ πλοκάμων παρέτραγε, "when he wants his prey, he devours his own arms;" and the leanness, and the secret pangs, and the perpetual restlessness of an envious man, feed upon his own heart, and drink down his spirits, unless he can ruin or observe the fall of the fairest fortunes of his neighbour. The fruits of this tree are mingled and sour, and not to be endured in the very eating. Neither will I reckon the horrid affrightments and amazements of murder, nor the uneasiness of impatience, which doubles every evil that it feels, and makes it a sin, and makes it intolerable; nor the secret grievings, and continual troubles of peevishness, which makes a man incapable of receiving good, or delighting in beauties and fair entreaties, in the mercies of God and charities of men.

It were easy to make a catalogue of sins, every one of which is a disease, a trouble in its very constitution and its nature: such are loathing of spiritual things, bitterness of spirit, rage, greediness, confusion of mind, and irresolution, cruelty and despite, slothfulness and distrust, unquietness and anger, effeminacy and niceness, prating and sloth, ignorance and inconstancy, incogitancy and cursing,

[b] Florileg.

malignity and fear, forgetfulness and rashness, pusillanimity and despair, rancour and superstition: if a man were to curse his enemy, he could not wish him a greater evil than these: and yet these are several kinds of sin which men choose, and give all their hopes of heaven in exchange for one of these diseases. Is it not a fearful consideration, that a man should rather choose eternally to perish than to say his prayers heartily and affectionately? but so it is with very many men; they are driven to their devotions by custom, and shame, and reputation, and civil compliances; they sigh and look sour when they are called to it, and abide there as a man under the chirurgeon's hands, smarting and fretting all the while; or else he passes the time with incogitancy, and hates the employment, and suffers the torment of prayers which he loves not; and all this, although for so doing it is certain he may perish: what fruit, what deliciousness, can he fancy in being weary of his prayers? there is no pretence or colour for these things. Can any man imagine a greater evil to the body and soul of a man than madness, and furious eyes, and a distracted look, paleness with passion, and trembling hands and knees, and furiousness, and folly in the heart and head? and yet this is the pleasure of anger, and for this pleasure men choose damnation. But it is a great truth, that there are but very few sins that pretend to pleasure: although a man be weak and soon deceived, and the devil is crafty, and sin is false and impudent, and pretences are too many, —yet most kinds of sin are real and prime troubles to the very body, without all manner of deliciousness, even to the sensual, natural, and carnal part; and a man must put on something of a devil before he can choose such sins, and he must love mischief because it is a sin; for in most instances there is no other reason in the world. Nothing pretends to pleasure but the lust of the lower belly, ambition, and revenge; and although the catalogue of sins is numerous as the production of fishes, yet these three only can be apt to cozen us with a fair outside; and yet upon the survey of what fruits they bring, and what taste they have in the manducation, besides the filthy relish they leave behind, we shall see how miserably they are abused and fooled, that expend any thing upon such purchases.

2. For a man cannot take pleasure in lusts of the flesh, in gluttony, or drunkenness, unless he be helped forward with inconsideration and folly. For we see it evidently that grave and wise persons, men of experience and consideration, are extremely less affected with lust and loves than the hare-brained boy; the young gentleman that thinks nothing in the world greater than to be free from a tutor, he indeed courts his folly, and enters into the possession of lust without abatement; consideration dwells not there: but when a sober man meets with a temptation, and is helped by his natural temper, or invited by his course of life; if he can consider, he hath so many objections and fears, so many difficulties and impediments, such sharp reasonings and sharper jealousies concerning its event, that if he does at all enter into folly, it pleases him so little, that he is forced to do it in despite of himself; and the pleasure is so allayed, that he knows not whether it be wine or vinegar; his very apprehension and instruments of relish are filled with fear and contradicting principles, and the deliciousness does but "affricare cutem," it went "but to the skin;" but the allay went farther; it kept a guard within, and suffered the pleasure to pass no farther. A man must resolve to be a fool, a rash inconsiderate person, or he will feel but little satisfaction in the enjoyment of his sin: indeed, he that stops his nose, may drink down such corrupted waters; and he understood it well who chose rather to be a fool,

> Dum mea delectent mala me, vel denique fallant,
> Quàm sapere et ringi. HOR.

"so that his sins might delight him, or deceive him, than to be wise and without pleasure in the enjoyment." So that in effect a man must lose his discerning faculties before he discerns the little fantastic joys of his concupiscence; which demonstrates how vain, how empty of pleasure that is, that is beholden to folly and illusion, to a juggling and a plain cozenage, before it can be fancied to be pleasant. For it is a strange beauty, that he that hath the best eyes cannot perceive, and none but the blind or blear-eyed people can see; and such is the pleasure of lust, which, by every degree of wisdom that a man hath, is lessened and undervalued.

3. For the pleasures of intemperance, they are nothing but the relics and images of pleasure, after that nature hath been feasted; for so long as she needs, that is, so long as temperance waits, so long pleasure also stands there; but as temperance begins to go away, having done the ministries of nature, every morsel, and every new goblet, is still less delicious, and cannot be endured but as men force nature by violence to stay longer than she would: how have some men rejoiced when they have escaped a cup! and when they cannot escape, they pour it in, and receive it with as much pleasure as the old women have in the Lapland dances; they dance the round, but there is horror and a harshness in the music; and they call it pleasure, because men bid them do so: but there is a devil in the company, and such as is his pleasure, such is theirs: he rejoices in the thriving sin, and the swelling fortune of his darling drunkenness, but his joys are the joys of him that knows and always remembers, that he shall infallibly have the biggest damnation; and then let it be considered how forced a joy that is, that is at the end of an intemperate feast.

> Nec bene mendaci risus componitur ore,
> Nec bene sollicitis ebria verba sonant. TIBULLUS.

Certain it is, intemperance takes but nature's leavings; when the belly is full, and nature calls to take away, the pleasure that comes in afterwards, is next to loathing: it is like the relish and taste of meats at the end of the third course, or sweetness of honey to him that hath eaten till he can endure to take no more; and in this, there is no other difference of these men from them that die upon another cause, than was observed among the Phalangia of old, τὰ μὲν

ποιεῖ γελῶντας ἀποθνήσκειν, τὰ δὲ κλαίοντας, "some of these serpents make men die laughing, and some to die weeping:" so does the intemperate, and so does his brother that languishes of a consumption; this man dies weeping, and the other dies laughing; but they both die infallibly, and all his pleasure is nothing but the sting of a serpent, "immixto liventia mella veneno," it wounds the heart, and he dies with a tarantula, dancing and singing till he bows his neck, and kisses his bosom with the fatal noddings and declensions of death.

4. In these pretenders to pleasure, (which you see are but few, and they not very prosperous in their pretences,) there is mingled so much trouble to bring them to act an enjoyment, that the appetite is above half tired before it comes; it is necessary a man should be hugely patient that is ambitious, "ambulare per Britannos, Scythicas pati pruinas;" no man buys death and damnation at so dear a rate, as he that fights for it, and endures cold and hunger, ——"Patiens liminis et solis," "the heat of the sun, and the cold of the threshold;" the dangers of war, and the snares of a crafty enemy; he lies upon the ground with a severity greater than the penances of a hermit, and fasts beyond the austerity of a rare penitent; with this only difference, that the one does it for heaven, and the other for an uncertain honour, and an eternity of flames. But, however, by this time that he hath won something, he hath spent some years, and he hath not much time left him to rest in his new purchase, and he hath worn out his body, and lessened his capacity of feeling it; and although it is ten to one he cannot escape all the dangers he must venture at, that he may come near his trifle, yet, when he is arrived thither, he can neither long enjoy, nor well perceive or taste it; and therefore, there are more sorrows at the gate, than there can dwell comforts in all the rooms of the houses of pride and great designs. And thus it is in revenge, which is pleasant only to a devil, or a man of the same cursed temper. He does a thing which ought to trouble him, and will move him to pity what his own vile hands have acted; but if he does not pity, that is, be troubled with himself, and wish the things undone, he hath those affections by which the devil doth rejoice in destroying souls; which affections a man cannot have, unless he be perfectly miserable, by being contrary to God, to mercy, and to felicity; and, after all, the pleasure is false, fantastic, and violent, it can do him no good, it can do him hurt, it is odds but it will, and on him that takes revenge, revenge shall be taken, and by a real evil he shall dearly pay for the goods that are but airy and fantastical; it is like a rolling stone, which, when a man hath forced up a hill, will return upon him with a greater violence, and break those bones whose sinews gave it motion. The pleasure of revenge is like the pleasure of eating chalk and coals; a foolish disease made the appetite, and it is entertained with an evil reward; it is like the feeding of a cancer or a wolf; the man is restless till it be done, and when it is, every man sees how infinitely he is removed from satisfaction or felicity.

5. These sins when they are entertained with the greatest fondness from without, it must have an extreme little pleasure, because there is a strong faction, and the better party against them: something that is within contests against the entertainment, and they sit uneasily upon the spirit when the man is vexed, that they are not lawful. The Persian king gave Themistocles a goodly pension, assigning Magnesia with the revenue of fifty talents for his bread, Lampsacum for his wine, and Myos for his meat; but all the while he fed high and drunk deep, he was infinitely afflicted that every thing went cross to his undertaking, and he could not bring his ends about to betray his country; and at last he mingled poison with his wine and drank it off, having first entreated his friends to steal for him a private grave in his own country. Such are the pleasures of the most pompous and flattering sins: their meat and drink are good and pleasant at first, and it is plenteous and criminal; but its employment is base, it is so against a man's interest, and against what is, and ought to be, dearest to him, that he cannot persuade his better parts to consent, but must fight against them and all their arguments. These things are against a man's conscience, that is, against his reason and his rest: and something within makes his pleasure sit uneasily. But so do violent perfumes make the head ache, and therefore wise persons reject them; and the eye refuses to stare upon the beauties of the sun, because it makes it weep itself blind; and if a luscious dish please my palate, and turns to loathing in the stomach, I will lay aside that evil, and consider the danger and the bigger pain, not that little pleasure. So it is in sin; it pleases the senses, but diseases the spirit, and wounds that: and that it is apt to smart as the skin, and is as considerable in the provisions of pleasure and pain respectively; and the pleasures of sin to a contradicting reason, are like the joys of wine to a condemned man,

——Difficile est imitari gaudia falsa;
Difficile est tristi fingere mente jocum. TIBULL.

It will be very hard to delight freely in that which so vexes the more tender and most sensible part; so that, what Pliny said of the poppies growing in the river Caicus, ἔχει ἀντὶ καρποῦ λίθον, "it brings a stone instead of a flower or fruit:" so are the pleasures of these pretending sins; the flower at the best is stinking, but there is a stone in the bottom; it is gravel in the teeth, and a man must drink the blood of his own gums when he manducates such unwholesome, such unpleasant fruit.

——Vitiorum gaudia vulnus habent.

They make a wound, and therefore are not very pleasant. Τὸ γὰρ ζῆν μὴ καλῶς, μέγας πόνος, "It is a great labour and travail, to live a vicious life."

6. The pleasure in the acts of these few sins that do pretend to it, is a little limited nothing, confined to a single faculty, to one sense, having nothing but the skin for its organ or instrument, an artery, or something not more considerable than a lute-string; and at the best, it is but the satisfaction of

an appetite which reason can cure, which time can appease, which every diversion can take off; such as is not perfective of his nature, nor of advantage to his person; it is a desire to no purpose, and as it comes with no just cause, so can be satisfied with no just measures; it is satisfied before it comes to a vice, and when it is come thither, all the world cannot satisfy it: a little thing will weary it, but nothing can content it. For all these sensual desires are nothing but an impatience of being well and wise, of being in health, and being in our wits; which two things if a man could endure, (and it is but reasonable, a man would think, that we should,) he would never lust to drown his heart in seas of wine, or oppress his belly with loads of undigested meat, or make himself base by the mixtures of a harlot, by breaking the sweetest limits and holy festivities of marriage. "Malum impatientia est boni," said Tertullian, it is nothing else; to please the sense is but to do a man's self mischief; and all those lusts tend to some direct dissolution of a man's health or his felicity, his reason or his religion; it is an enemy that a man carries about him: and as the Spirit of God said concerning Babylon, "Quantum in deliciis fuit, tantum date illi tormentum et luctum," "Let her have torment and sorrow according to the measure of her delights," is most eminently true in the pleasing of our senses; the lust and desire is a torment, the remembrance and the absence is a torment, and the enjoyment does not satisfy, but disables the instrument, and tires the faculty; and when a man hath but a little of what his sense covets, he is not contented, but impatient for more; and when he hath loads of it, he does not feel it. For he that swallows a full goblet does not taste his wine: and this is the pleasure of the sense; nothing contents it but that which he cannot perceive, and it is always restless, till it be weary; and all the way unpleased, till it can feel no pleasure; and that which is the instrument of sense, is the means of its torment; by the faculty by which it tastes, by the same it is afflicted; for so long as it can taste, it is tormented with desire, and when it can desire no longer, it cannot feel pleasure.

7. Sin hath little or no pleasure in its very enjoyment; because its very manner of entry and production is by a curse and a contradiction; it comes into the world like a viper through the sides of its mother, by means unnatural, violent, and monstrous. Men love sin only because it is forbidden; "Sin took occasion by the law," saith St. Paul; it could not come in upon its own pretences, but men rather suspect secret pleasure in it because there are guards kept upon it.

> Sed quia cæcus inest vitiis amor, omne futurum
> Despicitur, suadentque brevem præsentia fructum,
> Et ruit in vetitum damni secura libido.

Men run into sin with blind affections, and against all reason despise the future, hoping for some little pleasure for the present; and all this is only because they are forbidden: do not many men sin out of spite? Some out of the spirit of disobedience, some by wildness and indetermination, some by imprudence, and because they are taken in a fault;

> ——— Frontemque à crimine sumunt;

some because they are reproved; many by custom, others by importunity:

> Ordo fuit crevisse malis ———

It grows upon crab-stocks, and the lust itself is sour and unwholesome: and since it is evident, that very many sins come in wholly upon these accounts, such persons and such sins cannot pretend pleasure; but as naturalists say of pulse, "Cum maledictis et probris serendum præcipiunt, ut lætius proveniat;" "the country-people were used to curse it and rail upon it all the while that it was sowing, that it might thrive the better;" it is true with sins, they grow up with curses, with spite and contradiction, peevishness and indignation, pride and cursed principles; and therefore, pleasure ought not to be the inscription of the box; for that is the least part of its ingredient and constitution.

8. The pleasures in the very enjoying of sin are infinitely trifling and inconsiderable, because they pass away so quickly; if they be in themselves little, they are made less by their volatile and fugitive nature; but if they were great, then their being so transient does not only lessen the delight, but changes it into a torment, and loads the spirit of the sinner with impatience and indignation. It is not a high upbraiding to the watchful adulterer, that after he hath contrived the stages of his sin, and tied many circumstances together with arts and labour, and these join and stand knit and solid only by contingency, and are very often borne away with the impetuous torrent of an inevitable accident, like Xerxes' bridge over the Hellespont; and then he is to begin again, and sets new wheels a-going; and by the arts, and the labour, and the watchings, and the importunity, and the violence, and the unwearied study, and indefatigable diligence, of many months, he enters upon possession, and finds them not of so long abode as one of his cares, which in so vast numbers made so great a portion of his life afflicted. Πρόσκαιρον ἁμαρτίας ἀπόλαυσιν, "the enjoying of sin for a season," St. Paul[c] calls it; he names no pleasures; our English translation uses the word of *enjoying pleasures;* but if there were any, they were but for that season, that instant, that very transition of the act, which dies in its very birth, and of which we can only say as the minstrel sung of Pacuvius, when he was carried dead from his supper to his bed, βεβίωκε, βεβίωκε. A man can scarce have time enough to say it is alive, but that it was: "nullo non se die extulit," it died every day, it lived never unto life, but lived and died unto death, being its mother and daughter: the man died before the sin did live; and when it had lived, it consigned him to die eternally.

Add to this, that it so passes away, that nothing at all remains behind it that is pleasant: it is like the path of an arrow in the air; the next morning no man can tell what is become of the pleasures of

[c] Heb. xi. 25.

the last night's sin: they are no where but in God's books, deposited in the conscience, and sealed up against the day of dreadful accounts; but as to the man, they are as if they never had been; and then, let it be considered, what a horrible aggravation it will be to the miseries of damnation, that a man shall for ever perish for that, which if he looks round about he cannot see, nor tell where it is. "He that dies, dies for that which is not;" and in the very little present he finds it an unrewarding interest, to walk seven days together over sharp stones only to see a place from whence he must come back in an hour. If it goes off presently, it is not worth the labour; if it stays long, it grows tedious; so that it cannot be pleasant, if it stays; and if it does not stay, it is not to be valued: "Hæc mala mentis gaudia." It abides too little a while to be felt, or called pleasure; and if it should abide longer, it would be troublesome as pain, and loathed like the tedious speech of an orator pleading against the life of the innocent.

9. Sin hath in its best advantages but a trifling, inconsiderable pleasure: because not only God and reason, conscience and honour, interest and laws, do sour it in the sense and gust of pleasure, but even the devil himself either being overruled by God, or by a strange insignificant malice, makes it troublesome and intricate, entangled and involved; and one sin contradicts another, and vexes the man with so great variety of evils, that if in the course of God's service he should meet with half the difficulty, he would certainly give over the whole employment. Those that St. James speaks of, who "prayed that they might spend it upon their lusts," were covetous and prodigal, and therefore must endure the torments of one to have the pleasure of another; and which is greater, the pleasure of spending, or the displeasure that it is spent and does not still remain after its consumption, is easy to tell: certain it is, that this lasts much longer. Does not the devil often tempt men to despair, and by that torment puts bars and locks upon them, that they may never return to God? Which what else is it but a plain indication that it is intended, the man should feel the images and dreams of pleasure, no longer but till he be without remedy? Pleasure is but like sentries or wooden frames, set under arches, till they be strong by their own weight and consolidation to stand alone; and when by any means the devil hath a man sure, he takes no longer care to cozen him with pleasures, but is pleased that men should begin an early hell, and be tormented before the time. Does not envy punish or destroy flattery; and self-love sometimes torment the drunkard; and intemperance abate the powers of lust, and make the man impotent; and laziness become a hinderance to ambition; and the desires of man wax impatient upon contradicting interests, and by crossing each other's design on all hands lessen the pleasure and leave the man tormented?

10. Sin is of so little relish and gust, so trifling a pleasure, that it is always greater in expectation than it is in the possession. But if men did beforehand see, what the utmost is, which sin ministers to please the beastly part of man, it were impossible it should be pursued with so much earnestness and disadvantages. It is necessary it should promise more than it can give; men could not otherwise be cozened. And if it be inquired, why men should sin again, after they had experience of the little and great deception? it is to be confessed, it is a wonder they should; but then we may remember, that men sin again, though their sin did afflict them; they will be drunk again, though they were sick; they will again commit folly, though they be surprised in their shame, though they have needed an hospital; and therefore, there is something else that moves them, and not the pleasure; for they do it without and against its interests; but either they still proceed, hoping to supply by numbers what they find not in proper measures; or God permits them to proceed as an instrument of punishment; or their understandings and reasonings grow cheaper; or they grow in love with it, and take it upon any terms; or contract new appetites, and are pleased with the baser and the lower reward of sin: but whatsoever can be the cause of it, it is certain, by the experience of all the world, that the fancy is higher, the desires more sharp, and the reflection more brisk, at the door and entrance of the entertainment, than in all the little and shorter periods of its possession: for then it is but limited by the natural measures, and abated by distemper, and loathed by enjoying, and disturbed by partners, and dishonoured by shame and evil accidents; so that as men coming to the river Lucius, ἔχει μὲν λευκότατον ὑδάτων καὶ ῥεῖ διειδέστατα, and seeing "waters pure" as the tears of the spring, or the pearls of the morning, expect that in such a fair promising bosom, the inmates should be fair and pleasant; τίκτει δὲ ἰχθῦς μελάνας ἰσχυρῶς, but find "the fishes black," filthy, and unwholesome; so it is in sin; its face is fair and beauteous,

Ἡ τακεραῖς λεῦσσουσα κόραις μαλακώτερον ὕπνου,
Λύσιδος ἁλκυὼν, τερπνὸν ἄθυρμα μέθης.

Softer than sleep, or the dreams of wine, tenderer than the curd of milk; "Et Euganea quantumvis mollior agnâ;" but when you come to handle it, it is filthy, rough as the porcupine, black as the shadows of the night, and having promised a fish it gives a scorpion, and a stone instead of bread.

11. The fruits of its present possession, the pleasures of its taste, are less pleasant, because no sober person, no man that can discourse, does like it long.

———Breve sit quod turpiter audes. JUVEN.

But he approves it in the height of passion, and in the disguises of a temptation; but at all other times he finds it ugly and unreasonable; and the very remembrances must at all times abate its pleasures, and sour its delicacies. In the most parts of a man's life he wonders at his own folly, and prodigious madness, that it should be ever possible for him to be deluded by such trifles; and he sighs next morning, and knows it over-night; and is it not therefore certain, that he leans upon a thorn,

which he knows will smart, and he dreads the event of to-morrow? But so have I known a bold trooper fight in the confusion of a battle, and being warm with heat and rage, received, from the swords of his enemy, wounds open like a grave; but he felt them not, and when, by the streams of blood, he found himself marked for pain, he refused to consider then what he was to feel to-morrow: but when his rage had cooled into the temper of a man, and clammy moisture had checked the fiery emission of spirits, he wonders at his own boldness, and blames his fate, and needs a mighty patience to bear his great calamity. So is the bold and merry sinner, when he is warm with wine and lust, wounded and bleeding with the strokes of hell, he twists with the fatal arm that strikes him, and cares not; but yet it must abate his gaiety, because he remembers that when his wounds are cold and considered, he must roar or perish, repent or do worse, that is, be miserable or undone. The Greeks call this *τῶν σάκκων εὐδαιμονίαν*, "the felicity of condemned slaves feasted high in sport." Dion Prusias reports, that when the Persians had got the victory, they would pick out the noblest slave, *καὶ καθίζουσιν εἰς τὸν θρόνον τοῦ βασιλέως, καὶ τὴν ἐσθῆτα δίδωσιν τὴν αὐτὴν καὶ τρυφᾷν, καὶ παλλακαῖς χρῆσθαι*, "they make him a king for three days, and clothe him with royal robes, and minister to him all the pleasures he can choose, and all the while he knows he is to die a sacrifice to mirth and folly." But then, let it be remembered, what checks and allays of mirth the poor man starts at, when he remembers the axe and the altar where he must shortly bleed; and by this we may understand what that pleasure is, in the midst of which the man sighs deeply, when he considers what opinion he had of this sin, in the days of counsel and sober thoughts; and what reason against it he shall feel to-morrow, when he must weep or die. Thus it happens to sinners according to the saying of the prophet, "Qui sacrificant hominem, osculabuntur vitulum," "He that gives a man in sacrifice shall kiss the calf;"[d] that is, shall be admitted to the seventh chapel of Moloch to kiss the idol: a goodly reward for so great a price, for so great an inquiry.

After all this I do not doubt but these considerations will meet with some persons that think them to be "protestatio contra factum," and fine pretences against all experience; and that, for all these severe sayings, sin is still so pleasant as to tempt the wisest resolution. Such men are in a very evil condition: and in their case only I come to understand the meaning of those words of Seneca; "Malorum ultimum est mala sua amare, ubi turpia non solum delectant, sed etiam placent:" "It is the worst of evils when men are so in love with sin that they are not only delighted with them, but pleased also;" not only feel the relish with too quick a sense, but also feel none of the objections, nothing of the pungency, the sting, or the lessening circumstances. However, to these men I say this only, that if by experience they feel sin pleasant, it is as certain also by experience, that most sins are in their own nature sharpnesses and diseases; and that very few do pretend to pleasure: that a man cannot feel any deliciousness in them, but when he is helped by folly and inconsideration; that is, a wise man cannot, though a boy or a fool can, be pleased with them: that they are but relics and images of pleasure left upon nature's stock, and therefore, much less than the pleasures of natural virtues: that a man must run through much trouble before he brings them to act and enjoyment: that he must take them in despite of himself, against reason and his conscience, the tenderest parts of man and the most sensible of affliction: they are at the best so little, that they are limited to one sense, not spread upon all the faculties like the pleasures of virtue, which make the bones fat by an intellectual rectitude, and the eyes sprightly by a wise proposition, and pain itself to become easy by hope and a present rest within: it is certain (I say) by a great experience, that the pleasures of sin enter by cursings and a contradictory interest, and become pleasant not by their own relish, but by the viciousness of the palate, by spite and peevishness, by being forbidden and unlawful: and that which is its sting is, at some times, the cause of all its sweetness it can have: they are gone sooner than a dream: they are crossed by one another, and their parent is their tormentor; and when sins are tied in a chain, with that chain they dash one another's brains out, or make their lodging restless: it is never liked long; and promises much and performs little; it is great at distance, and little at hand, against the nature of all substantial things; and, after all this, how little pleasure is left, themselves have reason with scorn and indignation to resent. So that, if experience can be pretended against experience, there is nothing to be said to it but the words which Phryne desired to be written on the gates of Thebes, *Ἀλέξανδρος κατέσκαψεν, ἀνέστησε δὲ Φρύνη ἡ ἑταίρα*, "Phryne the harlot built it up, but Alexander dug it down:" the pleasure is supported by little things, by the experience of fools and them that observed nothing, and the relishes tasted by artificial appetites, by art and cost, by violence and preternatural desires, by the advantage of deception and evil habits, by expectation and delays, by dreams and inconsiderations: these are the harlot's hands that build the fairy castle, but the hands of reason and religion, sober counsels and the voice of God, experience of wise men and the sighings and intolerable accents of perishing or returning sinners, dig it down, and sow salt in the foundations, that they may never spring up in the accounts of men that delight not in the portion of fools and forgetfulness. "Neque enim Deus ita viventibus quicquam promisit boni, neque ipsa per se mens humana, talium sibi conscia, quicquam boni sperare audet:" "To men that live in sin, God hath promised no good, and the conscience itself dares not expect it."[e]

[d] Hosea xiii. 2.

[e] Plat. de Rep.

SERMON XX.

PART II.

WE have already opened this dunghill, covered with snow, which was indeed on the outside white as the spots of leprosy, but it was no better; and if the very colours and instruments of deception, if the fucus and ceruse be so spotted and sullied, what can we suppose to be under the wrinkled skin, what in the corrupted liver, and in the sinks of the body of sin? That we are next to consider: but if we open the body, and see what a confusion of all its parts, what a rebellion and tumult of the humours, what a disorder of the members, what a monstrosity or deformity is all over, we shall be infinitely convinced, that no man can choose a sin, but upon the same ground on which he may choose a fever, or long for madness or the gout. Sin, in its natural efficiency, hath in it so many evils, as must needs affright a man, and scare the confidence of every one that can consider.

When our blessed Saviour shall conduct his church to the mountains of glory, he shall "present it to God without spot or wrinkle," [a] that is, pure and vigorous, entirely freed from the power and the infection of sin. Upon occasion of which expression it hath been spoken, that sin leaves in the soul a stain or spot, permanent upon the spirit, discomposing the order of its beauty, and making it appear to God "in sordibus," "in such filthiness," that he who "is of pure eyes cannot behold." But concerning the nature or proper effects of this spot or stain, they have not been agreed: some call it an obligation or a guilt of punishment; so Scotus. Some fancy it to be an elongation from God, by dissimilitude of conditions; so Peter Lombard. Alexander of Ales says it is a privation of the proper beauty and splendour of the soul, with which God adorned it in the creation and superaddition of grace; and upon this expression they most agree, but seem not to understand what they mean by it; and it signifies no more, but as you, describing sickness, call it a want of health, and folly, a want of wisdom; which is indeed to say, what a thing is not, but not to tell what it is: but that I may not be hindered by this consideration, we may observe, that the spots and stains of sin are metaphorical significations of the disorder and evil consequents of sin; which it leaves partly upon the soul, partly upon the state and condition of man, as meekness is called an ornament, and faith a shield, and salvation a helmet, and sin itself a wrinkle, corruption, rottenness, a burden,[b] a wound, death, filthiness: so it is a defiling of a man; that is, as the body contracts nastiness and dishonour by impure contacts and adherences, so does the soul receive such a change, as must be taken away before it can enter into the eternal regions, and house of purity. But it is not a distinct thing, not an inherent quality, which can be separated from other evil effects of sin, which I shall now reckon by their proper names; and St. Paul comprises under the scornful appellative of "shame."

1. The first natural fruit of sin is ignorance. Man was first tempted by the promise of knowledge; he fell into darkness by believing the devil holding forth to him a new light. It was not likely good should come of so foul a beginning; that the woman should believe the devil putting on no brighter shape than a snake's skin, she neither being afraid of sin, nor affrighted to hear a beast speak, and he pretending so weakly in the temptation, that he promised only that they should know evil; for they knew good before; and all that was offered to them was the experience of evil: and it was no wonder that the devil promised no more, for sin never could perform any thing but an experience of evil, no other knowledge can come upon that account; but the wonder was, why the woman should sin for no other reward, but for that which she ought to have feared infinitely; for nothing could have continued her happiness, but not to have known evil. Now this knowledge was the introduction of ignorance. For when the understanding suffered itself to be so baffled as to study evil, the will was as foolish to fall in love with it, and they conspired to undo each other. For when the will began to love it, then the understanding was set on work to commend, to advance, to conduct and to approve, to believe it, and to be factious in behalf of the new purchase. I do not believe, the understanding part of man received any natural decrement or diminution. For if to the devils their naturals remain entire, it is not likely that the lesser sin of man should suffer a more violent and effective mischief. Neither can it be understood how the reasonable soul, being immortal both in itself and its essential faculties, can lose or be lessened in them, any more than it can die. But it received impediment, by new propositions: it lost and willingly forgot what God had taught, and went away from the fountain of truth, and gave trust to the father of lies, and it must without remedy grow foolish; and so a man came to know evil, just as a man is said to taste of death: for, in proper speaking, as death is not to be felt, because it takes away all sense; so neither can evil be known, because whatsoever is truly cognoscible, is good and true; and therefore all the knowledge a man gets by sin is to feel evil: he knows it not by discourse, but by sense; not by proposition, but by smart; the devil doing to man as Æsculapius did to Neoclides, ὄξει διέμενος σφηττίῳ, κατέπλασόεν αὐτοῦ τὰ βλέφαρα, ἵνα Ὀδυνῶτο μᾶλλον· "he gave him a formidable collyrium to torment him more:" the effect of which was, ὅτι βλέπειν τὸν Πλοῦτον ταχὺ ἐποίησεν, Τὸν δὲ Νεοκλείδην μᾶλλον ἐποίησε τυφλόν: (Arist. Pl. 720.) "the devil himself grew more quicksighted to abuse us," but we became more blind by that opening of our eyes. I shall not need to discourse of the philosophy of this mischief, and by the connexion of what causes ignorance doth follow sin: but it is certain, whether a

[a] Eph. v. 27.

[b] Κατὰ δ' αἰθάλης
Κηλί δ' οἰκτρόταταν κέχρωσαι, &c. Hecub.

man would fain be pleased with sin, or be quiet or fearless when he hath sinned, or continue in it, or persuade others to it, he must do it by false propositions, by lyings, and such weak discourses as none can believe but such as are born fools, or such as have made themselves so, or are made so by others. Who in the world is a verier fool, a more ignorant, wretched person, than he that is an atheist? A man may better believe there is no such man as himself, and that he is not in being, than that there is no God: for himself can cease to be, and once was not, and shall be changed from what he is, and in very many periods of his life knows not that he is; and so it is every night with him when he sleeps: but none of these can happen to God; and if he knows it not, he is a fool. Can any thing in this world be more foolish than to think that all this rare fabric of heaven and earth can come by chance, when all the skill of art is not able to make an oyster? To see rare effects and no cause; an excellent government and no prince; a motion without an immovable; a circle without a centre; a time without eternity; a second without a first; a thing that begins not from itself, and therefore not to perceive there is something from whence it does begin, which must be without beginning; these things are so against philosophy and natural reason, that he must needs be a beast in his understanding that does not assent to them; this is the atheist: "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." That is his character: the thing framed says that nothing framed it; the tongue never made itself to speak, and yet talks against him that did; saying, that which is made, is, and that which made it, is not. But this folly is as infinite as hell, as much without light or bound, as the chaos or the primitive nothing. But in this, the devil never prevailed very far; his schools were always thin at these lectures: some few people have been witty against God, that taught them to speak before they knew to spell a syllable; but either they are monsters in their manners, or mad in their understandings, or ever find themselves confuted by a thunder or a plague, by danger or death.

But the devil hath infinitely prevailed in a thing that is almost as senseless and ignorant as atheism, and that is idolatry; not only making God after man's image, but in the likeness of a calf, of a cat, of a serpent; making men such fools as to worship a quartan ague, fire and water, onions and sheep. This is the skill man learned, and the philosophy that he is taught, by believing the devil. What wisdom can there be in any man, that calls good evil, and evil good; to say fire is cold, and the sun black; that fornication can make a man happy, or drunkenness can make him wise? And this is the state of a sinner, of every one that delights in iniquity; he cannot be pleased with it if he thinks it evil; he cannot endure it without believing this proposition, That there is in drunkenness or lust pleasure enough, good enough, to make him amends for the intolerable pains of damnation. But then if we consider upon what nonsense-principles the state of an evil life relies, we must in reason be impatient, and with scorn and indignation drive away the fool; such as are—sense is to be preferred before reason, interest before religion, a lust before heaven, moments before eternity, money above God himself; that a man's felicity consists in that which a beast enjoys; that a little in present, uncertain, fallible possession, is better than the certain state of infinite glories hereafter: what child, what fool, can think things more weak and more unreasonable? And yet if men do not go upon these grounds, upon what account do they sin? Sin hath no wiser reasons for itself than these: *μῶρος ἔχει πυραύνου μόρον*: the same argument that a fly hath to enter into a candle, the same argument a fool hath that enters into sin: it looks prettily, but rewards the eye, as burning basins do, with intolerable circles of reflected fire. Such are the principles of a sinner's philosophy. And no wiser are his hopes; all his hopes that he hath are, that he shall have time to repent of that which he chooses greedily; that he whom he every day provokes will save him, whether he will or no; that he can, in an instant, or in a day, make amends for all the evils of forty years; or else, that he shall be saved whether he does or no; that heaven is to be had for a sigh, or a short prayer, and yet hell shall not be consequent to the affections, and labours, and hellish services, of a whole life; he goes on and cares not, he hopes without a promise, and refuses to believe all the threatenings of God; but believes he shall have a mercy for which he never had a revelation. If this be knowledge or wisdom, then there is no such thing as folly, no such disease as madness.

But then consider, that there are some sins whose very formality is a lie. Superstition could not be in the world, if men did believe God to be good and wise, free and merciful, not a tyrant, not an unreasonable exactor; no man would dare to do in private what he fears to do in public, if he did know that God sees him there, and will bring that work of darkness into light. But he is so foolish as to think, that if he sees nothing, nothing sees him; for if men did perceive God to be present, and yet do wickedly, it is worse with them than I have yet spoke of; and they believe another lie, that to be seen by man will bring more shame, than to be discerned by God; or that the shame of a few men's talk is more intolerable than to be confounded before Christ, and his army of angels, and saints, and all the world. He that excuses a fault by telling a lie, believes it better to be guilty of two faults, than to be thought guilty of one; and every hypocrite thinks it not good to be holy, but to be accounted so is a fine thing; that is, that opinion is better than reality, and that there is in virtue nothing good but the fame of it. And the man that takes revenge, relies upon this foolish proposition; that his evil that he hath already suffered grows less if another suffers the like; that his wound cannot smart, if by my hand he dies that gave it; *ἤξει τι μέλος γοερὸν γοεραῖς*, the sad accents and doleful tunes are increased by the number of mourners, but the sorrow is not lessened.

I shall not need to thrust into this account the

other evils of mankind that are the events of ignorance, but introduced by sin; such as are, our being moved by what we see strongly, and weakly by what we understand; that men are moved rather by a fable than by a syllogism, by parables than by demonstrations, by examples than by precepts, by seeming things than by real, by shadows than by substances; that men judge of things by their first events, and measure the events by their own short lives, or shorter observations; that they are credulous to believe what they wish, and incredulous of what makes against them, measuring truth or falsehood by measures that cannot fit them, as foolishly as if they should judge of a colour by the dimensions of a body, or feel music with the hand; they make general conclusions from particular instances, and take account of God's actions by the measures of a man. Men call that justice that is on their side, and all their own causes are right, and they are so always; they are so when they affirm them in their youth, and they are so when they deny them in their old age; and they are confident in all their changes; and their first error, which they now see, does not make them modest in the proposition which they now maintain; for they do not understand that what was, may be so again: "So foolish and ignorant was I, (said David,) and as it were a beast before thee." Ambition is folly, and temerity is ignorance, and confidence never goes without it, and impudence is worse, and zeal or contention is madness, and prating is want of wisdom, and lust destroys it, and makes a man of a weak spirit and a cheap reasoning; and there are in the catalogue of sins very many, which are directly kinds, and parts, and appendages of ignorance; such as are, blindness of mind, affected ignorance, and wilful; neglect of hearing the word of God, resolved incredulity, forgetfulness of holy things, lying and believing a lie; this is the fruit of sin, this is the knowledge that the devil promised to our first parents as the rewards of disobedience; and although they sinned as weakly and fondly, *φρονήματος τόπριν στερηθέντες*, upon as slight grounds, and trifling a temptation, and as easy a deception, as many of us since, yet the causes of our ignorance are increased by the multiplication of our sins; and if it was so bad in the green tree, it is much worse in the dry; and no man is so very a fool as the sinner, and none are wise but the servants of God,

Μοῦνοι Χαλδαῖοι σοφίαν λάχον, ἠδ' ἀρ' Ἑβραῖοι,
Αὐτογένεθλον ἄνακτα σεβαζόμενοι θεὸν ἁγνῶς.

"The wise Chaldees and the wiser Hebrews, which worship God chastely and purely, they only have a right to be called wise;" all that do not so are fools and ignorants, neither knowing what it is to be happy, nor how to purchase it; ignorant of the noblest end, and of the competent means towards it: they neither know God nor themselves, and no ignorance is greater than this, or more pernicious. What man is there in the world that thinks himself covetous or proud? and yet millions there are who, like Harpaste, think that the house is dark, but not themselves. Virtue makes our desires temperate and regular, it observes our actions, condemns our faults, mortifies our lusts, watches all our dangers and temptations: but sin makes our desires infinite, and we would have we cannot tell what; we strive that we may forget our faults; we labour that we may neither remember nor consider; we justify our errors, and call them innocent, and that which is our shame we miscall honour; and our whole life hath in it so many weak discourses and trifling propositions, that the whole world of sinners is like the hospital of the "insensati," madness and folly possess the greater part of mankind. What greater madness is there than to spend the price of a whole farm in contention for three sheaves of corn? and yet "tantum pectora cæcæ Noctis habent," this is the wisdom of such as are contentious, and love their own will more than their happiness, their humour more than their peace.

——Furor est post omnia perdere naulum. JUV.

Men lose their reason, and their religion, and themselves at last, for want of understanding; and all the wit and discourses by which sin creeps in, are but *φροντίδων βουλεύματα, γλώσσης τε κόμποι*, "frauds of the tongue, and consultations of care:" [c] but in the whole circle of sins there is not one wise proposition, by which a man may conduct his affairs, or himself become instructed to felicity. This is the first natural fruit of sin: it makes a man a fool, and this hurt sin does to the understanding, and this is shame enough to that in which men are most apt to glory.

Sin naturally makes a man weak; that is, unapt to do noble things: by which I do not understand a natural disability: for it is equally ready for a man to will good as evil, and as much in the power of his hands to be lifted up in prayer to God as against his brother in a quarrel; and between a virtuous object and his faculties there is a more apt proportion, than between his spirit and a vice; and every act of grace does more please the mind, than an act of sin does delight the sense; and every crime does greater violence to the better part of man, than mortification does to the lower; and oftentimes a duty consists in a negative, as, not to be drunk, not to swear, and it is not to be understood that a man hath naturally no power not to do; if there be a natural disability, it is to action, not to rest or ceasing; and therefore in this case, we cannot reasonably nor justly accuse our nature, but we have reason to blame our manners, which have introduced upon us a moral disability, that is, not that the faculty is impotent and disabled, but that the whole man is; for the will in many cases desires to do good, and the understanding is convinced and consents, and the hand can obey, and the passions can be directed, and be instrumental to God's service: but because they are not used to it, the will finds a difficulty to do them so much violence, and the understanding consents to their lower reasonings, and the desires of the lower man do will stronger; and then the whole man cannot do the duty that is expected. There is a law in the mem-

[c] Hecub.

bers, and he that gave that law is a tyrant, and the subjects of that law are slaves, and oftentimes their ear is bored; and they love their fetters, and desire to continue that bondage for ever; the law is the law of sin, the devil is the tyrant, custom is the sanction or the firmament of the law; and every vicious man is a slave, and chooses the vilest master, and the basest of services, and the most contemptible rewards. "Lex enim peccati est violentia consuetudinis, quâ trahitur et tenetur animus etiam invitus, eo merito quo in eam volens illabitur," said St. Austin; "The law of sin is the violence of custom, which keeps a man's mind against his mind, because he entered willingly," and gave up his own interest; which he ought to have secured for his own felicity, and for his service who gave for it an invaluable price: and indeed in questions of virtue and vice there is no such thing as nature; or it is so inconsiderable, that it hath in it nothing beyond an inclination which may be reverted; and very often not so much: nothing but a perfect indifferency, we may if we will, or we may choose; but custom brings in a new nature, and makes a bias in every faculty. To a vicious man some sins become necessary; temperance makes him sick; severity is death to him, it destroys his cheerfulness and activity, it is as his nature, and the desire dwells for ever with him, and his reasonings are framed for it and his fancy, and in all he is helped by example, by company, by folly, and inconsideration; and all these are a faction and a confederacy against the honour and service of God. And in this, philosophy is at a stand, nothing can give an account of it but experience and sorrowful instances; for it is infinitely unreasonable, that when you have discoursed wisely against unchastity, and told, that we are separated from it by a circumvallation of laws of God and man, that it dishonours the body, and makes the spirit caitive, that it is fought against by arguments sent from all the corners of reason and religion, and the man knows all this, and believes it, and prays against his sin, and hates himself for it, and curses the actions of it; yet oppose against all this but a fable or a merry story, a proverb or a silly saying, the sight of his mistress, or any thing but to lessen any one of the arguments brought against it, and that man shall as certainly and clearly be determined to that sin, as if he had on his side all the reason of the world. Δεινὸν γὰρ ἦθος καὶ ἐξομοιῶσαι καὶ βιάσασθαι πρὸς φύσιν,[d] Custom does as much as nature can do; it does sometimes more, and superinduces a disposition contrary to our natural temper. Eudemus had so used his stomach to so unnatural drinks, that, as himself tells the story, he took in one day two-and-twenty potions in which hellebore was infused, and rose at noon, and supped at night, and felt no change: so are those that are corrupted with evil customs, nothing will purge them; if you discourse wittily, they hear you not; or, if they do, they have twenty ways to answer, and twice twenty to neglect it: if you persuade them to promise to leave their sin, they do but show their folly at the next temptation, and tell that they did not mean it: and if you take them at an advantage when their hearts are softened with a judgment or a fear, with a shame or an indignation, and then put the bars and locks of vows upon them, it is all one; one vow shall hinder but one action, and the appetite shall be doubled by the restraint, and the next opportunity shall make an amends for the first omission: or else the sin shall enter by parts: the vow shall only put the understanding to make a distinction, or to change the circumstance, and under that colour the crime shall be admitted, because the man is resolved to suppose the matter so dressed was not vowed against. But then, when that is done, the understanding shall open that eye that did but wink before, and see that it was the same thing, and secretly rejoice that it was so cozened: for now the lock is opened, and the vow was broken against his will, and the man is at liberty again because he did the thing at unawares, οὐ θέλων τε καὶ θέλων, still he is willing to believe the sin was not formal vow-breach, but now he sees he broke it materially, and because the band is broken, the yoke is in pieces; therefore the next action shall go on upon the same stock of a single iniquity, without being affrighted in his conscience at the noise of perjury. I wish we were all so innocent as not to understand the discourse; but it uses to be otherwise.

> Nam si discedas, laqueo tenet ambitiosi
> Consuetudo mali; —— et in ægro corde senescit.—Juv.

"Custom hath waxen old in his deceived heart, and made snares for him that he cannot disentangle himself:" so true is that saying of God by the prophet, "Can an Ethiopian change his skin? then may ye learn to do well, when ye are accustomed to do evil." But I instance in two things, which, to my sense, seem great aggravations of the slavery and weakness of a customary sinner.

The first is, that men sin against their interest. They know they shall be ruined by it; it will undo their estates, lose their friends, ruin their fortunes, destroy their body, impoverish the spirit, load the conscience, discompose his rest, confound his reason, amaze him in all his faculties, destroy his hopes, and mischief enough besides; and when he considers this, he declares against it; but, "cum bona verba erumpant, affectus tamen ad consuetudinem relabuntur," "the man gives good words, but the evil custom prevails;" and it happens as in the case of the Tirynthians, who, to free their nation from a great plague, were bidden only to abstain from laughter, while they offered their sacrifice: but they had been so used to a ridiculous effeminacy, and vain course of conversation, that they could not, though the honour and splendour of the nation did depend upon it. God of his mercy keep all christian people from a custom in sinning! for if they be once fallen thither, nothing can recover them but a miraculous grace.

2. The second aggravation of it is, that custom prevails against experience. Though the man hath already smarted, though he hath been disgraced and undone, though he lost his relation and his friends, he is turned out of service, and disemployed, he begs with a load of his old sins upon his shoulders—

[d] Plutarch.

yet this will not cure an evil custom: do we not daily see how miserable some men make themselves with drunkenness and folly? Have not we seen them that have been sick with intemperance, deadly sick, enduring for one drunken meeting more pain than is in all the fasting-days of the whole year? and yet, do they not the very next day go to it again? Indeed, some few are smitten into the beginning of repentance, and they stay a fortnight, or a month, and, it may be, resist two or three invitations; but yet the custom is not gone,

> Nec tu, cùm obstiteris semel, instantique negaris
> Parere imperio, "Rupi jam vincula," dicas:

"Think not the chain is off, when thou hast once or twice resisted; or if the chain be broke, part remains on thee, like a cord upon a dog's neck,"

> Nam et luctata canis nodum abripit; attamen illi,
> Cum fugit, a collo trahitur pars longa catenæ. PERS.

He is not free that draws his chain after him; and he that breaks off from his sins with greatest passion, stands in need of prosperous circumstances, and a strange freedom from temptation, and accidental hardness, and superinduced confidence, and a preternatural severity; "Opus est aliqua fortunæ indulgentia adhuc inter humana luctanti, dum nodum illum exsolvit et omne vinculum mortale,"[e] for the knot can hardly be untied which a course of evil manners hath bound upon the soul; and every contingency in the world can entangle him, that wears upon his neck the links of a broken chain. "Nam qui ab eo quod amat, quam extemplo suaviis sagittatis percussus est, ilico res foras labitur, liquitur;" if he sees his temptation again he is *ἐπικλώμενος ὑπ' εὐνοίας*, his kindness to it, and conversation with his lust, undoes him, and breaks his purposes, and then he dies again, or falls upon that stone, that with so much pains he removed a little out of his way; and he would lose the spent wealth, or the health, and the reputation, over again, if it were in his power. Philomusus was a wild young fellow in Domitian's time, and he was hard put to it to make a large pension to maintain his lust and luxury, and he was every month put to beggarly arts to feed his crime. But when his father died and left him all, he disinherited himself; he spent it all, though he knew he was to suffer that trouble always, which vexed his lustful soul in the frequent periods of his violent want.[f]

Now, this is such a state of slavery, that persons that are sensible ought to complain, *δουλείαν δουλεύειν πάνυ ἰσχυράν*· that they serve worse lords than Egyptian task-masters, there is a lord within that rules and rages, "Intus et in jecore ægro pascuntur domini;" sin dwells there, and makes a man a miserable servant; and this is not only a metaphorical expression, under which some spiritual and metaphysical truth is represented, but it is a physical, material truth; and a man endures hardship, he cannot move but at this command; and not his outward actions only, but his will and his understanding too, are kept in fetters and foolish bondage: *μέμνησο, ὅτι νευροσπαστοῦν ἐστὶν ἐκεῖνο, τὸ ἔνδον ἐγκεκρυμμένον· ἐκεῖνο ῥητορεία, ἐκεῖνο ζωή, ἐκεῖνο ἄνθρωπος*, said Marcus Antoninus, "The two parts of a man are rent in sunder, and that that prevails is the life, it is the man, it is the eloquence, persuading every thing to its own interest." And now consider what is the effect of this evil. A man by sin is made a slave, he loses that liberty that is dearer to him than life itself; and, like the dog in the fable, we suffer chains and ropes only for a piece of bread, when the lion thought liberty a sufficient reward and price for hunger, and all the hardnesses of the wilderness. Do not all the world fight for liberty, and at no terms will lay down arms, till at least they be cozened with the image and colour of it? *οὐ θνήσκει ζῆλος ἐλευθερίας*; and yet for the pleasure of a few minutes we give ourselves into bondage; and all the world does it, more or less.

> *Φεῦ. οὐκ ἔστι θνητῶν, ὅστις ἔστ' ἐλεύθερος.*
> *Ἢ χρημάτων γὰρ δοῦλός ἐστιν, ἢ τύχης,*
> *Ἢ πλῆθος αὐτὸν πόλεος, ἢ νόμων γραφαὶ*
> *Εἴργουσι χρῆσθαι μὴ κατὰ γνώμην τρόποις.* EURIP.

Either men are slaves to fortune, or to lust; to covetousness, or tyranny; something or other compels him to usages against his will and reason; and when the laws cannot rule him, money can; "Divitiæ enim apud sapientem virum in servitute sunt, apud stultum in imperio;" for "Money is the wise man's servant, and the fool's master;" but the bondage of a vicious person, is such a bondage as the child hath in the womb, or rather as a sick man in his bed; we are bound fast by our disease, and a consequent weakness; we cannot go forth though the doors be open, and the fetters knocked off, and virtue and reason, like St. Peter's angel, call us, and beat us upon the sides, and offer to go before us, yet we cannot come forth from prison; for we have by our evil customs given hostages to the devil, never to stir from the enemy's quarter; and this is the greatest bondage that is imaginable, the bondage of conquered, wounded, unresisting people; *ἀδέσποτος ἡ ἀρετή*, "virtue only is the truest liberty;" "and if the Son of God make us free, then are we free indeed."

3. Sin does naturally introduce a great baseness upon the spirit, expressed in Scripture, in some cases, by the devil's entering into a man, as it was in the case of Judas, "after he had taken the sop, Satan entered into him;"[g] and St. Cyprian, speaking of them that after baptism lapsed into foul crimes, affirms, that "spiritu immundo quasi redeunte quatiuntur, ut manifestum sit diabolum in baptismo fide credentis excludi, si fides postmodum defecerit regredi;"[h] "faith, and the grace of baptism, turn the devil out of possession; but when faith fails, and we lose the bands of religion, then the devil returns;" that is, the man is devolved into such sins, of which there can be no reason given, which no excuse can lessen, which are set off with no pleasure, advanced by no temptations, which deceive by no allurements and flattering pretences; such things which have a proper and direct con-

[e] Seneca de vitâ beatâ. [f] Martial. [g] John xiii. 27. [h] Cypr. Ep. 76.

trariety to the good spirit, and such as are not restrained by human laws; because they are states of evil rather than evil actions, principles of mischief rather than direct emanations; such as are unthankfulness, impiety, giving a secret blow, fawning hypocrisy, detraction, impudence, forgetfulness of the dead, and forgetting to do that in their absence which we promised to them in presence;

Οὐκοῦν τόδ' αἰσχρὸν εἰ βλέποντι μὲν φίλῳ
Χρώμεσθ', ἐπεὶ δ' ὤλωλε, μὴ χρώμεσθ' ἔτι. Eurip.

concerning which sorts of unworthiness, it is certain they argue a most degenerous spirit, and they are the effect, the natural effect, of malice and despair, an unwholesome ill-natured soul, a soul corrupted in its whole constitution. I remember that in the apologues of Phædrus, it is told concerning an ill-natured fellow, that he refused to pay his symbol, which himself and all the company had agreed should be given for every disease that each man had; he denying his itch to be a disease; but the company taking off the refuser's hat for a pledge, found that he had a scald head, and so demanded the money double: which he pertinaciously resisting, they threw him down, and then discovered he was broken-bellied, and justly condemned him to pay three philippics:

——— Quæ fuerat fabula, pœna fuit.

One disease discovers itself by the hiding of another, and that being opened discovers a third; he that is almost taken in a fault, tells a lie to escape; and to protect that lie, he forswears himself; and that he may not be suspected of perjury, he grows impudent; and that sin may not shame him, he will glory in it, like the slave in the comedy, who, being torn with whips, grinned, and forced an ugly smile that it might not seem to smart. There are some sins which a man that is newly fallen cannot entertain. There is no crime made ready for a young sinner, but that which nature prompts him to. Natural inclination is the first tempter, then compliance, then custom, but this being helped by a consequent folly, dismantles the soul, making it to hate God, to despise religion, to laugh at severity, to deride sober counsels, to flee from repentance, to resolve against it, to delight in sin without abatement of spirit or purposes: for it is an intolerable thing for a man to be tormented in his conscience for every sin he acts; that must not be; he must have his sin and his peace too, or else he can have neither long; and because true peace cannot come, for "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked," therefore they must make a fantastic peace by studied cozening of themselves, by false propositions, by carelessness, by stupidity, by impudence, by sufferance and habit, by conversation and daily acquaintances, by doing some things, as Absalom did when he lay with his father's concubines, to make it impossible for him to repent, or to be forgiven, something to secure him in the possession of hell; "Tute hoc intristi, quod tibi exedendum est," the man must through it now; and this is it that makes men fall into all baseness of spiritual sins, [Ἀσεβὴς ἐλθὼν εἰς βάθος κακῶν καταφρονεῖ, "When a man is come to the bottom of his wickedness, he despises all,"] such as malice and despite, rancour and impudence, malicious, studied ignorance, voluntary contempt of all religion, hating of good men and good counsels, and taking every wise man and wise action to be his enemy; οὐδὲν οὕτως ἀναίσχυντον ποιεῖ ὡς πονηρὸν συνειδός. And this is that baseness of sin which Plato so much detested, that he said "he should blush to be guilty of, though he knew God would pardon him, and that men should never know it, "propter solam peccati turpitudinem," for the very baseness that is in it." A man that is false to God, will also, if an evil temptation overtakes him, betray his friend; and it is notorious in the covetous and ambitious:

Ἀχάριστον ὑμῶν σπέρμ', ὅσοι δημηγόρους
Ζηλοῦτε τιμὰς· μηδὲ γιγνώσκοισθ' ἐμοί,
Οἱ τοὺς φίλους βλάπτοντες οὐ φροντίζετε
Ἥν τοῖσι πολλοῖς πρὸς χάριν λέγητέ τι. Eurip.

They are an unthankful generation, and, to please the people, or to serve their interest, will hurt their friends. That man hath so lost himself to all sweetness and excellency of spirit, that is gone thus far in sin, that he looks like a condemned man, or is like the accursed spirits, preserved in chains of darkness and impieties unto the judgment of the great day, ἄνθρωπος δ' αἰεὶ ὁ μὲν πονηρὸς οὐδὲν ἄλλο πλὴν κακὸς· "this man can be nothing but evil;" for these inclinations and evil forwardnesses, this dyscrasy and gangrened disposition, do always suppose a long or a base sin for their parent; and the product of these is a wretchless spirit; that is, an aptness to any unworthiness, and an unwillingness to resist any temptation, a perseverance in baseness, and a consignation to all damnation: Δράσαντι δ' αἰσχρὰ δεινὰ τ' ἀποτίμια Δαίμων δέδωκεν, "If men do evil things, evil things shall be their reward." If they obey the evil spirit, an evil spirit shall be their portion; and the devil shall enter into them as he entered into Judas, and fill them full of iniquity.

SERMON XXI.

PART III.

4. Although these are shameful effects of sin, and a man need no greater dishonour than to be a fool and a slave, and a base person, all which sin infallibly makes him; yet there are some sins, which are directly shameful in their nature, and proper disreputation; and a very great many sins are the worst and basest in several respects; that is, every of them hath a venomous quality of its own, whereby it is marked and appropriated to a peculiar evil spirit. The devil's sin was the worst, because it came from the greatest malice: Adam's was the worst, because it was of most universal efficacy and dissemination: Judas's sin the worst, because against the most excellent person; and the relapses of the godly are the worst, by reason they were the most obliged persons. But the ignorance of the law is

the greatest of evils, if we consider its danger; but covetousness is worse than it, if we regard its incurable and growing nature; luxury is most alien from spiritual things, and is the worst of all in its temptation and our proneness; but pride grows most venomous by its unreasonableness and importunity, arising even from the good things a man hath; even from graces, and endearments, and from being more in debt to God. Sins of malice, and against the Holy Ghost, oppugn the greatest grace with the greatest spite; but idolatry is perfectly hated by God by a direct enmity. Some sins are therefore most heinous, because to resist them is most easy, and to act them there is the least temptation: such as are, severally, lying and swearing. There is a strange poison in the nature of sins, that, of so many sorts, every one of them should be the worst. Every sin hath an evil spirit, a devil of its own, to manage, to conduct, and to imbitter it: and although all these are God's enemies, and have an appendant shame in their retinue, yet to some sins shame is more appropriate, and a proper ingredient in their constitutions: such as are lying, and lust, and vow-breach, and inconstancy. God sometimes cures the pride of a man's spirit by suffering his evil manners, and filthy inclination, to be determined upon lust; lust makes a man afraid of public eyes, and common voices; it is (as all sins else are, but this especially) a work of darkness; it does debauch the spirit, and make it to decay and fall off from courage and resolution, constancy and severity, the spirit of government and a noble freedom; and those punishments, which the nations of the world have inflicted upon it, are not smart so much as shame: lustful souls are cheap and easy, trifling and despised, in all wise accounts; they are so far from being fit to sit with princes, that they dare not chastise a sinning servant that is private to their secret follies; it is strange to consider what laborious arts of concealment, what excuses and lessenings, what pretences and fig-leaves, men will put before their nakedness and crimes; shame was the first thing that entered upon the sin of Adam: and when the second world began, there was a strange scene of shame acted by Noah and his sons, and it ended in slavery and baseness to all descending generations.

We see the event of this by too sad an experience. What arguments, what hardness, what preaching, what necessity, can persuade men to confess their sins? They are so ashamed of them, that to be concealed they prefer before their remedy; and yet in penitential confession the shame is going off, it is like Cato's coming out of the theatre, or the philosopher from the tavern; it might have been shame to have entered, but glory to have departed for ever; and yet ever to have relation to sin is so shameful a thing, that a man's spirit is amazed, and his face is confounded, when he is dressed of so shameful a disease. And there are but few men that will endure it, but rather choose to involve it in excuses and denial, in the clouds of lying, and the white linen of hypocrisy: and yet, when they make a veil for their shame, such is the fate of sin, the shame grows the bigger and the thicker; we lie to men, and we excuse it to God; either some parts of lying or many parts of impudence, darkness or forgetfulness, running away or running farther in, these are the covers of our shame, like menstruous rags upon a skin of leprosy: but so sometimes we see a decayed beauty besmeared with a lying fucus, and the chinks filled with ceruse; besides that it makes no real beauty, it spoils the face, and betrays evil manners: it does not hide old age, or the change of years, but it discovers pride or lust; it was not shame to be old, or wearied and worn out with age, but it is a shame to dissemble nature by a wanton vizor. So sin retires from blushing into shame; if it be discovered, it is not to be endured, and if we go to hide it, we make it worse. But then if we remember how ambitious we are for fame and reputation, for honour and a fair opinion, for a good name all our days, and when our days are done; and that no ingenious man can enjoy any thing he hath, if he lives in disgrace; and that nothing so breaks a man's spirit as dishonour, and the meanest person alive does not think himself fit to be despised; we are to consider into what an evil condition sin puts us, for which we are not only disgraced and disparaged here, marked with disgraceful punishments, despised by good men, our follies derided, our company avoided, and hooted at by boys, talked of in fairs and markets, pointed at and described by appellatives of scorn, and every body can chide us, and we die unpitied, and lie in our graves eaten up by worms, and a foul dishonour; but after all this, at the day of judgment, we shall be called from our charnel-houses, where our disgrace could not sleep, and shall, in the face of God, in the presence of angels and devils, before all good men and all the evil, see and feel the shame of all our sins written upon our foreheads: here in this state of misery and folly we make nothing of it; and though we dread to be discovered to men, yet to God we confess our sins without a trouble or a blush; but to tell an even story, because we find some forms of confession prescribed in our prayer-books; and, that it may appear how indifferent and unconcerned we seem to be, we read and say all, and confess the sins we never did, with as much sorrow and regret, as those that we have acted a thousand times. But in that strange day of recompences, we shall find the devil to upbraid the criminal, Christ to disown them, the angels to drive them from the seat of mercy, and shame to be their smart, the consigning them to damnation; they shall then find, that they cannot dwell where virtue is rewarded, and where honour and glory have a throne; there is no veil but what is rent, no excuse to any but to them that are declared as innocent: no circumstances concerning the wicked to be considered, but them that aggravate; then the disgrace is not confined to the talk of a village, or a province, but is scattered to all the world: not only in one age shall the shame abide, but the men of all generations shall see and wonder at the vastness of that evil that is spread upon the souls of sinners for ever and ever; *ἀγὼν μέγας, Πλήρης στεναγμῶν, οὐδὲ δακρύων κενός.* No night shall then hide it; for in

those regions of darkness where the dishonoured man shall dwell for ever, there is nothing visible but the shame; there is light enough for that, but darkness for all things else: and then he shall reap the full harvest of his shame; all that for which wise men scorned him, and all that for which God hated him; all that in which he was a fool, and all that in which he was malicious; that which was public, and that which was private; that which fools applauded, and that which himself durst not own; the secrets of his lust, and the criminal contrivances of his thoughts; the base and odious circumstances, and the frequency of the action, and the partner of his sin; all that which troubles his conscience, and all that he willingly forgets,—shall be proclaimed by the trumpet of God, by the voice of an archangel, in the great congregation of spirits and just men.

There is one great circumstance more of the shame of sin, which extremely enlarges the evil of a sinful state, but that is not consequent to sin by a natural emanation, but is superinduced by the just wrath of God; and therefore is to be considered in the third part, which is next to be handled.

3. When the Bœotians asked the oracle, by what they should become happy? the answer was made, Ἀσεβήσαντας εὐπράξειν· "Wicked and irreligious persons are prosperous:" and they taking the devil at his word, threw the inspired Pythian, the ministering witch, into the sea, hoping so to become mighty in peace and war. The effect of which was this, the devil was found a liar, and they fools at first, and at last felt the reward of irreligion. For there are to some crimes such events, which are not to be expected from the connexion of natural causes, but from secret influences and undiscernible conveyances; that a man should be made sick for receiving the holy sacrament unworthily, and blind for resisting the words of an apostle, a preacher of the laws of Jesus, and die suddenly for breaking of his vow, and committing sacrilege, and be under the power and scourge of an exterminating angel for climbing his father's bed,—these are things beyond the world's philosophy; but as in nature, so in divinity too, there are sympathies and antipathies, effects which we feel by experience, and are forewarned of by revelation, which no natural reason can judge, nor any providence can prevent, but by living innocently, and complying with the commandments of God. The rod of God, which "cometh not into the lot of the righteous," strikes the sinning man with sore strokes of vengeance.

1. The first that I shall note is, that which I called the aggravation of the shame of sin; and that is, an impossibility of being concealed in most cases of heinous crimes, Μηδέποτε μηδὲν αἰσχρὸν ποιήσας ἔλπιζε λήσειν, "Let no man suppose that he shall for ever hide his sin:" a single action may be conveyed away under the covert of an excuse or a privacy, escaping as Ulysses did the search of Polyphemus, and it shall in time be known that it did escape, and shall be discovered that it was private; that is, that it is so no longer. But no wicked man, that dwelt and delighted in sin, did ever go off from his scene of unworthiness without a filthy character; the black veil is thrown over him before his death, and by some contingency or other he enters into his cloud, because few sins determine finally in the thoughts; but if they dwell there, they will also enter into action, and then the sin discovers itself; or else the injured person will proclaim it, or the jealous man will talk of it before it is done, or curious people will inquire and discover, or the spirit of detraction shall be let loose upon him, and in spite shall declare more than he knows, not more than is true. The ancients, especially the scholars of Epicurus, believed that no man could be secured or quiet in his spirit from being discovered. "Scelus aliqua tutum, nulla securum tulit;" "They are not secure, even when they are safe;" but are afflicted with perpetual jealousies; and every whisper is concerning them, and all new noises are arrests to their spirits; and the day is too light, and the night is too horrid, and both are the most opportune for their discovery; and besides the undiscernible connexion of the contingencies of Providence, many secret crimes have been published by dreams, and talkings in their sleep. It is the observation of Lucretius,

> Multi de magnis per somnum rebu' loquuntur,
> Indicioque sui facti persæpe fuere.

And what their understanding kept a guard upon, their fancy let loose; fear was the bars and locks, but sleep became the key to open, even then when all the senses were shut, and God ruled alone without the choice and discourse of man. And though no man regards the wilder talkings of a distracted man, yet it hath sometimes happened, that a delirium and a fever, fear of death, and the intolerable apprehensions of damnation, have opened the cabinet of sin, and brought to light all that was acted in the curtains of night;

> Quippe ubi se multi, per somnia sæpe loquentes,
> Aut morbo delirantes, protraxe feruntur,
> Et, celata diu, in medium peccata dedisse. Lucr.

But there are so many ways of discovery, and amongst so many some one does so certainly happen, that they are well summed up by Sophocles, by saying, that "Time hears all, and tells all;"

> Πρὸς ταῦτα κρύπτε μηδὲν, ὡς ὁ πάνθ' ὁρῶν
> Καὶ πάντ' ἀκούων, πάντ' ἀναπτύσσει χρόνος.

A cloud may be its roof and cover till it passes over, but when it is driven by a fierce wind, or runs fondly after the sun, it lays open a deformity, which like an ulcer had a skin over it, and pain within, and drew to it a heap of sorrows big enough to run over all its enclosures. Many persons have betrayed themselves by their own fears, and knowing themselves never to be secure enough, have gone to purge themselves of what nobody suspected them; offered an apology when they had no accuser, but one within; which, like a thorn in the flesh, or like "a word in a fool's heart," was uneasy till it came out. "Non amo se nimium purgitantes," when men are "over-busy in justifying themselves," it is

a sign themselves think they need it. Plutarch tells of a young gentleman that destroyed a swallow's nest, pretending to them that reproved him for doing the thing, which in their superstition the Greeks esteemed so ominous, that the little bird accused him for killing his father. And to this purpose it was that Solomon gave counsel: "Curse not the king, no, not in thy thought, nor the rich in thy bedchamber; for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that that hath wings shall tell the matter:" [a] murder and treason have by such strange ways been revealed, as if God had appointed an angel president of the revelation, and had kept this in secret and sure ministry to be as an argument to destroy atheism from the face of the earth, by opening the secrets of men with his key of providence. Intercepting of letters, mistaking names, false inscriptions, errors of messengers, faction of the parties, fear in the actors, horror in the action, the majesty of the person, the restlessness of the mind, distracted looks, weariness of the spirit, and all under the conduct of the Divine wisdom, and the Divine vengeance, make the covers of the most secret sin transparent as a net, and visible as the Chian wines in the purest crystal.

For besides that God takes care of kings, and of the lives of men,—

Ἢ δὲ τόσον μὲν ἔεργεν ἀπὸ χροός, ὡς ὅτε μήτηρ
Παιδὸς ἐέργει μυῖαν, ὅθ' ἡδεῖ λέξατο ὕπνῳ, HOMER.

driving away evil from their persons, and "watching as a mother to keep gnats and flies from her dear boy sleeping in the cradle;" there are, in the machinations of a mighty mischief, so many motions to be concentred, so many wheels to move regularly, and the hand that turns them does so tremble, and there is so universal a confusion in the conduct, that unless it passes suddenly into act, it will be prevented by discovery, and if it be acted it enters into such a mighty horror, that the face of a man will tell what his heart did think, and his hands have done. And, after all, it was seen and observed by him that stood behind the cloud, who shall also bring every work of darkness into light in the day of strange discoveries and fearful recompences: and in the mean time certain it is, that no man can long put on a person and act a part, but his evil manner will peep through the corners of the white robe, and God will bring an hypocrite to shame even in the eyes of men.

2. A second superinduced consequent of sin brought upon it by the wrath of God, is sin; when God punishes sin with sin he is extremely angry; for then the punishment is not medicinal, but final and exterminating; God in that case takes no care concerning him, though he dies, and dies eternally. I do not here speak of those sins which are naturally consequent to each other, as evil words to evil thoughts, evil actions to evil words, rage to drunkenness, lust to gluttony, pride to ambition; but such which God suffers the man's evil nature to be tempted to by evil opportunities: Θεῶν ἀναγκαῖον τόδε, "This is the wrath of God," and the man is without remedy. It was a sad calamity, when God punished David's adultery by permitting him to fall to murder,—and Solomon's wanton and inordinate love, with the crime of idolatry,—and Ananias's sacrilege with lying against the Holy Ghost,—and Judas's covetousness with betraying his Lord, and that betraying with despair, and that despair with self-murder.

——— Παρακαλεῖ δ' ἐκεῖθεν αὖ
Λύπη τὶς ἄλλη, διάδοχος κακῶν κακοῖς. EURIP.

"One evil invites another;" and when God is angry and withdraws his grace, and the Holy Spirit is grieved and departs from his dwelling, the man is left at the mercy of the merciless enemy, and he shall receive him only with variety of mischiefs; like Hercules when he had broken the horn of Achelous, he was almost drowned with the flood that sprung from it; and the evil man, when he hath passed the first scene of his sorrows, shall be enticed or left to fall into another. For it is a certain truth, that he who resists, or that neglects to use, God's grace, shall fall into that evil condition, that when he wants it most he shall have least. It is so with every man; he that hath the greatest want of the grace of God, shall want it more, if this great want proceeded once from his own sin. "Habenti dabitur," said our blessed Lord, "To him that hath, shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly; from him that hath not, shall be taken even that which he hath." It is a remarkable saying of David's; "I have thought upon thy name, O Lord, in the night season, and have kept thy law; this I had because I kept thy commandments;" [b] keeping God's commandments was rewarded with keeping God's commandments. And in this world God hath not a greater reward to give; for so the soul is nourished unto life, so it grows up with the increase of God, so it passes on to a perfect man in Christ, so it is consigned for heaven, and so it enters into glory; for glory is the perfection of grace, and when our love to God is come to its state and perfection, then we are within the circles of a diadem, and then we are within the regions of felicity. And there is the same reason in the contrary instance.

The wicked person falls into sin, and this he had, because he sinned against his Maker. "Tradidit Deus eos in desideria cordis eorum;" and it concerns all to observe it; and if ever we find that a sin succeeds a sin in the same instance, it is because we refuse to repent; but if a sin succeeds a sin in another instance, as, if lust follows pride, or murder drunkenness; it is a sign that God will not give us the grace of repentance: he is angry at us with a destructive fury, he hath dipped his arrows in the venom of the serpent, and whets his sword in the forges of hell; then it is time that a man withdraw his foot, and that he start back from the preparations of an intolerable ruin: for though men in this case grew insensible, and that is the part of the disease, διὰ τοῦτο μέγα ἐστὶ κακὸν, ὅτι οὐδὲν εἶναι δοκεῖ, saith Chrysostom; "It is the biggest part of the evil that the man feels it not;" yet the very *antiperistasis*, or the contrariety, the very horror and

[a] Eccl. x. 20. [b] Psal. cxix. 55, 56.

bigness of the danger, may possibly make a man to contend to leap out of the fire; and sometimes God works a miracle, and besides his own rule delights to reform a dissolute person, to force a man from the grave, to draw him against the bent of his evil habits; yet it is so seldom, that we are left to consider, that such persons are in a desperate condition, who cannot be saved unless God is pleased to work a miracle.

3. Sin brings in its retinue, fearful plagues and evil angels, messengers of the displeasure of God, concerning which, τῶν τεθνηκότων ἅλις, "there are enough of dead;" I mean, the experience is so great, and the notion so common, and the examples so frequent, and the instances so sad, that there is scarce any thing new in this particular to be noted; but something is remarkable, and that is this,—that God, even when he forgives the sin, does reserve such ὑστερήματα τῆς θλίψεως, "remains of punishment," and those not only to the less perfect, but to the best persons, that it makes demonstration, that every sinner is in a worse condition than he dreams of. For consider; can it be imagined that any one of us should escape better than David did? We have reason to tremble when we remember what he suffered, even when God had sealed his pardon. Did not God punish Zedekiah with suffering his eyes to be put out in the house of bondage? Was not God so angry with Valentinian, that he gave him into his enemy's hand to be flayed alive? Have not many persons been struck suddenly in the very act of sin, and some been seized upon by the devil and carried away alive? These are fearful contingencies: but God hath been more angry yet; rebellion was punished in Korah and his company, by the gaping of the earth, and the men were buried alive; and Dathan and Abiram were consumed with fire for usurping the priest's office: but God hath struck severely since that time; and for the prostitution of a lady by the Spanish king, the Moors were brought in upon his kingdom, and ruled there for seven hundred years. And have none of us known an excellent and good man to have descended, or rather to have been thrust, into a sin, for which he hath repented, which he hath confessed, which he hath rescinded, and which he hath made amends for as he could, and yet God was so severely angry, that this man was suffered to fall in so big a calamity, that he died by the hands of violence, in a manner so seemingly impossible to his condition, that it looked like the biggest sorrow that hath happened to the sons of men? But then, let us consider, how many and how great crimes we have done; and tremble to think, that God hath exacted so fearful pains and mighty punishments for one such sin, which we, it may be, have committed frequently. Our sin deserves as bad as theirs: and God is impartial, and we have no privilege, no promise of exemption, no reason to hope it; what then do we think shall become of this affair? Where must we suffer this vengeance? For that it is due, that it is just we suffer it, these sad examples are a perfect demonstration. We have done that, for which God thought flaying alive not to be too big a punishment; that for which God hath smitten kings with formidable plagues; that for which governments have been changed, and nations enslaved, and churches destroyed, and the candlestick removed, and famines and pestilences have been sent upon a whole kingdom; and what shall become of us? Why do we vainly hope it shall not be so with us? If it was just for these men to suffer what they did, then we are at least to expect so much; and then, let us consider, into what a fearful condition sin hath put us, upon whom a sentence is read, that we shall be plagued like Zedekiah, or Korah, or Dathan, or the king of Spain, or any other king, who were, for aught we know, infinitely more innocent and more excellent persons than any of us. What will become of us? For God is as just to us as to them; and Christ died for them as well as for us; and they have repented more than we have done; and what mercy can we expect, that they might not hope for, upon at least as good ground as we? God's ways are secret, and his mercies and justice dwell in a great abyss; but we are to measure our expectations by revelation and experience. But then what would become of us, if God should be as angry at our sin as at Zedekiah's, or king David's? Where have we in our body room enough for so many stripes, as our sin ought justly to be punished withal; or what security or probability have we that he will not so punish us?

For I did not represent this sad story, as a matter of possibility only, that we may fear such fearful strokes as we see God lay upon sinners; but we ought to look upon it as a thing that will come some way or other, and, for aught we know, we cannot escape it. So much, and more, is due for the sin; and though Christ hath redeemed our souls, and if we repent we shall not die eternally, yet he hath no where promised we shall not be smitten. It was an odd saying of the devil to a sinner whom he would fain have had to despair; "Me è cœlo ad Barathrum demisit peccatum, et vos ullum in terra locum tutum existimabitis?" "Sin thrust me from heaven to hell, and do you think on earth to have security?"—Men use to presume that they shall go unpunished; but we see what little reason we have to flatter and undo ourselves, πᾶσι γὰρ κοινὸν τόδε, τὸν μὲν κακὸν κακόν τι πάσχειν, "He that hath sinned must look for a judgment," and how great that is, we are to take our measures by those sad instances of vengeance by which God hath chastised the best of men, when they have committed but a single sin, ὀλέθριον, ὀλέθριον κακὸν, "sin is" damnable and "destructive:" and therefore, as the ass refused the barley which the fatted swine left, perceiving by it he was fatted for the slaughter,

> Tuum libenter prorsus appeterem cibum,
> Nisi, qui nutritus illo est, jugulatus foret, Phædrus.

we may learn to avoid these vain pleasures which cut the throat after they are swallowed, and leave us in that condition that we may every day fear, lest that evil happen unto us, which we see fall upon the great examples of God's anger; and our fears cannot, ought not, at all to be taken off, but by an effective, busy, pungent, hasty, and a permanent

repentance; and then also but in some proportions, for we cannot be secured from temporal plagues, if we have sinned; no repentance can secure us from all that; nay, God's pardon, or remitting his final anger, and forgiving the pains of hell, does not secure us here: *ἡ νέμεσις παρὰ πόδας βαίνει*; but sin lies at the door ready to enter in, and rifle all our fortunes.

1. But this hath two appendages, which are very considerable; and the first is, that there are some mischiefs which are the proper and appointed scourges of certain sins, and a man need not ask; "Cujus vulturis hoc erit cadaver?" "What vulture," what death, what affliction, "shall destroy this sinner?" The sin hath a punishment of his own, which usually attends it, as giddiness does a drunkard. He that commits sacrilege, is marked for a vertiginous and changeable fortune; "Make them, O my God, like unto a wheel,"[d] of an inconstant state: and we and our fathers have seen it, in the change of so many families, which have been undone by being made rich: they took the lands from the church, and the curse went along with it, and the misery and the affliction lasted longer than the sin. Telling lies frequently hath for its punishment to be "given over to believe a lie," and, at last, that nobody shall believe it but himself; and then the mischief is full, he becomes a dishonoured and a baffled person. The consequent of lust is properly shame; and witchcraft is still punished with baseness and beggary; and oppression of widows hath a sting; for the tears of the oppressed are, to the oppressor, like the waters of jealousy, making the belly to swell, and the thigh to rot; the oppressor seldom dies in a tolerable condition; but is remarked towards his end with some horrible affliction. The sting of oppression is darted as a man goes to his grave. In these, and the like, God keeps a rule of striking, "In quo quis peccat, in eo punitur." The Divine judgment did point at the sin, lest that be concealed by excuses, and protected by affection, and increased by passion, and destroy the man by its abode. For some sins are so agreeable to the spirit of a fool and an abused person, because he hath framed his affections to them and they comply with his unworthy interest, that when God, out of an angry kindness, smites the man and punishes the sin, the man does carefully defend his beloved sin, as the serpent does his head, which he would most tenderly preserve. But therefore God, that knows all our tricks and devices, our stratagems, to be undone, hath therefore apportioned out his punishments by analogies, by proportions, and entail: so that when every sin enters into its proper portion, we may discern why God is angry, and labour to appease him speedily.

2. The second appendage to this consideration is this, that there are some states of sin, which expose a man to all mischief, as it can happen, by taking off from him all his guards and defences; by driving the good spirit from him, by stripping him of the guards of angels. But this is the effect of an habitual sin, a course of an evil life, and it is called in Scripture, "a grieving the good Spirit of God." But the guard of angels is, in Scripture, only promised to them that live godly; "The angels of the Lord pitch their tents round about them that fear him, and deliver them," said David.[e]

Τῷ δὲ θρόνῳ πυρόεντι παρεστᾶσιν πολύμοχθοι
Ἄγγελοι, οἵσι μέμηλε βροτοῖς ὡς πάντα τελεῖται.

And the Hellenists used to call the angels *ἐγρηγόρους*, "watchmen;" which custody is at first designed and appointed for all, when by baptism they give up their names to Christ, and enter into the covenant of religion. And of this the heathen have been taught something by conversation with the Hebrews and christians; "unicuique nostrûm dare pædagogum Deum," said Seneca to Lucilius, "non primarium, sed ex eorum numero, quos Ovidius vocat ex plebe deos:" "There is a guardian god assigned to every one of us, of the number of those which are of the second order;" such are those of whom David speaks, "Before *the gods* will I sing praise unto thee;" and it was the doctrine of the stoics, that to every one there was assigned a genius, and a Juno: "Quamobrem major cœlitum populus etiam quàm hominum intelligi potest, quum singuli ex semetipsis totidem Deos faciant, Junones geniosque adoptando sibi," said Pliny: "Every one does adopt gods into his family, and get a genius and a Juno of their own." "Junonem meam iratam habeam;" it was the oath of Quartilla in Petronius; and Socrates in Plato is said to "swear by his Juno;" though afterwards, among the Romans, it became the woman's oath, and a note of effeminacy; but the thing they aimed at was this, that God took care of us below, and sent a ministering spirit for our defence; but, that this is only upon the accounts of piety, they knew not. But we are taught it by the Spirit of God in Scripture. For, "the angels are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to the good of them who shall be heirs of salvation;"[f] and concerning St. Peter, the faithful had an opinion, that it might be "his angel;" agreeing to the doctrine of our blessed Lord, who spake of angels appropriate to his little ones, to infants, to those that belong to him. Now what God said to the sons of Israel, is also true to us christians; "Behold, I send an angel before thee: beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions."[g] So that if we provoke the Spirit of the Lord to anger by a course of evil living, either the angel will depart from us, or, if he stays, he will strike us. The best of these is bad enough, and he is highly miserable,

—— Qui non sit tanto hoc Custode securus,

whom an angel cannot defend from mischief, nor any thing secure him from the wrath of God. It was the description and character which the Erythrean sibyl gave to God,

Ἄφθαρτος, κτιστὴς αἰώνιος, αἰθέρα ναίων,
Τοῖς τ' ἀκάκοις ἄκακον προφέρων πολὺ μείζονα μισθὸν,
Τοῖς δὲ κακοῖς ἀδίκοις τε χόλον καὶ θύμον ἐγείρων.

[d] Psal. lxxxiii. [e] Psal. xxxiii. 4, 7. [f] Heb. i. 14. [g] Exod. xxiii. 20, 21.

It is God's appellative to be "a giver of excellent rewards to just and innocent persons: but to assign to evil men fury, wrath, and sorrow, for their portion." If I should launch farther into this dead sea, I should find nothing but horrid shriekings, and the skulls of dead men utterly undone. Fearful it is to consider, that sin does not only drive us into calamity, but it makes us also impatient, and imbitters our spirit in the sufferance: it cries loud for vengeance, and so torments men before the time, even with such fearful outcries, and horrid alarms, that their hell begins before the fire is kindled. It hinders our prayers, and consequently makes us hopeless and helpless. It perpetually affrights the conscience, unless by its frequent stripes it brings a callousness and an insensible damnation upon it. It makes us to lose all that which Christ purchased for us, all the blessings of his providence, the comforts of his Spirit, the aids of his grace, the light of his countenance, the hopes of his glory; it makes us enemies to God, and to be hated by him more than he hates a dog: and with a dog shall be his portion to eternal ages; with this only difference, that they shall both be equally excluded from heaven, but the dog shall not, and the sinner shall, descend into hell; and, which is the confirmation of all evil, for a transient sin God shall inflict an eternal death. Well might it be said in the words of God by the prophet, "Ponam Babylonem in possessionem erinacei," "Babylon shall be the possession of a hedgehog:" that is, a sinner's dwelling, encompassed round with thorns and sharp prickles, afflictions and uneasiness all over. So that he that wishes his sin big and prosperous, wishes his bee as big as a bull, and his hedgehog like an elephant; the pleasure of the honey would not cure the mighty sting; and nothing make recompence, or be a good, equal to the evil of an eternal ruin. But of this there is no end. I sum up all with the saying of Publius Mimus; "Tolerabilior est qui mori jubet, quàm qui male vivere," "He is more to be endured that puts a man to death, than he that betrays him into sin:"—for the end of this is "death eternal."

SERMON XXII.

THE GOOD AND EVIL TONGUE.

PART I.

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. —Ephes. iv. 29.

HE that had an ill memory, did wisely comfort himself by reckoning the advantages he had by his forgetfulness. For by this means he was hugely secured against malice and ambition; for his anger went off with the short notice and observation of the injury; and he saw himself unfit for the businesses of other men, or to make records in his head, and undertake to conduct the intrigues of affairs of a multitude, who was apt to forget the little accounts of his own seldom reading. He also remembered this, that his pleasures in reading books were more frequent, while he remembered but little of yesterday's study, and to-morrow the book is new, and with its novelties gives him fresh entertainment, while the retaining brain lays the book aside, and is full already. Every book is new to an ill memory, and one long book is a library, and its parts return fresh as the morning, which becomes a new day, though by the revolution of the same sun. Besides these, it brought him to tell truth for fear of shame, and in mere necessity made his speech little, and his discoursings short; because the web drawn from his brain was soon spun out, and his fountain grew quickly dry, and left running through forgetfulness. He that is not eloquent and fair-spoken, hath some of these comforts to plead in excuse of his ill fortune or defective nature. For if he can but hold his peace, he shall be sure not to be troublesome to his company, nor marked for lying, nor become tedious with multiplicity of idle talk; he shall be presumed wise, and oftentimes is so; he shall not feel the wounds of contention, nor be put to excuse an ill-taken saying, nor sigh for the folly of an irrecoverable word; if his fault be that he hath not spoken, that can at any time be mended, but if he sinned in speaking, it cannot be unspoken again. Thus he escapes the dishonour of not being believed, and the trouble of being suspected; he shall never fear the sentence of judges, nor the decrees of courts, high reproaches, or the angry words of the proud, the contradiction of the disputing man, or the thirst of talkers. By these, and many other advantages, he that holds his peace, and he that cannot speak, may please themselves; and he may at least have the rewards and effects of solitariness, if he misses some of the pleasures of society. But by the use of the tongue, God hath distinguished us from beasts, and by the well or ill using it, we are distinguished from one another; and therefore, though silence be innocent as death, harmless as a rose's breath to a distant passenger, yet it is rather the state of death than life; and therefore, when the Egyptians sacrificed to Harpocrates, their god of silence, in the midst of their rites they cried out, γλῶσσα δαίμων, "the tongue is an angel," good or bad, that is as it happens; silence was to them a god, but the tongue is greater; it is the band of human intercourse, and makes men apt to unite in societies and republics: and I remember what one of the ancients said, that we are better in the company of a known dog, than of a man whose speech is not known, "ut externus alieno non sit hominis vice;" a stranger to a stranger in his language, is not as a man to a man;" for by voices and homilies, by questions and answers, by narratives and invectives, by counsel and reproof, by praises and hymns, by prayers and glorifications, we serve God's glory and the necessities of men; and by the tongue our tables are made to differ from

mangers, our cities from deserts, our churches from herds of beasts and flocks of sheep. "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God," spoken by the tongues of men and angels: and the blessed spirits in heaven cease not from saying night and day their Τρισάγιον, "their song of glory," to him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever; and then our employment shall be glorious as our state, when our tongues shall to eternal ages sing hallelujahs to their Maker and Redeemer; and therefore, since nature hath taught us to speak, and God requires it, and our thankfulness obliges us, and our necessities engage us, and charity sometimes calls for it, and innocence is to be defended, and we are to speak in the cause of the oppressed, and open our mouths in the cause of God, and it is always a seasonable prayer, that God would open our lips, that our mouth may do the work of heaven, and declare his praises, and show forth his glory; it concerns us to take care that nature be changed into grace, necessity into choice, that, while we speak the greatness of God, and minister to the needs of our neighbour, and do the works of life and religion, of society and prudence, we may be fitted to bear a part in the songs of angels, when they shall rejoice at the feast of the marriage-supper of the Lamb. But the tongue is a fountain both of bitter waters and of pleasant; it sends forth blessing and cursing; it praises God, and rails at men; it is sometimes set on fire, and then it puts whole cities in combustion; it is unruly, and no more to be restrained than the breath of a tempest; it is volatile and fugitive: reason should go before it, and when it does not, repentance comes after it; it was intended for an organ of the Divine praises, but the devil often plays upon it, and then it sounds like the screech-owl, or the groans of death; sorrow and shame, folly and repentance, are the notes and formidable accents of that discord. We all are naturally λογόφιλοι, "lovers of speech," more or less; and God reproves it not, provided that we be also φιλόλογοι, "wise and material, useful and prudent, in our discourses." For since speech is for conversation, let it be also charitable and profitable, let it be without sin, but not without profit and grace to the hearers, and then it is as God would have it; and this is the precept of the text, first telling us what we should avoid, and then telling us what we should pursue; what our discourse ought not to be, and, secondly, what it ought to be. There being no more variety in the structure of the words, I shall, 1. discourse of the vices of the tongue; 2. of its duty and proper employment.

1. "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth;" πᾶς ὁ σαπρὸς λόγος, corrupt or "filthy" communication; so we read it: and it seems properly to note such communication as ministers to wantonness; such as are the Fescennines of Ausonius, the excrement and spume of Martial's verse, and the Ephesiaca of Xenophon; indeed, this is such a rudeness as is not to be admitted into civil conversation; and is wittily noted by the apostle, charging that "fornication should not be once named among them, as becometh saints;" not meaning that the vice should not have its name and filthy character, but that nothing of it be named, in which it can be tempting or offensive; nothing tending to it, or teaching of it, should be named; we must not have πόρνον λόγον, "fornication in our talk;" that is such a baseness, that it not only grieves the Divine Spirit, but dishonours all its channels and conveyances: the proper language of the sin is not fit to be used so much as in reproof; and therefore, I have sometimes wondered, how it came to pass, that some of the ancients, men wise and modest, chaste and of sober spirits, have fallen into a fond liberty of declamation against uncleanness, using such words which bring that sin upon the stage of fancy, and offend "auriculas non calentes," "sober and chaste ears." For who can, without blushing, read Seneca describing the looking-glass of Hostius, or the severe but looser words of Persius, or the reproofs of St. Jerome himself, that great patron of virginity, and exacter of chastity? yet more than once reprove filthy things with unhandsome language: St. Chrysostom makes an apology for them that do so; ἐὰν μὲν γὰρ σεμνῶς εἰπῇς, οὐ δυνήσῃ καθικέσθαι τοῦ ἀκούοντος· ἐὰν δὲ βουληθῇς καθάψασθαι, σφοδρῶς ἀνάγκην ἔχεις ἀπογυμνῶσαι σαφέστερον τὰ λεγόμενα,[h] "you cannot profit the hearers unless you discover the filthiness," for the withdrawing the curtain is shame and confutation enough for so great a baseness; and chirurgeons care not how they defile their hand, so they may do profit to the patient. And, indeed, there is a material difference in the design of him that speaks; if he speaks ἐξ οἰκείου πάθους, "according to his secret affection," and private folly, it is certainly intolerable: but if he speaks ἀπὸ κηδεμονίας, "out of a desire to profit" the hearer, and cure the criminal, though it be in the whole kind of it honest and well meant; yet, that it is imprudent,

(Irritamentum Veneris languentis, et acris
Divitis urticæ,) JUV.

and not wholly to be excused by the fair meaning, will soon be granted by all who know what danger and infection it leaves upon the fancy, even by those words by which the spirit is instructed. "Ab hâc scabie teneamus ungues;" it is not good to come near the leprosy, though to cleanse the leper's skin.

But the word which the apostle uses, σαπρὸς λόγος, means more than this. Σαπρὸν οὐ τὸ μοχθηρὸν φαῦλον, ἀλλὰ τὸ παλαιὸν, said Eupolis; and so it signifies, "musty, rotten, and out-worn with age;" σαπρᾶς εἰρήνης, "rusty peace," so Aristophanes: and, according to this acceptation of the word, we are forbidden to use all language that is in any sense corrupted, unreasonable, or useless; language proceeding from an old iniquity, evil habits, or unworthy customs, called, in the style of Scripture, "the remains of the old man," and by the Greeks, "doting" or "talking fondly;" τὸ παιδαρίον εἶ, καὶ φρονεῖς ἀρχαϊκὰ; "the boy talks like an old dotard." 2. Σαπρὸς signifies "wicked, filthy, or reproachful;" σαπρὸν, αἰσχρὸν, ἀκάθαρτον, "any thing that is in

[h] Homil. 4. in. ep. Rom.

its own nature criminal and disgraceful, any language that ministers to mischief. But it is worse than all this: σαπρὸς ὁ ἀφανισμὸς, "it is a deletery, an extinction of all good;" for ἀφανίζομαι is φθείρω, λυμαίνομαι, καταλύω, it is "a destruction, an entire corruption," of all morality; and to this sense is that of Menander, quoted by St. Paul, φθείρουσιν ἤθη χρησθ' ὁμιλίαι κακαὶ· "Evil words corrupt good manners." And therefore, under this word is comprised all the evil of the tongue, that wicked instrument of the unclean spirit, in the capacity of all the appellatives. 1. Here is forbidden the useless, vain, and trifling conversation, the Βεελζεβοὺλ, "the god of flies," so is the devil's name; he rules by these little things, by trifles and vanity, by idle and useless words, by the intercourses of a vain conversation. 2. The devil is Διάβολος, "an accuser of the brethren, and the calumniating, slandering, and undervaluing, detracting tongue does his work; that is, λόγος αἰσχρὸς, the second that I named; for αἰσχρότης is λοιδορία, μῖσος, so Hesychius; it is "slander, hatred, and calumny." 3. But the third is Ἀπολλύων, the devil's worst appellative, "the destroyer," the dissolute, wanton, tempting, destroying conversation; and its worst instance of all is flattery, that malicious, cozening devil, that strengthens our friend in sin, and ruins him from whom we have received, and from whom we expect, good. Of these in order: and first, of the trifling, vain, useless, and impertinent conversation, σαπρὸς λόγος, "Let no *vain* communication proceed out of your mouth."

1. The first part of this inordination is "multiloquium," "talking too much;" concerning which, because there is no rule or just measure for the quantity, and it is as lawful, and sometimes as prudent, to tell a long story as a short, and two as well as one, and sometimes ten as well as two: all such discourses are to take their estimate by the matter and the end, and can only be altered by their circumstances and appendages. Much speaking is sometimes necessary, sometimes useful, sometimes pleasant; and when it is none of all these, though it be tedious and imprudent, yet it is not always criminal. Such was the humour of the gentleman Martial speaks of: he was a good man, and full of sweetness and justice and nobleness, but he would read his nonsense-verses to all companies; at the public games and in private feasts, in the baths and on the beds, in public and in private, to sleeping and waking people.

> Vis, quantum facias mali, videre?
> Vir justus, probus, innocens timeris. Lib. 3. Ep. 44.

Every one was afraid of him, and though he was good, yet he was not to be endured. The evil of this is very considerable in the accounts of prudence, and the effects and plaisance of conversation: and the ancients described its evil well by a proverbial expression; for when a sudden silence arose, they said that Mercury was entered, meaning, that he being their "loquax numen," their "prating god," yet that quitted him not, but all men stood upon their guard, and called for aid and rescue, when they were seized upon by so tedious an impertinence. And, indeed, there are some persons so full of nothings, that, like the strait sea of Pontus, they perpetually empty themselves by their mouth, making every company or single person they fasten on to be their Propontis; such a one as was Anaximenes, λέξεων ποταμὸς, νοῦ δὲ σταλαγμος· "He was an ocean of words, but a drop of understanding." And if there were no more in this than the matter of prudence, and the proper measures of civil conversation, it would yet highly concern old men,[i] and young men and women,[k] to separate from their persons the reproach of their sex and age, that modesty of speech be the ornament of the youthful, and a reserved discourse be the testimony of the old man's prudence. "Adolescens" from Ἀδολέσχης, said one: "a young man is a talker for want of wit," and an old man for want of memory; for while he remembers the things of his youth, and not how often he hath told them in his old age, he grows in love with the trifles of his youthful days, and thinks the company must do so too: but he canonizes his folly, and by striving to bring reputation to his first days, he loses the honour of his last. But this thing is considerable to further issues; for though no man can say, that much speaking is a sin, yet the Scripture says, "In multiloquio peccatum non deerit;" "Sin goes along with it, and is an ingredient in the whole composition." For it is impossible but a long and frequent discourse must be served with many passions, and they are not always innocent; for he that loves to talk much, must "rem corradere," "scrape materials together" to furnish out the scenes and long orations; and some talk themselves into anger, and some furnish out their dialogues with the lives of others; either they detract, or censure, or they flatter themselves, and tell their own stories with friendly circumstances, and pride creeps up the sides of the discourse; and the man entertains his friend with his own panegyric; or the discourse looks one way and rows another, and more minds the design than its own truth; and most commonly will be so ordered, that it shall please the company, (and that truth or honest plainness seldom does,) or there is a bias in it, which the more of weight and transportation it hath, the less it hath of ingenuity. "Non credo auguribus qui aureis rebus divinant;" like soothsayers, men speak fine words to serve ends, and then they are not believed, or at last are found liars, and such discourses are built up to serve the ministries or pleasures of the company, but nothing else. Pride and flattery, malice and spite, self-love and vanity, these usually wait upon much speaking; and the reward of it is, that the persons grow contemptible and troublesome, they engage in quarrels, and are troubled to answer exceptions; some will mistake them, and some will not believe them, and it will be impossible that the mind should be perpetually present to a perpetual talker, but they will forget truth and themselves, and their own relations.

[i] Supellex ejus garrulitas.—Comœd.

[k] Muliebre ingenium proluvium.—Accius in Andromedâ. Sola laboranti potuit succurrere lunæ.—JUVEN.

And upon this account it is, that the doctors of the primitive church do literally expound those minatory words of our blessed Saviour; "Verily I say unto you, of every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account at the day of judgment."[l] And by "idle words," they understand, such as are not useful to edification and instruction. So St. Basil: "So great is the danger of an idle word, that though a word be in its own kind good, yet, unless it be directed to the edification of faith, he is not free from danger that speaks it:"[m] to this purpose are the words of St. Gregory; "While the tongue is not restrained from idle words," "ad temeritatem stultæ increpationis efferatur," "it is made wild, or may be brought forth to rashness and folly:" and therein lies the secret of the reproof: "A periculo liber non est, et ad temeritatem efferatur," "the man is not free from danger, and he may grow rash,"[n] and foolish, and run into crimes, whilst he gives his tongue the reins, and lets it wander, and so it may be fit to be reproved, though in its nature it were innocent. I deny not, but sometimes they are more severe. St. Gregory calls every word "vain" or "idle," "quod aut ratione justæ necessitatis, aut intentione piæ utilitatis caret:"[o] and St. Jerome calls it "vain," "quod sine utilitate et loquentis dicitur et audientis," "which profits neither the speaker nor the hearer."[p] The same is affirmed by St. Chrysostom[q] and Gregory Nyssen[r] upon Ecclesiastes; and the same seems intimated in the word *κενὸν ῥῆμα*, or *ῥῆμα ἀργὸν*, as it is in some copies, "every word that is idle, or *empty* of business." But, for the stating of the case of conscience, I have these things to say;

1. That the words of our blessed Saviour, being spoken to the Jews, were so certainly intended as they best and most commonly understood, and by "vain" they understood "false" or "lying," not "useless" or "imprudent;" and yet so, though our blessed Saviour hath not so severely forbidden every empty, insignificant discourse; and yet he hath forbidden every lie, though it be "in genere bonorum," as St. Basil's expression is; that is, "though it be in the intention charitable, or in the matter innocent."

2. "Of every idle word we shall give account;" but yet so, that sometimes the *κρῖμα*, "the judgment," shall fall upon the words, not upon the persons; they be hay and stubble, useless and impertinent, light and easy, the fire shall consume them, and himself shall escape with that loss; he shall then have no honour, no fair return for such discourses, but they shall with loss and prejudice be rejected and cast away.

3. If all unprofitable discourses be reckoned for idle words, and put upon the account, yet even the capacities of profit are so large and numerous, that no man hath cause to complain that his tongue is too much restrained by this severity. For in all the ways in which he can do himself good or his neighbour, he hath his liberty; he is only to secure the words from being directly criminal, and himself from being arrested with a passion, and then he may reckon it lawful, even upon the severest account, to discourse freely, while he can instruct, or while he can please, his neighbour;

Aut prodesse volunt, aut delectare——— HOR.

while himself gets a fair opinion and a good name, apt to serve honest and fair purposes; he may discourse himself into a friendship, or help to preserve it; he may serve the works of art or nature, of business public or private, the needs of his house, or the uses of mankind; he may increase learning, or confirm his notices, cast in his symbol of experience and observation, till the particulars may become a proverbial sentence and a rule; he may serve the ends of civility and popular addresses, or may instruct his brother or himself, by something, which, at that time, shall not be reduced to a precept by way of meditation, but is of itself apt at another time to do it; he may speak the praises of the Lord by discoursing of any of the works of creation, and himself or his brother may afterwards remember it to that purpose; he may counsel or teach, reprove or admonish, call to mind a precept, or disgrace a vice, reprove it by a parable or a story, by way of idea or witty representment; and he that can find talk beyond all this, discourse that cannot become useful in any one of these purposes, may well be called a prating man, and expect to give account of his folly, in the days of recompence.

4. Although, in this latitude, a man's discourses may be free and safe from judgment, yet the man is not, unless himself design it to good and wise purposes; not always actually, but by an habitual and general purpose. Concerning which he may, by these measures, best take his accounts.

1. That he be sure to speak nothing that may minister to a vice, willingly and by observation.

2. If any thing be of a suspicious and dubious nature, that he decline to publish it.

3. That, by a prudent moral care, he watch over his words, that he do none of this injury and unworthiness.

4. That he offer up to God in his prayers all his words, and then look to it, that he speak nothing unworthy to be offered.

5. That he often interweave discourses of religion, and glorifications of God, instructions to his brother, and ejaculations of his own, something or other not only to sanctify the order of his discourses, but to call him back into retirement and sober thoughts, lest he wander and be carried off too far into the wild regions of impertinence; and this Zeno calls *γλῶσσαν εἰς νοῦν ὑποβρέξαι*, "to dip our tongues in understanding." In all other cases the rule is good, *Ἢ λέγε τὶ σιγῆς κρεῖττον, ἢ σιγὴν ἔχε*, "Either keep silence, or speak something that is better than it;"[s] *ἢ σιγὴν καίριον ἢ λόγον ὠφέλιμον*, so Isocrates, consonantly enough to this evangelical precept; "a seasonable silence, or a profitable discourse," choose you whether; for whatsoever cometh of more, is sin, or else is folly at hand, and will be sin at distance.

[l] Matt. xii. 36.
[m] In Reg. brevior
[n] Lib. 7. Moral.
[o] C. 17. ubi sup.
[p] In Matt. xii.
[q] In Ps. cxviii.
[r] Cap. 1.
[s] Eurip.

5. This account is not to be taken by little traverses and intercourses of speech, but by greater measures, and more discernible portions, such as are commensurate to valuable portions of time; for however we are pleased to throw away our time, and are weary of many parts of it, yet are impatiently troubled when all is gone; yet we are as sure to account for every considerable portion of our time, as for every sum of money we receive; and in this it was, that St. Bernard gave caution, "Nemo parvi æstimet tempus, quod in verbis consumitur otiosis," "Let no man think it a light matter, that he spend his precious time in idle words;" [t] let no man be so weary of what flies away too fast, and cannot be recalled, as to use arts and devices to pass the time away in vanity, which might be rarely spent in the interests of eternity. Time is given us to repent in, to appease the Divine anger, to prepare for and hasten to the society of angels, to stir up our slackened wills, and enkindle our cold devotions, to weep for our daily iniquities, and to sigh after, and work for, the restitution of our lost inheritance; and the reward is very inconsiderable, that exchanges all this for the pleasure of a voluble tongue; and indeed this is an evil, that cannot be avoided by any excuse that can be made for words, that are, in any sense, idle,—though, in all senses of their own nature and proper relations, they be innocent. They are a throwing away something of that, which is to be expended for eternity, and put on degrees of folly, according as they are tedious and expensive of time to no good purposes. I shall not after all this need to reckon more of the evil consequents to the vain and great talker; but if these already reckoned were not a heap big enough, I could easily add this great evil; that the talking man makes himself artificially deaf, being like a man in the steeple when the bells ring, you talk to a deaf man, though you speak wisely;

Οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην μὴ στέγοντα πιμπλάναι
Σοφοὺς ἐπαντλῶν ἀνδρὶ μὴ σοφῷ λόγους. EURIP.

Good counsel is lost upon him, and he hath served all his ends when he pours out whatsoever he took in; for he therefore loaded his vessel, that he might pour it forth into the sea.

These and many more evils, and the perpetual unavoidable necessity of sinning by much talking, hath given great advantages to silence, and made it to be esteemed an act of discipline and great religion. St. Romualdus, upon the Syrian mountain, severely kept a seven years' silence: and Thomas Cantipratensis tells of a religious person, in a monastery in Brabant, that spake not one word in sixteen years. But they are greater examples which Palladius tells of; Ammona, who lived with three thousand brethren in so great silence, as if he were an anchoret; but Theona was silent for thirty years together; and Johannes, surnamed Silentiarius, was silent for forty-seven years. But this morosity and sullenness are so far from being imitable and laudable, that if there were no direct prevarication of any commands expressed or intimated in Scripture, yet it must certainly either draw with it, or be itself, an infinite omission of duty; especially in the external glorifications of God, in the institution or advantages of others, in thanksgiving and public offices, and in all the effects and emanations of spiritual mercy. This was to make amends for committing many sins by omitting many duties; and, instead of digging out the offending eye, to pluck out both, that they might neither see the scandal nor the duty; for fear of seeing what they should not, to shut their eyes against all light. It was more prudent which was reported of St. Gregory Nazianzen, who made silence an act of discipline, and kept it a whole Lent in his religious retirements, "Cujus facti mei si causam quæris," (said he in his account he gives of it,) "idcirco à sermone prorsus abstinui, ut sermonibus meis moderari discam;" "I then abstained wholly, that all the year after I might be more temperate in my talk." This was in him an act of caution; but how apt it was to minister to his purpose of a moderated speech for the future, is not certain; nor the philosophy of it, and natural efficacy, easy to be apprehended. It was also practised by way of penance, with indignation against the follies of the tongue, and the itch of prating; so to chastise that petulant member, as if there were a great pleasure in prating, which when it grew inordinate, it was to be restrained and punished like other lusts. I remember it was reported of St. Paul the hermit, scholar of St. Anthony, that, having once asked whether Christ or the old prophets were first, he grew so ashamed of his foolish question, that he spake not a word for three years following: and Sulpitius, as St. Jerome reports of him, being deceived by the Pelagians, spoke some fond things, and, repenting of it, held his tongue to his dying day, "ut peccatum quod loquendo contraxerat, tacendo penitus emendaret." Though the pious mind is in such actions highly to be regarded, yet I am no way persuaded of the prudence of such a deadness and Libitinarian religion;

Murmura cum secum et rabiosa silentia rodunt,

so such importune silence was called, and understood to be a degree of stupidity and madness; for so physicians, among the signs of that disease in dogs, place their not barking; and yet, although the excess and unreasonableness of this may be well chastised by such a severe reproof, yet it is certain, in silence there is wisdom, and there may be deep religion. So Aretæus, describing the life of a studious man, among others, he inserts this, they are ἄχροοι, καὶ ἐν νεότητι γηραλέοι, καὶ ὑπ' ἐννοίας κωφοί· "without colour, pale and wise when they are young, and, by reason of their knowledge, silent" as mutes, and dumb as the Seriphian frogs. And indeed it is certain, great knowledge, if it be without vanity, is the most severe bridle of the tongue. For so have I heard, that all the noises and prating of the pool, the croaking of frogs and toads, is hushed and appeased upon the instant of bringing upon them the light of a candle or torch. Every beam of reason and ray of knowledge

[t] Serm. de Triplici Custodiâ.

checks the dissolutions of the tongue. But "Ut quisque contemptissimus et maximè ludibrio est, ita solutissimæ linguæ est," said Seneca; "Every man, as he is a fool and contemptible, so his tongue is hanged loose;" being like a bell, in which there is nothing but tongue and noise.

Silence therefore is the cover of folly, or the effect of wisdom; it is also religious; and the greatest mystic rites of any institution are ever the most solemn and the most silent; the words in use are almost made synonymous: "There was silence made in heaven for awhile," said St. John, who noted it upon occasion of a great solemnity and mysterious worshippings or revelations to be made there. Ἦ μάλα τὶς θεὸς ἔνδον, "One of the gods is within," said Telemachus; upon occasion of which his father reproved his talking.

Σίγα, καὶ μετὰ σὸν νόον ἴσχανε, μηδ' ἐρέεινε·
Αὕτη τοι δίκη ἐστὶ θεῶν, οἳ Ὄλυμπον ἔχουσιν. Odys. τ.

"Be thou also silent and say little; let thy soul be in thy hand, and under command; for this is the rite of the gods above." And I remember, that when Aristophanes[u] describes the religion in the temple of Æsculapius, ὁ πρόσπολος, εἰπὼν, ἦν τις αἴσθηται ψόφου, Σιγᾶν: "The priest commanded great silence when the mysteriousness was nigh;" and so among the Romans:

Ite igitur, pueri, linguis animisque faventes,
Sertaque delubris et farra imponite cultris.

But now, although silence is become religious, and is wise, and reverend, and severe, and safe, and quiet, ἄδιψος, καὶ ἄλυπος, καὶ ἀνώδυνος, as Hippocrates affirms of it, "without thirst, and trouble, and anguish;" yet it must be καίριος, it must be "seasonable," and just, not commenced upon chance or humour, not sullen and ill-natured, not proud and full of fancy, not pertinacious and dead, not mad and uncharitable, "nam sic etiam tacuisse nocet." He that is silent in a public joy hath no portion in the festivity, or no thankfulness to him that gave the cause of it. And though, of all things in the world, a prating religion, and much talk in holy things, does most profane the mysteriousness of it, and dismantles its regards, and makes cheap its reverence, and takes off fear and awfulness, and makes it loose and garish, like the laughters of drunkenness, yet even in religion there are seasons to speak; and it was sometimes "pain and grief" to David to be silent; but yet, although tedious and dead silence hath not a just measure of praise and wisdom; yet the worst silence of a religious person is more tolerable and innocent, than the usual pratings of the looser and foolish men. "Pone, Domine, custodiam ori meo et ostium circumstantiæ labiis meis," said David; "Put a guard, O Lord, unto my mouth, and a door unto my lips;" upon which St. Gregory said well, "Non parietem, sed ostium petit, quod viz. aperitur et clauditur;" "He did not ask for a wall, but for a door; a door that might open and shut:" and it were well it were so indeed: "Labia tua sicut vitta coccinea;" so Christ commends his spouse in the Canticles; "Thy lips are like a scarlet hair-lace," that is, tied up with modesty from folly and dissolution. For however that few people offend in silence and keeping the door shut too much, yet, in opening it too hastily, and speaking too much and too foolishly, no man is without a load of guiltiness; and some mouths, like the gates of death,

Noctes atque dies patent—

"are open night and day;" and he who is so, cannot be innocent. It is said of Cicero, he never spake a word which himself would fain have recalled, he spake nothing that repented him. St. Austin, in his seventh epistle to Marcellinus, says, it was the saying of a fool and a sot, not of a wise man; and yet I have read the same thing to have been spoken by the famous Abbot Pambo, in the primitive church; and if it could be well said of this man, who was sparing and severe in talk, it is certain it could not be said of the other, who was a talking, bragging person.

[u] Plutus.

SERMON XXIII.

PART II.

THE consideration hitherto hath been of the immoderation and general excess in speaking, without descending to particular cases: but because it is a principle and parent of much evil, it is with great caution to be cured, and the evil consequents will quickly disband. But when we draw near to give counsel, we shall find, that upon a talking person scarce any medicine will stick.

1. Plutarch advises, that "such men should give themselves to writing," that, making an issue in the arm, it should drain the floods of the head; supposing, that if the humour were any way vented, the tongue might be brought to reason. But the experience of the world hath confuted this; and when Ligurinus had writ a poem, he talked of it to all companies he came in;[a] but, however, it can be no hurt to try; for some have been cured of bleeding at the nose, by opening a vein in the arm.

2. Some advise, that such persons should keep company with their betters, with grave, and wise, and great persons, before whom men do not usually bring forth all, but the better parts of their discourse: and this is apt to give assistance by the help of modesty; and might do well, if men were not apt to learn to talk more in the society of the aged, and, out of a desire to seem wise and knowing, be apt to speak before their opportunity.

3. Consideration of the dangers and consequent evils hath some efficacy in nature to restrain our looser talkings, by the help of fear and prudent apprehensions. Ælian tells of the geese flying over

[a] Mart.

the mountain Taurus;[b] that, for fear of eagles, nature hath taught them to carry stones in their mouths, till they be past their danger; care of ourselves, desire of reputation, appetite of being believed, love of societies and fair compliances, fear of quarrels and misinterpretation, of law-suits and affronts, of scorn and contempt, of infinite sins, and consequently the intolerable wrath of God; these are the great endearments of prudent and temperate speech.

Some advise, that such persons should change their speech into business and action: and it were well if they changed it into any good thing, for then the evil were cured; but action and business are not the cure alone, unless we add solitariness; for the experience of this last age hath made us to feel, that companies of working people have nursed up a strange religion; the first, second, and third part of which, is talking and folly, save only that mischief, and pride, and fighting, came in the retinue. But he that works, and works alone, he hath employment, and no opportunity. But this is but a cure of the symptom and temporary effect; but the disease may remain yet. Therefore,

5. Some advise, that the business and employment of the tongue be changed into religion; and if there be a "pruritus," or "itch" of talking, let it be in matters of religion, in prayers and pious discourses, in glorifications of God, and the wise sayings of Scripture and holy men; this indeed will secure the material part, and make that the discourses in their nature shall be innocent. But I fear this cure will either be improper, or insufficient. For in prayers, multitude of words is sometimes foolish, very often dangerous; and, of all things in the world, we must be careful we bring not to God "the sacrifice of fools;" and the talking much of the things of Scripture hath ministered often to vanity and divisions. But therefore, whoever will use this remedy must never dwell long upon any one instance, but by variety of holy duties entertain himself; for he may easily exceed his rule in any thing, but in speaking honourably of God, and in that let him enlarge himself as he can; he shall never come to equal, much less to exceed, that which is infinite.

6. But some men will never be cured without a cancer or a quinsy; and such persons are taught by all men what to do; for if they would avoid all company, as willingly as company avoids them, they might quickly have a silence great as midnight, and prudent as the Spartan brevity. But God's grace is sufficient to all that will make use of it; and there is no way for the cure of this evil, but the direct obeying of a counsel, and submitting to the precept, and fearing the Divine threatening: always remembering, that "of every word a man speaks, he shall give account at the day of judgment;" I pray God show us all a mercy in that day, and forgive us the sins of the tongue. Amen.

"Cito lutum colligit amnis exundans," said St. Ambrose; let your language be restrained within its proper channels and measures; for, "if the river swells over the banks, it leaves nothing but dirt and filthiness behind;" and, besides the great evils and mischiefs of a wicked tongue,—the vain tongue, and the trifling conversation, hath some proper evils; 1. "Stultiloquium," or "speaking like a fool;" 2. "Scurrilitas," or "immoderate and absurd jesting:" and, 3. Revealing secrets.

1. Concerning stultiloquy, it is to be observed, that the masters of spiritual life mean not, the talk and useless babble of weak and ignorant persons; because in their proportion they may serve their little mistaken ends of civility and humanity, as seemingly to them, as the strictest and most observed words of the wiser; if it be their best, their folly may be pitied, but not reproved; and to them there is no caution to be added, but that it were well if they would put the bridle into the hands of another, who may give them check when themselves cannot; and no wisdom can be required or useful to them, but to suspect themselves and choose to be conducted by another. For so the little birds and laborious bees,—who, having no art and power of contrivance, no distinction of time, or foresight of new necessities, yet, being guided by the hand, and counselled by the wisdom, of the Supreme Power, their Lord, and ours,—do things with greater niceness and exactness of art, and regularity of time, and certainty of effect, than the wise counsellor, who, standing at the back of the prince's chair, guesses imperfectly, and counsels timorously, and thinks by interest, and determines extrinsical events by inward and unconcerning principles; because these have understanding, but it is less than the infinity of accidents and contingencies without; but the other having none, are wholly guided by him, that knows and determines all things: so it is in the imperfect designs and actions and discourses of weaker people; if they can be ruled by an understanding without, when they have none within, they shall receive this advantage, that their own passions shall not transport their minds, and the divisions and weakness of their own sense and notices shall not make them uncertain and indeterminate; and the measures they shall walk by, shall be disinterest, and even, and dispassionate, and full of observation.

But that which is here meant by stultiloquy, or foolish speaking, is the "lubricum verbi," as St. Ambrose calls it, "the slipping with the tongue;" which prating people often suffer, whose discourses betray the vanity of their spirit, and discover "the hidden man of the heart." For no prudence is a sufficient guard, or can always stand "in excubiis," "still watching," when a man is in perpetual floods of talk: for prudence attends after the manner of an angel's ministry; it is despatched on messages from God, and drives away enemies, and places guards, and calls upon the man to awake, and bids him send out spies and observers, and then goes about his own ministries above: but an angel does not sit by a man, as a nurse by the baby's cradle, watching every motion, and the lighting of a fly upon the child's lip: and so is prudence: it gives rules, and proportions out our measures, and pre-

[b] Ἕκαστος λίθον ἐνδακόντες, ὥσπερ οὖν ἐμβαλόντες σφίσι στόμιον, διαπέτονται.

scribes us cautions, and, by general influences, orders our particulars; but he that is given to talk, cannot be secured by all this; the emissions of his tongue are beyond the general figures and lines of rule; and he can no more be wise in every period of a long and running talk, than a lutanist can deliberate and make every motion of his hand by the division of his notes, to be chosen and distinctly voluntary. And hence it comes, that at every corner of the mouth a folly peeps out, or a mischief creeps in. A little pride and a great deal of vanity will soon escape, while the man minds the sequel of his talk, and not that ugliness of humour, which the severe man, that stood by, did observe, and was ashamed of. Do not many men talk themselves into anger, screwing up themselves with dialogues of fancy, till they forget the company and themselves? And some men hate to be contradicted, or interrupted, or to be discovered in their folly; and some men being a little conscious, and not striving to amend by silence, they make it worse by discourse; a long story of themselves,—a tedious praise of another collaterally to do themselves advantage,—a declamation against a sin to undo the person, or oppress the reputation, of their neighbour,—unseasonable repetition of that which neither profits nor delights,—trifling contentions about a goat's beard, or the blood of an oyster,—anger and animosity, spite and rage,—scorn and reproach begun upon questions which concern neither of the litigants,—fierce disputations,—strivings for what is past, and for what shall never be: these are the events of the loose and unwary tongue; which are like flies and gnats upon the margin of a pool; they do not sting like an asp, or bite deep as a bear; yet they can vex a man into a fever and impatience, and make him incapable of rest and counsel.

2. The second is scurrility, or foolish jesting. This the apostle so joins with the former *μωρολογία*, "foolish speaking, and jestings which are not convenient,"[b] that some think this to be explicative of the other, and that St. Paul, using the word *εὐτραπελία*, (which all men before his time used in a good sense,) means not that which indeed is witty and innocent, pleasant and apt for institution, but that which fools and parasites call *εὐτραπελία*, but indeed is *μωρολογία*; what they call facetiousness and pleasant wit, is indeed to all wise persons a mere stultiloquy, or talking like a fool; and that kind of jesting is forbidden. And indeed I am induced fully to this understanding of St. Paul's words, by the conjunctive particle *ἤ*, which he uses, *καὶ αἰσχρότης καὶ μωρολογία, ἢ εὐτραπελία*, "and filthiness and foolish talking, *or* jesting;" just as in the succeeding verse, he joins *ἀκαθαρσία ἢ πλεονεξία*, "uncleanness (so we read it) *or* covetousness;" one explicates the other; for by "covetousness" is meant any "defraudation;" *πλεονέκτης*, "fraudator," so St. Cyprian renders it: and *πλεονεκτεῖν* St. Jerome derives from *πλέον ἔχειν*, "to take more than a man should;" and therefore, when St. Paul said, "Let no man circumvent his brother in any matter," he expounds it of "adultery;" and in this very place he renders *πλεονεξίαν*, "stuprum," "lust;" and, indeed, it is usual in Scripture, that covetousness,—being so universal, so original a crime, such a prolific sin,—be called by all the names of those sins by which it is either punished, or to which it tempts, or whereby it is nourished; and as here it is called "uncleanness," or "corruption;" so, in another place, it is called "idolatry." But to return; this jesting, which St. Paul reproves, is a direct *μωρολογία*, or the jesting of mimics and players, that of the fool in the play, which, in those times, and long before, and long after, were of that licentiousness, that they would abuse Socrates or Aristides: and because the rabble were the laughers, they knew how to make them roar aloud with a slovenly and wanton word, when they understood not the salt and ingenuity of a witty and useful answer or reply; as is to be seen in the intertextures of Aristophanes' comedies. But in pursuance of this of St. Paul, the fathers of the church have been very severe in the censures of this liberty. St. Ambrose forbids all: "Non solum profusos, sed etiam omnes jocos declinandos arbitror;" "Not only the looser jestings, but even all, are to be avoided:"[c] nay, "licet interdum joca honesta et suavia sint, tamen ab ecclesiæ horrent regula," "the church allows them not, though they be otherwise honest and pleasant; for how can we use those things we find not in Holy Scripture?" St. Basil gives reason for this severity: "Jocus facit animam remissam et erga præcepta Dei negligentem;" and, indeed, that cannot be denied; those persons whose souls are dispersed and ungathered by reason of a wanton humour to intemperate jesting, are apt to be trifling in their religion. St. Jerome is of the same opinion, and adds a commandment of a full authority, if at least the record was right; for he quotes a saying of our blessed Saviour out of the Gospel of the Nazarenes; "Nunquam læti sitis, nisi cum fratrem vestrum in charitate videritis;" "Never be merry, but when you see your brother in charity:"[d] and when you are merry, St. James hath appointed a proper expression of it, and a fair entertainment to the passion; "If any man be merry, let him sing psalms." But St. Bernard, who is also strict in this particular, yet he adds the temper. Though jestings be not fit for a christian, "Interdum tamen si incidant, ferendæ fortassis, referendæ nunquam: magis interveniendum caute et prudenter nugacitati:" "If they seldom happen, they are to be borne, but never to be returned and made a business of; but we must rather interpose warily and prudently to hinder the growth and progress of the trifle."

But concerning this case of conscience, we are to remember, these holy persons found jesting to be a trade;[e] such were the "ridicularii" among the Romans, and the *γελωτοποιοὶ* among the Greeks; and this trade, besides its own unworthiness, was mingled with infinite impieties; and in the institution, and in all the circumstances of its practice, was not only against all prudent severity, but against modesty and chastity, and was a license in disparagement of virtue; and the most excellent things

[b] Ephes. v. 4. [c] Lib. de Offic. [d] In ep. ap Ephes.

[e] Vide S. Chrysost. Homil. 6. in Matth.

and persons were by it undervalued; so that in this throng of evil circumstances finding a humour placed, which, without infinite wariness, could never pretend to innocence, it is no wonder they forbade all; and so also did St. Paul upon the same account. And in the same state of reproof to this day, are all that do as they did: such as are professed jesters, people that play the fool for money, whose employment and study is to unclothe themselves of the covers of reason or modesty, that they may be laughed at. And let it be considered, how miserable every sinner is, if he does not deeply and truly repent; and when the man is wet with tears, and covered with sorrow, crying out mightily against his sins, how ugly will it look when this is remembered, the next day, that he plays the fool, and raises his laughter louder than his prayers and yesterday's groans, for no interest but that he may eat! A penitent and a jester is like a Grecian piece of money, on which were stamped a Helena on one side, and a Hecuba on the other, a rose and a deadly aconite, a Paris and an Æsop,—nothing was more contrary; and upon this account this folly was reproved by St. Jerome; "Verum et hæc à sanctis viris penitus propellenda, quibus magis convenit stere atque lugere;" "Weeping, and penitential sorrow, and the sweet troubles of pity and compassion, become a holy person,"[f] much better than a scurrilous tongue. But the whole state of this question is briefly this.

1. If jesting be unseasonable, it is also intolerable; Γέλως ἄκαιρος ἐν βροτοῖς δεινὸν κακόν.

2. If it be immoderate, it is criminal, and a little thing here makes the access; it is so in the confines of folly, that, as soon as it is out of doors, it is in the regions of sin.

3. If it be in an ordinary person, it is dangerous; but if in an eminent, a consecrated, a wise, and extraordinary person, it is scandalous. "Inter sæculares nugæ sunt, in ore Sacerdotis blasphemiæ," so St. Bernard.

4. If the matter be not of an indifferent nature, it becomes sinful by giving countenance to a vice, or making virtue to become ridiculous.

5. If it be not watched that it complies with all that hear, it becomes offensive and injurious.

6. If it be not intended to fair and lawful purposes, it is sour in the using.

7. If it be frequent, it combines and clusters into a formal sin.

8. If it mingles with any sin, it puts on the nature of that new unworthiness, beside the proper ugliness of the thing itself; and, after all these, when can it be lawful or apt for christian entertainment?

The Ecclesiastical History reports, that many jests passed between St. Anthony, the father of the hermits, and his scholar St. Paul; and St. Hilarion is reported to have been very pleasant, and of facete, sweet, and more lively conversation; and, indeed, plaisance, and joy, and a lively spirit, and a pleasant conversation, and the innocent caresses of a charitable humanity, is not forbidden; "Plenum tamen suavitatis et gratiæ sermonem non esse indecorum," St. Ambrose affirmed; and here in my text our conversation is commanded to be such, ἵνα δῷ χάριν, "that it may minister grace," that is, favour, complaisance, cheerfulness; and be acceptable and pleasant to the hearer: and so must be our conversation; it must be as far from sullenness as it ought to be from lightness, and a cheerful spirit is the best convoy for religion; and though sadness does in some cases become a christian, as being an index of a pious mind, of compassion, and a wise, proper resentment of things, yet it serves but one end, being useful in the only instance of repentance; and hath done its greatest works, not when it weeps and sighs, but when it hates and grows careful against sin. But cheerfulness and a festival spirit fill the soul full of harmony, it composes music for churches and hearts, it makes and publishes glorifications of God, it produces thankfulness, and serves the end of charity: and when the oil of gladness runs over, it makes bright and tall emissions of light and holy fires, reaching up to a cloud, and making joy round about: and therefore, since it is so innocent, and may be so pious and full of holy advantage, whatsoever can innocently minister to this holy joy, does set forward the work of religion and charity. And, indeed, charity itself, which is the vertical top of all religion, is nothing else but a union of joys, concentred in the heart, and reflected from all the angels of our life and intercourse. It is a rejoicing in God, a gladness in our neighbour's good, a pleasure in doing good, a rejoicing with him; and without love we cannot have any joy at all. It is this that makes children to be a pleasure, and friendship to be so noble and divine a thing; and upon this account it is certain, that all that which can innocently make a man cheerful, does also make him charitable; for grief, and age, and sickness, and weariness, these are peevish and troublesome; but mirth and cheerfulness are content, and civil, and compliant, and communicative, and love to do good, and swell up to felicity only upon the wings of charity. Upon this account, here is pleasure enough for a christian at present; and if a facete discourse, and an amicable friendly mirth, can refresh the spirit, and take it off from the vile temptation of peevish, despairing, uncomplying melancholy, it must needs be innocent and commendable. And we may as well be refreshed by a clean and a brisk discourse, as by the air of Campanian wines; and our faces and our heads may as well be anointed and look pleasant with wit and friendly intercourse, as with the fat of the balsam-tree; and such a conversation no wise man ever did or ought to reprove. But when the jest hath teeth and nails, biting or scratching our brother,—when it is loose and wanton,—when it is unseasonable,—and much, or many,—when it serves ill purposes, or spends better time,—then it is the drunkenness of the soul, and makes the spirit fly away, seeking for a temple where the mirth and the music are solemn and religious.

But, above all the abuses which ever dishonoured the tongues of men, nothing more deserves the

[f] Ubi supra.

whip of an exterminating angel, or the stings of scorpions, than profane jesting: which is a bringing of the Spirit of God to partake of the follies of a man; as if it were not enough for a man to be a fool, but the wisdom of God must be brought into those horrible scenes: he that makes a jest of the words of Scripture, or of holy things, plays with thunder, and kisses the mouth of a cannon just as it belches fire and death; he stakes heaven at spurn-point, and trips cross and pile whether ever he shall see the face of God or no; he laughs at damnation, while he had rather lose God than lose his jest; nay, (which is the horror of all,) he makes a jest of God himself, and the Spirit of the Father and the Son to become ridiculous. Some men use to read Scripture on their knees, and many with their heads uncovered, and all good men with fear and trembling, with reverence and grave attention. "Search the Scriptures, for therein ye hope to have life eternal;" and, "All Scripture is written by inspiration of God, and is fit for instruction, for reproof, for exhortation, for doctrine," not for jesting; but he that makes that use of it, had better part with his eyes in jest, and give his heart to make a tennis-ball; and, that I may speak the worst thing in the world of it, it is as like the material part of the sin against the Holy Ghost, as jeering of a man is to abusing him; and no man can use it but he, that wants wit and manners, as well as he wants religion.

3. The third instance of the vain, trifling conversation and immoderate talking, is, revealing secrets; which is a dismantling and renting of the robe from the privacies of human intercourse; and it is worse than denying to restore that which was intrusted to our charge; for this not only injures his neighbour's right, but throws it away, and exposes it to his enemy; it is a denying to give a man his own arms, and delivering them to another, by whom he shall suffer mischief. He that intrusts a secret to his friend, goes thither as to a sanctuary, and to violate the rites of that is sacrilege, and profanation of friendship, which is the sister of religion, and the mother of secular blessing; a thing so sacred, that it changes a kingdom into a church, and makes interest to be piety, and justice to become religion. But this mischief grows according to the subject-matter and its effect; and the tongue of a blabber may crush a man's bones, or break his fortune upon her own wheel; and whatever the effect be, yet of itself it is the betraying of a trust, and, by reproach, oftentimes passes on to intolerable calamities, like a criminal to his scaffold through the execrable gates of cities; and, though it is infinitely worse that the secret is laid open out of spite or treachery, yet it is more foolish when it is discovered for no other end but to serve the itch of talking, or to seem to know, or to be accounted worthy of a trust; for so some men open their cabinets, to show only that a treasure is laid up, and that themselves were valued by their friend, when they were thought capable of a secret, but they shall be so no more, for he that by that means goes in pursuit of reputation, loses the substance by snatching at the shadow, and, by desiring to be thought worthy of a secret, proves himself unworthy of friendship or society. D'Avila tells of a French Marquis, young and fond, to whom the Duke of Guise had conveyed notice of the intended massacre; which when he had whispered into the king's ear, where there was no danger of publication, but only would seem a person worthy of such a trust, he was instantly murdered, lest a vanity like that might unlock so horrid a mystery.

I have nothing more to add concerning this, but that if this vanity happens in the matters of religion, it puts on some new circumstances of deformity: and if he, that ministers to the souls of men, and is appointed to "restore him that is overtaken in a fault, shall publish the secrets of a conscience, he prevaricates the bands of nature and religion; instead of a father, he turns "an accuser," a διάβολος, he weakens the hearts of the penitent, and drives the repenting man from his remedy by making it to be intolerable; and so religion becomes a scandal, and his duty is made his disgrace, and Christ's yoke does bow his head unto the ground, and the secrets of the Spirit pass into the flames of the world, and all the sweetnesses by which the severity of the duty are alleviated and made easy, are imbittered and become venomous by the tongue of a talking fool. Valerius Soranus was put to death by the old and braver Romans, "ob meritum profanæ vocis, quòd, contra interdictum, Romæ nomen eloqui fuit ausus;" "because by prating he profaned the secret of their religion, and told abroad that name of the city which the Tuscan rites had commanded to be concealed, lest the enemies of the people should call from them their tutelar gods, which they could not do but by telling the proper relation. And in christianity, all nations have consented to disgrace that priest, who loves the pleasure of a fool's tongue before the charity of souls, and the arts of the Spirit, and the nobleness of the religion; and they have inflicted upon him all the censures of the church, which in the capacity of an ecclesiastical person he can suffer.

These I reckon as the proper evils of the vain and trifling tongue; for though the effect passes into further mischief, yet the original is weakness and folly, and all that unworthiness which is not yet arrived at malice. But hither also, upon the same account, some other irregularities of speech are reducible, which, although they are of a mixed nature, yet are properly acted by a vain and loose tongue; and therefore here may be considered not improperly.

1. The first is common swearing, against which St. Chrysostom spends twenty homilies: and by the number and weight of arguments hath left this testimony, that it is a foolish vice, but hard to be cured; infinitely unreasonable, but strangely prevailing; almost as much without remedy, as it is without pleasure; for it enters first by folly, and grows by custom, and dwells with carelessness, and is nursed by irreligion, and want of the fear of God; it profanes the most holy things, and mingles dirt with the beams of the sun, follies and trifling talk interweaved and knit together with the sacred name

of God; it placeth the most excellent of things in the meanest and basest circumstances, it brings the secrets of heaven into the streets, dead men's bones into the temple; nothing is a greater sacrilege than to prostitute the great name of God to the petulancy of an idle tongue, and blend it as an expletive to fill up the emptiness of a weak discourse. The name of God is so sacred, so mighty, that it rends mountains, it opens the bowels of the deepest rocks, it casts out devils, and makes hell to tremble, and fills all the regions of heaven with joy; the name of God is our strength and confidence, the object of our worshippings, and the security of all our hopes; and when God had given himself a name, and immured it with dread and reverence, like the garden of Eden with the swords of cherubim, and none durst speak it but he whose lips were hallowed, and that at holy and solemn times, in a most holy and solemn place; I mean the high priest of the Jews at the solemnities when he entered into the sanctuary,—then he taught all the world the majesty and veneration of his name; and therefore it was that God made restraints upon our conceptions and expressions of him: and, as he was infinitely curious, that, from all the appearances he made to them, they should not depict or engrave any image of him; so he took care that even the tongue should be restrained, and not be too free in forming images and representments of his name; and therefore, as God drew their eyes from vanity, by putting his name amongst them, and representing no shape; so even when he had put his name amongst them, he took it off from the tongue, and placed it before the eye; for Jehovah was so written on the priest's mitre, that all might see and read, but none speak it but the priest. But besides all this, there is one great thing concerning the name of God, beyond all that can be spoken or imagined else; and that is, that when God the Father was pleased to pour forth all his glories, and imprint them upon his holy Son in his exaltation, it was by giving him his holy name, the Tetragrammaton, or Jehovah made articulate; to signify "God manifested in the flesh;" and so he wore the character of God, and became the bright image of his person.

Now all these great things concerning the name of God, are infinite reproofs of common and vain swearing by it; God's name is left us here to pray by, to hope in, to be the instrument and conveyance of our worshippings, to be the witness of truth and the judge of secrets, the end of strife and the avenger of perjury, the discerner of right and the severe exacter of all wrongs; and shall all this be unhallowed by impudent talking of God without sense, or fear, or notices, or reverence, or observation?

One thing more I have to add against this vice of a foolish tongue, and that is, that, as much prating fills the discourse with lying, so this trifling swearing changes every trifling lie into a horrid perjury; and this was noted by St. James; "But, above all things, swear not at all," ἵνα μὴ ὑπὸ κρίσιν πέσητε, "that ye may not fall into condemnation;"[g] so we read it, following the Arabian, Syrian, and Latin books, and some Greek copies; and it signifies, that all such swearing, and putting fierce appendages to every word, like great iron bars to a straw basket or the curtains of a tent, is a direct condemnation of ourselves: for while we by much talking regard truth too little, and yet bind up our trifles with so severe a band, we are condemned by our own words; for men are made to expect what you bound upon them by an oath, and account your trifle to be serious; of which when you fail, you have given sentence against yourself: and this is agreeable to those words of our blessed Saviour, "Of every idle word you shall give account;"[h]—"for by thy words thou shalt be condemned, and by thy words thou shalt be justified." But there is another reading of these words, which hath great emphasis and power, in this article, "Swear not at all," ἵνα μὴ εἰς ὑπόκρισιν πέσητε, "that you may not fall *into hypocrisy*," that is, into the disreputation of a lying, deceiving, cozening person: for he that will put his oath to every common word, makes no great matter of an oath; for in swearing commonly, he must needs sometimes swear without consideration, and therefore without truth; and he that does so, in any company, tells the world he makes no great matter of being perjured.

All these things put together may take off our wonder at St. James's expression, of πρὸ πάντων, "*above all things* swear not;" it is a thing so highly to be regarded, and yet is so little considered, that it is hard to say whether there be in the world any instance, in which men are so careless of their danger and damnation, as in this.

2. The next appendage of vain and trifling speech is contention, wrangling, and perpetual talk, proceeding from the spirit of contradiction: "Profert enim mores plerumque oratio, et animi secreta detegit. Nec sine causâ Græci prodiderunt, 'Ut vivat, quemque etiam dicere,'" said Quintillian: "For the most part, a man's words betray his manners, and unlock the secrets of the mind: and it was not without cause that the Greeks said, 'As a man lives, so he speaks;'" for so indeed Menander, ἀνδρὸς χαρακτὴρ ἐκ λόγου γνωρίζεται; and Aristides, οἷος ὁ τρόπος, τοιοῦτος καὶ ὁ λόγος: so that it is a sign of a peevish, an angry, and quarrelling disposition, to be disputative, and busy in questions, and impertinent oppositions.

You shall meet with some men, (such were the sceptics, and such were the Academics, of old,) who will not endure any man shall be of their opinion, and will not suffer men to speak truth, or to consent to their own propositions, but will put every man to fight for his own possessions, disturbing the rest of truth, and all the dwellings of unity and consent: "clamosum altercatorem," Quintilian calls such a one. This is περίσσευμα καρδίας, "an overflowing of the heart," and of the gall; and it makes men troublesome, and intricates all wise discourses, and throws a cloud upon the face of truth; and while men contend for truth, error, dressed in the same habit, slips into her chair, and all the litigants court her for the divine sister of wisdom. "Nimium al-

[g] Chap. v. 12.

[h] Matt. xii.

tercando veritas amittitur:" There is noise but no harmony, fighting but no victory, talking, but no learning: all are teachers, and are wilful, every man is angry, and without reason and without charity.

Ἔγχος ἔχων στόμα θοῦρον, ἔπος ξίφος, ἀσπίδα φωνὴν,

"Their mouth is a spear, their language is a two-edged sword, their throat is a shield," as Nonnus's expression is; and the clamours and noises of this folly is that which St. Paul reproves in this chapter; "Let all bitterness and clamour be put away." People that contend earnestly, talk loud; "Clamor equus est iræ; cum prostraveris, equitem dejeceris," saith St. Chrysostom; "Anger rides upon noise as upon a horse; still the noise and the rider is in the dirt;" and, indeed, so to do is an act of fine strength, and the cleanest spiritual force that can be exercised in this instance; and though it be hard, in the midst of a violent motion, instantly to stop, yet by strength and good conduct it may be done. But he whose tongue rides upon passion, and is spurred by violence and contention, is like a horse or mule without a bridle, and without understanding, τῶν δὲ κεκραγότων οὐδεὶς σώφρων ἐστὶ: "No person that is clamorous can be wise."

These are the vanities and evil fruits of the easy talker; the instances of a trifling, impertinent conversation; and yet, it is observable, that although the instances in the beginning be only vain, yet in the issue and effects they are troublesome and full of mischief; and, that we may perceive, that even all effusion and multitude of language and vainer talk cannot be innocent, we may observe that there are many good things which are wholly spoiled, if they do but touch the tongue; they are spoiled with speaking: such as is, the sweetest of all christian graces, humility,—and the noblest actions of humanity, the doing favours and acts of kindness. If you speak of them, you pay yourself, and lose your kindness; humility is by talking changed into pride and hypocrisy, and patience passes into peevishness, and secret trust into perfidiousness, and modesty into dissolution, and judgment into censure; but by silence, and a restrained tongue, all the first mischiefs are avoided, and all these graces preserved.

SERMON XXIV.

PART III.

OF SLANDER AND FLATTERY.

He that is twice asked a question, and then answers, is to be excused if he answers weakly: but he that speaks before he be asked, had need take care he speak wisely; for if he does not, he hath no excuse; and if he does, yet it loses half its beauty; and therefore, the old man gave good counsel in the comedy to the boy, ᾦ παῖ, σιώπα, πόλλ' ἔχει σιγὴ καλά:[a] the profits of a restrained modest tongue cannot easily be numbered, any more than the evils of an unbridled and dissolute. But they were but infant mischiefs, which for the most part we have already observed, as the issues of vain and idle talking; but there are two spirits worse than these; 1. the spirit of detraction; and, 2. the spirit of flattery. The first is Διαβολὴ, from whence the devil hath his name; he is "an accuser" of the brethren. But the second is worse; it is θανατηφόρος or θανάσιμος, "damnable" and "deadly;" it is the nurse of vice, and the poison of the soul. These are σαπροὶ λόγοι, "sour" and "filthy communications;" the first is rude, but the latter is most mischievous; and both of them to be avoided like death, or the despairing murmurs of the damned.

1. Let no calumny, no slandering, detracting communication proceed out of your mouth; the first sort of this is that which the apostle calls *whispering*, which signifies to abuse our neighbour secretly, by telling a private story of him:

——— linguâque refert audita susurra; Ovid.

for here the man plays a sure game, as he supposes, a mischief without a witness,

Φιλολοιδόροιο γλώσσης
——— βέλεμνα κοῦφα,

as Anacreon calls them; "the light, swift arrows of a calumniating tongue;" they pierce into the heart and bowels of the man speedily. These are those which the Holy Scripture notes by the disgraceful name of "tale-bearers;" "Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer among the people;"[b] for "there are six things which God hates," (saith Solomon,) "yea, the seventh is an abomination unto him;"[c] it is βδέλυγμα, as bad, and as much hated by God, as an idol, and that is, "a whisperer," or "tale-bearer that soweth contention amongst brethren."[d] This kind of communication was called συκοφαντία among the Greeks, and was as much hated as the publicans among the Jews: πονηρὸν, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, πονηρὸν συκοφάντης, "It is a vile thing, O ye Athenians, it is a vile thing for a man to be a sycophant, or a tale-bearer:" and the dearest friendships in the world cannot be secure, where such whisperers are attended to.

Te fingente nefas, Pyladen odisset Orestes,
Thesea Pirithoi destituisset amor.
Tu Siculos fratres, et majus nomen Atridas,
Et Ledæ poteras dissociare genus. Mart.

But this crime is a conjugation of evils, and is productive of infinite mischiefs; it undermines peace, and saps the foundation of friendship; it destroys families, and rends in pieces the very heart and vital parts of charity; it makes an evil man, party, and witness, and judge, and executioner of the innocent, who is hurt though he deserved it not;

Et, si non aliquà nocuisses, mortuus esses.—Virg.

And no man's interest or reputation, no man's peace

[a] Menander. [b] Levit. xix. 6 [c] Prov. vi. 17. [d] Prov. xxvi. 20.

or safety, can abide, where this nurse of jealousy and parent of contention, like the earwig, creeps in at the ear, and makes a diseased noise and a scandalous murmur.

2. But such tongues as these, where they dare, and where they can safely, love to speak louder, and then it is *detraction;* when men under the colour of friendship, will certainly wound the reputation of a man, while, by speaking some things of him fairly, he shall without suspicion be believed when he speaks evil of him; such was he that Horace speaks of, "Me Capitolinus convictore usus amicoque," &c. "Capitolinus is my friend, and we have long lived together, and obliged each other by mutual endearments, and I am glad he is acquitted by the criminal judges;"

> Sed tamen admiror, quo pacto judicium illud
> Fugerit:

"Yet I confess, I wonder how he should escape; but I will say no more, because he is my friend." Καινὸς γὰρ ἔτι τὶς οὗτος εὕρηται τρόπος διαβολῆς, τὸ μὴ ψέγοντας ἀλλ' ἐπαινοῦντας λυμαίνεσθαι, says Polybius; "This is a new way of accusation, to destroy a man by praises." These men strike obliquely, like a wild swine, or the οἱ ἐν νεύροις βόες, ἐπὶ τῶν ὤμων ἔχουσι τὰ κέρατα, "like bulls in a yoke, they have horns upon their necks," and do you a mischief when they plough your ground; and, as Joab slew Abner, he took him by the beard and kissed him, and smote him under the fifth rib, that he died; so doth the detracting tongue, like the smooth-tongued lightning, it will break your bones when it kisses the flesh; so Syphax did secretly wound Masinissa, and made Scipio watchful and implacable against Sophonisba, only by commending her beauty and her wit, her constancy and unalterable love to her country, and by telling how much himself was forced to break his faith by the tyranny of her prevailing charms. This is that which the apostle calls πονηρίαν, "a crafty and deceitful way of hurting," and renders a man's tongue venomous as the tongue of a serpent, that bites even though he be charmed.

3. But the next is more violent, and that is, *railing* or reviling; which Aristotle, in his Rhetorics, says, is very often the vice of boys and of rich men, who—out of folly or pride, want of manners, or want of the measures of a man, wisdom, and the just proportions of his brethren—do use those that err before them most scornfully and unworthily; and Tacitus noted it of the Claudian family in Rome, an old and inbred pride and scornfulness made them apt to abuse all that fell under their power and displeasure; "Quorum superbiam frustra per obsequium et modestiam effugeres."[g] No observance, no prudence, no modesty, can escape the reproaches of such insolent and high talkers. A. Gellius tells of a boy that would give every one that he met a box on the ear; and some men will give foul words, having a tongue rough as a cat, and biting like an adder; and all their reproofs are direct scoldings, their common intercourse is open contumely. There have been, in these last ages, examples of judges, who would reproach the condemned and miserable criminal, deriding his calamity, and reviling his person. Nero did so to Thraseas; and the old heathens to the primitive martyrs; "pereuntibus addita ludibria," said Tacitus of them; they crucified them again, by putting them to suffer the shame of their fouler language; they railed at them, when they bowed their heads upon the cross, and groaned forth the saddest accents of approaching death. This is that evil that possessed those, of whom the Psalmist speaks: "Our tongues are our own; we are they that ought to speak; who is Lord over us?" that is, our tongues cannot be restrained; and St. James said something of this, "The tongue is an unruly member, which no man can tame;"[e] that is, no private person, but a public may; for he that can rule the tongue, is fit also to rule the whole body, that is, the church or congregation; magistrates and the governors of souls, they are by severity to restrain this inordination, which indeed is a foul one;

> Ὡς ἄρα οὐδέν τι διαβόλου γλώττης χείρων ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἕτερον κακόν·

"No evil is worse, or of more open violence to the rest and reputation of men, than a reproachful tongue." And it were well if we considered this evil, to avoid it in those instances, by which our conversation is daily stained. Are we not often too imperious against our servants? Do we not entertain and feed our own anger with vile and basest language? Do not we chastise a servant's folly or mistake, his error or his chance, with language fit to be used by none but vile persons, and towards none but dogs? Our blessed Saviour, restraining the hostility and murder of the tongue, threatens hellfire to them that call their brother "fool;" meaning, that all language, which does really, and by intention, disgrace him in the greater instances, is as directly against the charity of the gospel, as killing a man was against the severity and justice of the law. And although the word itself may be used to reprove the indiscretions and careless follies of an idle person; yet it must be used only in order to his amendment,—by an authorized person,—in the limits of a just reproof,—upon just occasion,—and so as may not do him mischief in the event of things. For so we find that our blessed Saviour called his disciples, ἀνοήτους, "foolish;"[f] and St. James used ἄνθρωπε κενὲ, "vain man," signifying the same with the forbidden "raca," κενὸν, "vain, useless, or empty;" and St. Paul calls the Galatians "mad, and foolish, and bewitched;" and Christ called Herod "fox;" and St. John called the Pharisees "the generation of vipers;" and all this matter is wholly determined by the manner, and with what mind, it is done; if it be for correction and reproof towards persons that deserve it, and by persons whose authority can warrant a just and severe reproof, and this also be done prudently, safely, and usefully,—it is not contumely; but when men, upon all occasions, revile an offending person,

[e] James iii.

[f] Matt. xxiii. 17, 19. Luke xxiv. 25.

lessening his value, souring his spirit, and his life, despising his infirmities, tragically expressing his lightest misdemeanour, *οἱ ὑπὸ μικρῶν ἁμαρτημάτων ἀνυπερβλήτως ὀργιζόμενοι*, "being tyrannically declamatory, and intolerably angry for a trifle;"—these are such, who, as Apollonius the philosopher said, will not suffer the offending person to know when his fault is great, and when it is little. For they, who always put on a supreme anger, or express the less anger with the highest reproaches, can do no more to him that steals, than to him that breaks a crystal; "non plus æquo, non diutius quo," was a good rule for reprehension of offending servants; but no more anger, no more severe language, than the thing deserves; if you chide too long, your reproof is changed into reproach; if too bitterly, it becomes railing; if too loud, it is immodest; if too public, it is like a dog.

Τὸ δ' ἐπιδιώκειν, εἴς τε τὴν ὁδὸν τρέχειν
Ἔτι λοιδορουμένην, κυνὸς ἐστ' ἔργον, Ῥόδη. MENAND.

So the man told his wife in the Greek comedy; "To follow me in the streets with thy clamorous tongue, is to do as dogs do," not as persons civil or religious.

4. The fourth instance of the calumniating, filthy communication, is that which we properly call *slander*, or the inventing evil things, falsely imputing crimes to our neighbour: "Falsum crimen quasi venenatum telum," said Cicero; "A false tongue or a foul lie against a man's reputation, is like a poisoned arrow," it makes the wound deadly, and every scratch to be incurable. "Promptissima vindicta contumelia," said one; to reproach and rail, is a revenge that every girl can take. But falsely to accuse, is as spiteful as hell, and deadly as the blood of dragons.

Stoicus occidit Baream, delator amicum. JUV.

This is the direct murder of the tongue, for "Life and death are in the hand of the tongue," said the Hebrew proverb; and it was esteemed so vile a thing, that when Jezebel commanded the elders of Israel to suborn false witnesses against Naboth, she gave them instructions to "take two men, the sons of Belial;" none else were fit for the employment.

Quid non audebis, perfida lingua, loqui? MART.

This was it that broke Ephraim in judgment, and executed the fierce anger of the Lord upon him; God gave him over to be oppressed by a false witness, "quoniam cœpit abire post sordes," therefore he suffered calumny, and was overthrown in judgment. This was it that humbled Joseph in fetters, and "the iron entered into his soul;" but it crushed him not so much as the false tongue of his revengeful mistress, "until his cause was known, and the word of the Lord tried him." This was it that slew Abimelech, and endangered David; it was a sword "in manu linguæ Doeg," "in the hand of Doeg's tongue." By this, Ziba cut off the legs of Mephibosheth, and made his reputation lame for ever; it thrust Jeremy into the dungeon, and carried Susanna to her stake, and our Lord to his cross; and therefore, against the dangers of a slandering tongue, all laws have so cautiously armed themselves, that, besides the severest prohibitions of God, often recorded in both Testaments, God hath chosen it to be one of his appellatives to be the defender of them, a party for those, whose innocency and defenceless state make them most apt to be undone by this evil spirit; I mean pupils, and widows, the poor, and the oppressed.[g] And in pursuance of this charity, the imperial laws have invented a "juramentum de calumniâ," an oath to be exhibited to the actor or plaintiff, that he believes himself to have a just cause, and that he does not implead his adversary "calumniandi animo," "with false instances," and indefensible allegations; and the defendant is to swear, that he thinks himself to use only just defences, and perfect instances of resisting; and both of them obliged themselves, that they would exact no proof but what was necessary to the truth of the cause. And all this defence was nothing but necessary guards. For, "a spear, and a sword, and an arrow, is a man that speaketh false witness against his neighbour." And therefore, the laws of God added yet another bar against this evil, and the false accuser was to suffer the punishment of the objected crime: and, as if this were not sufficient, God hath in several ages wrought miracles, and raised the dead to life, that, by such strange appearances, they might relieve the oppressed innocent, and load the false accusing tongue with shame and horrible confusion. So it happened in the case of Susanna, the spirit of a man was put into the heart of a child to acquit the virtuous woman; and so it was in the case of Gregory, bishop of Agrigentum, falsely accused by Sabinus and Crescentius; God's power cast the devil out of Eudocia, the devil, or spirit of slander, and compelled her to speak the truth. St. Austin, in his book, "De Curâ pro Mortuis," tells of a dead father that appeared to his oppressed son, and, in a great matter of law, delivered him from the teeth of false accusation.[h] So was the church of Monts rescued by the appearance of Aia, the deceased wife of Hidulphus, their earl, as it appears in Hanovian story; and the Polonian Chronicles tell the like of Stanislaus, bishop of Cracovia, almost oppressed by the anger and calumny of Boleslaus their king; God relieved him by the testimony of St. Peter, their bishop, or a phantasm like him. But whether these records may be credited or no, I contend not: yet, it is very material which Eusebius relates of the three false witnesses accusing Narcissus, bishop of Jerusalem, of an infamous crime, which they did, affirming it under several curses:[i] the first wishing, that, if he said false, God would destroy him with fire; the second, that he might die of the king's-evil; the third, that he might be blind; and so it came to pass; the first, being surprised with fire in his own roof, amazed and intricated, confounded and despairing, paid the price of his slander with the pains of most fearful flames; and the second

[g] Levit. vi. Zech. vii. Luke iii.

[h] C. 11.

[i] L. 6. c. 7.

perished by pieces, and chirurgeons, and torment: which when the third saw, he repented of his fault, cried mightily for pardon, but wept so bitterly, that he found at the same time the reward of his calumny and the acceptation of his repentance: *κακουργότερον οὐδὲν διαβολῆς ἐστί πω*, said Cleanthes: "Nothing is more operative of spiteful and malicious purposes, than the calumniating tongue." In the temple at Smyrna, there were looking-glasses which represented the best face as crooked, ugly, and deformed; the Greeks called these *ἑτερόσχημα* and *παράχροα*: and so is every false tongue; it lies in the face of heaven, and abuses the ears of justice; it oppresses the innocent, and is secretly revenged of virtue; it defeats all the charity of laws, and arms the supreme power, and makes it strike the innocent; it makes frequent appeals to be made to heaven, and causes an oath, instead of being the end of strife, to be the beginning of mischief; it calls the name and testimony of God to seal an injury; it feeds and nourishes cruel anger, but mocks justice, and makes mercy weep herself into pity, and mourn because she cannot help the innocent.

5. The last instance of this evil I shall now represent, is *cursing*, concerning which I have this only to say: that although the causeless curse shall return upon the tongue that spake it, yet, because very often there is a fault on both sides, when there is reviling or cursing on either, the danger of a cursing tongue is highly to be declined, as the biting of a mad dog, or the tongue of a smitten serpent. For, as envy is in the evil eye, so is cursing in the reproachful tongue; it is a kind of venom and witchcraft, an instrument by which God oftentimes punishes anger and uncharitableness; and by which the devil gets power over the bodies and interests of men: for he that works by Thessalic ceremonies, by charms, and nonsense words, by figures and insignificant characterisms, by images and by rags, by circles and imperfect noises, hath more advantage and real title to the opportunities of mischief, by the cursing tongue; and though God is infinitely more ready to do acts of kindness than of punishment, yet God is not so careless a regarder of the violent and passionate wishes of men, but he gives some over to punishment, and chastises the follies of rage, and the madness of the tongue, by suffering it to pass into a further mischief than the harsh sound and horrible accents of the evil language. "By the tongue we bless God and curse men," saith St. James; *λοιδορία* is *κατάρα*, "reproaching is cursing," and both of them opposed to *εὐλογία*, to "blessing;" and there are many times and seasons in which both of them pass into real effect. These are the particulars of the second.

3. I am now to instance in the third sort of filthy communication, that in which the devil does the most mischief; by which he undoes souls; by which he is worse than *Διάβολος*, "an accuser:" for though he accuses maliciously, and instances spitefully, and heaps objections diligently, and aggravates bitterly, and, with all his power endeavours to represent the separate souls to God as polluted and unfit to come into his presence, yet this malice is ineffective, because the scenes are acted before the wise Judge of men and angels, who cannot be abused; before our Father, and our Lord, who knows whereof we be made, and remembereth that we are but dust; before our Saviour, and our elder Brother, who hath felt our infirmities, and knows how to pity, to excuse, and to answer for us: but though this accusation of us cannot hurt them who will not hurt themselves, yet this malice is prevailing when the spirit of *flattery* is let forth upon us. This is the *Ἀπολλύων*, "the destroyer," and is the most contrary thing to charity in the whole world: and St. Paul noted it in his character of charity, *Ἡ ἀγάπη οὐ περπερεύεται*, "Charity vaunteth not itself;"[k] so we translate it, but certainly not exactly, for it signifieth "easiness," complying foolishly, and flattering; "charity *flattereth* not;" *Τί ἐστι τὸ περπερεύεσθαι; πᾶν ὃ μὴ διὰ χρείαν, ἀλλὰ διὰ καλλωπισμὸν παραλαμβάνεται*, saith Suidas, out of St. Basil; "It signifies any thing that serves rather for ornament than for use," for pleasure than for profit.

> Et eo plectuntur poetæ quàm suo vitio sæpiùs,
> Ductabilitate nimiâ vestrâ aut perperitudine;

saith the comedy; "The poets suffer more by your easiness and flattery, than by their own fault."—And this is it which St. Paul says is against charity. For if to call a man "fool and vicious," be so high an injury, we may thence esteem what a great calamity it is to be so; and therefore, he that makes him so, or takes a course he shall not become other, is the vilest enemy to his person and his felicity: and this is the mischief that is done by flattery; it is a design against the wisdom, against the repentance, against the growth and promotion of a man's soul. He that persuades an ugly, deformed man, that he is handsome,—a short man that he is tall,—a bald man that he hath a good head of hair,—makes him to become ridiculous and a fool, but does no other mischief. But he that persuades his friend, that is a goat in his manners, that he is a holy and a chaste person,—or that his looseness is a sign of a quick spirit,—or that it is not dangerous, but easily pardonable,—a trick of youth, a habit that old age will lay aside as a man pares his nails,—this man hath given great advantage to his friend's mischief; he hath made it grow in all the dimensions of the sin, till it grows intolerable, and perhaps unpardonable. And let it be considered; what a fearful destruction and contradiction of friendship or service it is, so to love myself and my little interest, as to prefer it before the soul of him whom I ought to love! By my flattery I lay a snare to get twenty pounds, and rather than lose this contemptible sum of money, I will throw him that shall give it me (as far as I can) into hell, there to roar beyond all the measures of time or patience. Can any hatred be more, or love be less, can any expression of spite be greater, than that it be said, "You will not part with twenty pounds to save your friend's, or your patron's, or your brother's

[k] 1 Cor. xiii. 5.

soul?" and so it is with him that invites him to, or confirms him in, his folly, in hopes of getting something from him; he will see him die, and die eternally, and help forward that damnation, so he may get that little by it. Every state is set in the midst of danger, as all trees are set in the wind, but the tallest endure the greatest violence of tempest: no man flatters a beggar; if he does a slovenly and a rude crime, it is entertained with ruder language, and the mean man may possibly be affrighted from his fault, while it is made so uneasy to him by the scorn and harsh reproaches of the mighty. But princes and nobles often die with this disease: and when the courtiers of Alexander counterfeited his wry neck, and the servants of the Sicilian tyrant pretended themselves dim-sighted, and on purpose rushed one against another, and overthrew the meat as it was served to his table, only because the prince was short-sighted, they gave them sufficient instances in what state of affairs they stood with them that waited; it was certain they would commend every foolish answer, and pretend subtilty in every absurd question, and make a petition that their base actions might pass into a law, and be made to be the honour and sanctity of all the people: and what proportions or ways can such great personages have towards felicity, when their vice shall be allowed and praised, every action that is but tolerable shall be accounted heroical, and if it be intolerable among the wise, it shall be called virtuous among the flatterers? Carneades said bitterly, but it had in it too many degrees of truth; That princes and great personages never learn to do any thing perfectly well, but to ride the great horse; "quia scilicet ferociens bestia adulari non didicit," "because the proud beast knows not how to flatter," but will as soon throw him off from his back, as he will shake off the son of a porter.—But a flatterer is like a neighing horse, that neigheth under every rider, and is pleased with every thing, and commends all that he sees, and tempts to mischief, and cares not, so his friend may but perish pleasantly. And, indeed, that is a calamity that undoes many a soul; we so love our peace, and sit so easily upon our own good opinions, and are so apt to flatter ourselves, and lean upon our own false supports, that we cannot endure to be disturbed or awakened from our pleasing lethargy. For we care not to be safe, but to be secure, not to escape hell, but to live pleasantly; we are not solicitous of the event, but of the way thither, and it is sufficient, if we be persuaded all is well; in the mean time, we are careless whether indeed it be so or no, and therefore we give pensions to fools and vile persons to abuse us, and cozen us of felicity. But this evil puts on several shapes, which we must discover, that they may not cozen us without our observation. For all men are not capable of an open flattery. And therefore, some will dress their hypocrisy and illusion so, that you may feel the pleasure, and but secretly the compliance and tenderness to serve the ends of your folly. "Perit procari, si latet," said Plancus; "If you be not perceived, you lose your reward; if you be too open, you lose it worse."

1. Some flatter by giving great names and propounding great examples; and thus the Egyptian villains hung a tumbler's rope upon their prince, and a piper's whistle; because they called their Ptolemy by the name of Apollo, their god of music. This put buskins upon Nero, and made him fiddle in all the great towns of Greece. When their lords were drunkards, they called them Bacchus; when they were wrestlers, they saluted them by the name of Hercules; and some were so vain, as to think themselves commended, when their flatterers told aloud, that they had drunk more than Alexander the conqueror. And indeed nothing more abuses easy fools, that only seek for an excuse for their wickedness, a patron for their vice, a warrant for their sleepy peace,—than to tell stories of great examples remarked for the instances of their temptation. When old Cato commended meretricious mixtures, and, to prevent adulteries, permitted fornication, the youth of the succeeding ages had warrant enough to go "ad olentes fornices," into their chambers of filthy pleasures;

> Quidam notus homo cum exiret fornice; Macte
> Virtute esto, inquit sententia dia Catonis. HOR.

And it would pass the goblets in a freer circle, if a flattering man shall but say, "Narratur et prisci Catonis Sæpe mero caluisse virtus," "That old Cato would drink hard at sunset." When Varro had noted, that wise and severe Sallust, who, by excellent sententious words, had reproved the follies of lust, was himself taken in adultery; the Roman youth did hug their vice, and thought it grew upon their nature like a man's beard, and that the wisest men would lay their heads upon that threshold; and Seneca tells, that the women of that age despised adultery of one man only; and hated it like marriage, and despised that as want of breeding, and grandeur of spirit: because the braver Spartans did use to breed their children promiscuously, as the herdsmen do cattle from the fairest bulls. And Arrianus tells that the women would defend their baseness by the doctrine of Plato, who maintained the community of women. This sort of flattery is therefore more dangerous, because it makes the temptation ready for mischief, apted and dressed with proper, material, and imitable circumstances. The way of discourse is far about, but evil examples kill quickly.

2. Others flatter by imitation: for when a crime is rare and insolent, singular and out of fashion, it must be a great strength of malice and impudence that must entertain it; but the flattering man doing the vice of his lord takes off the wonder, and the fear of being stared at; and so encourages it by making it popular and common. Plutarch tells of one that divorced himself from his wife, because his friend did so, that the other might be hardened in the mischief; and when Plato saw his scholars stoop in the shoulders, and Aristotle observed his to stammer, they began to be less troubled with those imperfections, which they thought common to themselves and others.

3. Some pretend rusticity and downright plain-

ness, and upon the confidence of that, humour their friend's vice, and flatter his ruin. Seneca observed it of some of his time; "Alius quâdam adulatione clam utebatur parce, alius ex aperto palam, rusticitate simulatâ, quasi simplicitas illa ars non sit;" They pretend they love not to dissemble, and therefore they cannot hide their thoughts; let their friend take it how he will, they must commend that which is commendable; and so, man, that is willing to die quietly, is content with the honest-heartiness and downright simplicity of him, that with an artificial rudeness dressed the flattery.

4. Some will dispraise themselves, that their friend may think better of himself, or less severely of his fault.

5. Others will reprove their friend for a trifle, but with a purpose to let him understand, that this is all; for the honest man would have told his friend if it had been worse.

6. Some will laugh and make a sport of a vice, and can hear their friend tell the cursed narrative of his adultery, of his drunkenness, of his craft and unjust purchases; and all this shall prove but a merry scene; as if damnation were a thing to be laughed at, and the everlasting ruin of his friend were a very good jest. But thus the poor sinner shall not be affrighted from his danger, nor chastised by severe language; but the villain that eats his meat, shall take him by the hand, and dance about the pit till he falls in, and dies with shame and folly. Thus the evil spirit puts on shapes enough; none to affright the man, but all to destroy him; and yet it is filthy enough, when it is invested with its own character.

Γαστὴρ ὅλον τὸ σῶμα, παντα χῇ βλέπων
Ὀφθαλμὸς, ἕρπων τοῖς ὀδοῦσι θήριον.

"The parasite or flatterer is a beast that is all belly, looking round with his eye, watchful, ugly, and deceitful, and creeping on his teeth;" they feed him, and he kills them that reach him bread; for that is the nature of all vipers.

I have this one thing only to insert, and then the caution will be sufficient, viz., that we do not think all praise given to our friend to be flattery, though it be in his presence. For sometimes praise is the best conveyance for a precept, and it may nourish up an infant virtue, and make it grow up towards perfection, and its proper measures and rewards. Friendship does better please our friend than flattery, and though it was made also for virtue, yet it mingles pleasures in the chalice: Εἰς ὄμματ' εὔνου φωτὸς ἔμβλέψαι γλυκὺ "It is delicious to behold the face of a friendly and a sweet person:" [1] and it is not the office of a friend always to be sour, or at any time morose; but free, open, and ingenuous, candid and humane, not denying to please, but ever refusing to abuse or corrupt. For as adulterine metals retain the lustre and colour of gold, but not the value; so flattery, in imitation of friendship, takes the face and outside of it, the delicious part; but the flatterer uses it to the interests of vice, and a friend by it serves virtue; and therefore, Plutarch well compared friendship to medicinal ointments, which however delicious they be, yet they are also useful, and minister to healing: but flattery is sweet and adulterate, pleasant, but without health. He, therefore, that justly commends his friend to promote and encourage his virtue, reconciles virtue with his friend's affection, and makes it pleasant to be good; and he that does so, shall also better be suffered when he reproves because the needing person shall find that then is the opportunity and season of it, since he denied not to please so long as he could also profit. I only add this advice; that since self-love is the serpent's milk that feeds this viper, flattery,—we should do well to choke it with its mother's milk; I mean, learn to love ourselves more, for then we should never endure to be flattered. For he that, because he loves himself, loves to be flattered, does, because he loves himself, love to entertain a man to abuse him, to mock him, and to destroy him finally. But he that loves himself truly, will suffer fire, will endure to be burnt, so he may be purified; put to pain, so he may be restored to health; for "of all sauces," (said Evenus,) sharpness, severity, and "fire, are the best."

[1] Eurip.

SERMON XXV.

THE DUTIES OF THE TONGUE.

PART IV.

——— *But that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.* —Ephes. iv. latter part of ver. 29.

"LOQUENDI magistros habemus homines, tacendi Deos," said one; Men teach us to speak, and God teaches us to hold our tongue." The first we are taught by the lectures of our schools; the latter, by the mysteries of the temple. But now, in the new institution, we have also a great master of speaking; and though silence is one of the great paths of innocence, yet holy speaking is the instrument of spiritual charity, and is a glorification of God; and therefore, this kind of speaking is a degree of perfection beyond the wisdom and severity of silence. For, although garrulity and foolish inordinate talking are a conjunction of folly and sin, and the prating man, while he desires to get the love of them he converses with, incurs their hatred; while he would be admired, is laughed at; he spends much and gets nothing; he wrongs his friends, and makes sport to his enemies, and injures himself; he is derided when he tells what others know, he is endangered if he tells a secret and what they know not; he is not believed when he tells good news, and when he tells ill news he is odious; and therefore, that silence, which is a cure of all this evil, is an excellent portion of safety and religion:—yet it

is with holy speaking and innocent silence as it is with a hermit and a bishop; the first goes to a good school, but the second is proceeded toward greater perfection; and therefore, the practical life of ecclesiastical governors, being found in the way of holiness and zeal, is called "status perfectionis:" a more excellent and perfect condition of life, and far beyond the retirements and inoffensive life of those innocent persons, which do so much less of profit, by how much charity is better than meditation, and going to heaven by religion and charity, by serving God and converting souls, is better than going to heaven by prayers and secret thoughts: so it is with silence and religious communication. That does not offend God, this glorifies him: that prevents sin, this sets forward the interests of religion. And therefore Plutarch said well, "Qui generosè et regio more instituuntur, primum tacere, deinde loqui discunt:" "To be taught first to be silent, then to speak well and handsomely, is education fit for a prince;" and that is St. Paul's method here: first we were taught how to restrain our tongues, in the foregoing instances,—and now we are called to employ them in religion.

1. We must speak "that which is good," ἀγαθόν τι, any thing that may serve the ends of our God and of our neighbour, in the measures of religion and usefulness. But it is here as in all other propositions of religion. To us,—who are in the body, and conducted by material phantasms, and understanding nothing but what we feel, or is conveyed to us by the proportions of what we do or have,—God hath given a religion that is fitted to our condition and constitution. And therefore, when we are commanded to love God, by this love Christ understands obedience; when we are commanded to honour God, it is by singing and reciting his praises, and doing things which cause reputation and honour: and even here when we are commanded to speak that which is good, it is instanced in such good things which are really profitable, practically useful; and here the measures of God are especially by the proportions of our neighbour: and therefore, though speaking honourable things of God be an employment that does honour to our tongues and voices, yet we must tune and compose even these notes so as may best profit our neighbour; for so it must be λόγος ἀγαθὸς, "good speech," such as is εἰς οἰκοδομὴν τῆς χρείας, "for the edification of necessity:" the phrase is a Hebraism, where the genitive case of a substantive is put for the adjective; and means, that our speech be apted to necessary edification, or such edification as is needful to every man's particular case; that is, that we so order our communication, that it be apt to instruct the ignorant, to strengthen the weak, to recall the wanderer, to restrain the vicious, to comfort the disconsolate, to speak a word in season to every man's necessity, ἵνα δῷ χάριν, "that it may minister grace;" something that may please and profit them, according as they shall need; all which I shall reduce to these three heads:

1. To instruct.
2. To comfort.
3. To reprove.

1. Our conversation must be διδακτικὸς, "apt to teach." For since all our hopes on our part depend upon our obedience to God, and conformity to our Lord Jesus, by whom our endeavours are sanctified and accepted, and our weaknesses are pardoned, and all our obedience relies upon, and is encouraged and grounded in, faith, and faith is founded naturally and primarily in the understanding,—we may observe, that it is not only reasonably to be expected, but experimentally felt, that, in weak and ignorant understandings, there are no sufficient supports for the vigorousness of a holy life; there being nothing, or not enough, to warrant and strengthen great resolutions, to reconcile our affections to difficulties, to make us patient of affronts, to receive deeper mortifications, and ruder usages, unless where an extraordinary grace supplies the want of ordinary notices, as the apostles were enabled to their preaching; but he, therefore, that carries and imports into the understanding of his brother, notices of faith, and incomes of spiritual propositions, and arguments of the Spirit, enables his brother towards the work and practices of a holy life: and though every argument, which the Spirit of God hath made and recorded in Holy Scripture, is of itself inducement great enough to endear obedience; yet it is not so in the event of things to every man's infirmity and need; but in the treasures of the Spirit, in the heaps and variety of institution, and wise discourses, there will not only be enough to make a man without excuse, but sufficient to do his work, and to cure his evil, and to fortify his weaker parts, and to comply with his necessities: for although God's sufficient grace is present to all that can use it, yet, if there be no more than that, it is a sad consideration to remember, that there are but few that will be saved, if they be helped but with just so much as can possibly do the work: and this we may well be assured of, if we consider that God is never wanting to any man in what is simply necessary: but then, if we add this also, that of the vast numbers of men, who might possibly be saved, so few really are so, we shall perceive, that that grace which only is sufficient, is not sufficient; sufficient to the *thing*, is not sufficient for the *person;* and therefore, that God does usually give us more, and we need more yet; and unless God "works in us to will and to do," we shall neither "will" nor "do;" though to will be in the power of our hand, yet we will not will; it follows from hence, that all they, who will comply with God's method of graciousness, and the necessities of their brethren, must endeavour, by all means, and in all their own measures and capacities, to lay up treasures of notices and instructions in their brother's soul, that, by some argument or other, they may be met withal, and taken in every corner of their conversation. Add to this, that the duty of a man hath great variety, and the souls of men are infinitely abused, and the persuasions of men are strangely divided, and the interests of men are a violent and preternatural declination from the strictnesses of virtue, and the resolutions of men are quickly altered, and very

hardly to be secured, and the cases of conscience are numerous and intricate, and every state of life hath its proper prejudice, and our notices are abused by our affections, and we shall perceive that men generally need knowledge enough to overpower all their passions, to root out their vicious inclinations, to master their prejudice, to answer objections, to resist temptations, to refresh their weariness, to fix their resolutions, and to determine their doubts; and therefore, to see your brother in a state of ignorance, is to see him unfurnished and unprepared to all good works; a person safe no longer than till a temptation comes, and one that cannot be saved but by an absolute, unlimited predestination, a favour of which he hath no promise, no security, no revelation; and although, to do this, God hath appointed a special order of men, the whole ecclesiastical order, whom he feeds at his own charges, and whom men rob at their own peril, yet this doth not disoblige others: for every master of a family is to instruct, or cause his family to be instructed, and catechised; every governor is to instruct his charge, every man his brother, not always in person, but ever by all possible and just provisions. For if the people die for want of knowledge, they who are set over them shall also die for want of charity. Here, therefore, we must remember, that it is the duty of us all, in our several measures and proportions, to instruct those that need it, and whose necessity is made ready for our ministration; and let us tremble to think, what will be the sad account which we shall make, when even our families are not taught in the fundamentals of religion; for how can it be possible for those, who could not account concerning the stories of Christ's life and death, the ministries of their redemption, the foundation of all their hopes, the great argument of all their obediences; how can it be expected, that they should ride in triumph over all the evils, which the devil, and the world, and their own follies, daily present to them, in the course of every day's conversation? And it will be an ill return to say, that God will require no more of them than he hath given them; for suppose that be true in your own sense, yet he will require it of thee, because thou gavest them no more; and, however, it is a formidable danger, and a trifling hope, for any man to put all the hopes of his being saved upon the only stock of ignorance; for if his ignorance should never be accounted for, yet it may leave him in that state, in which his evils shall grow great, and his sins may be irremediable.

2. Our conversation must be παράκλητος, "apt to comfort" the disconsolate; and than this, men in present can feel no greater charity: for, since half the duty of a christian in this life consists in the exercise of passive graces, and the infinite variety of Providence, and the perpetual adversity of chances, and the dissatisfaction and emptiness that are in things themselves, and the weariness and anguish of our spirit, do call us to the trial and exercise of patience, even in the days of sunshine, and much more in the violent storms that shake our dwellings, and make our hearts tremble; God hath sent some angels into the world, whose office is to refresh the sorrows of the poor, and to lighten the eyes of the disconsolate; he hath made some creatures whose powers are chiefly ordained to comfort; wine, and oil, and society, cordials, and variety; and time itself is checkered with black and white; stay but till to-morrow, and your present sorrow will be weary, and will lie down to rest. But this is not all. The third person of the holy Trinity is known to us by the name and dignity of the "Holy Ghost, the Comforter," and God glories in the appellative, that he is "the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;" and therefore, to minister in the office, is to become like God, and to imitate the charities of heaven; and God hath fitted mankind for it: he most needs it, and he feels his brother's wants, by his own experience; and God hath given us speech, and the endearments of society, and pleasantness of conversation, and powers of seasonable discourse, arguments to allay the sorrow, by abating our apprehensions and taking out the sting, or telling the periods of comfort, or exciting hope, or urging a precept, and reconciling our affections, and reciting promises, or telling stories of the Divine mercy, or changing it into duty, or making the burden less by comparing it with greater, or by proving it to be less than we deserve, and that it is so intended, and may become the instrument of virtue. And, certain it is, that as nothing can better do it, so there is nothing greater, for which God made our tongues, next to reciting his praises, than to minister comfort to a weary soul. And what greater measure can we have, than that we should bring joy to our brother, who, with his dreary eyes, looks to heaven and round about, and cannot find so much rest as to lay his eye-lids close together; than that thy tongue should be tuned with heavenly accents, and make the weary soul to listen for light and ease, and when he perceives that there is such a thing in the world, and in the order of things, as comfort and joy, to begin to break out from the prison of his sorrows, at the door of sighs and tears, and, by little and little, melt into showers and refreshment? This is glory to thy voice, and employment fit for the brightest angel. But so have I seen the sun kiss the frozen earth, which was bound up with the images of death, and the colder breath of the north; and then the waters break from their enclosures, and melt with joy, and run in useful channels; and the flies do rise again from their little graves in walls, and dance awhile in the air, to tell that there is joy within, and that the great mother of creatures will open the stock of her new refreshment, become useful to mankind, and sing praises to her Redeemer; so is the heart of a sorrowful man under the discourses of a wise comforter; he breaks from the despairs of the grave, and the fetters and chains of sorrow; he blesses God, and he blesses thee, and he feels his life returning; for to be miserable is death, but nothing is life but to be comforted; and God is pleased with no music from below so much as in the thanksgiving-songs of relieved widows, of supported orphans, of rejoicing, and comforted, and thankful persons. This part of communication does the work of God and of our

neighbours, and bears us to heaven in streams of joy made by the overflowings of our brother's comfort. It is a fearful thing to see a man despairing. None knows the sorrow and the intolerable anguish but themselves, and they that are damned; and so are all the loads of a wounded spirit, when the staff of a man's broken fortune bows his head to the ground, and sinks like an osier under the violence of a mighty tempest. But therefore, in proportion to this, I may tell the excellency of the employment, and the duty of that charity, which bears the dying and languishing soul from the fringes of hell, to the seat of the brightest stars, where God's face shines, and reflects comforts, for ever and ever. And though God hath, for this, especially intrusted his ministers and servants of the church, and hath put into their hearts and notices great magazines of promises, and arguments of hope, and arts of the Spirit, yet God does not always send angels on these embassies, but sends a man, "ut sit homo homini Deus," "that every good man in his season may be to his brother in the place of God," to comfort and restore him; and that it may appear, how much it is the duty of us all to minister comfort to our brother, we may remember, that the same words and the same arguments do oftentimes more prevail upon our spirits, when they are applied by the hand of another, than when they dwell in us, and come from our own discoursings. This is indeed λόγος χρηστὸς and ἀγαθὸς, it is, εἰς οἰκοδομὴν τῆς χρείας, "to the edification of our needs," and the greatest and most holy charity.

3. Our communication must in its just season be ἐλεγκτικός, "we must reprove" our sinning brother; "for the wounds of a friend are better than the kisses of an enemy," saith Solomon;[a] we imitate the office of "the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls," if we go "to seek and save that which was lost;" and it is a fearful thing to see a friend go to hell undisturbed, when the arresting him in his horrid progress may possibly make him to return; this is a course that will change our vile itch of judging and censuring others into an act of charity; it will alter slander into piety, detraction into counsel, revenge into friendly and most useful offices, that the viper's flesh may become Mithridate, and the devil be defeated in his malicious employment of our language. He is a miserable man, whom none dares tell of his faults so plainly, that he may understand his danger; and he that is incapable and impatient of reproof, can never become a good friend to any man. For, besides that himself would never admonish his friend when he sins, (and if he would, why should not himself be glad of the same charity?) he is also "proud, and scorner is his name;" he thinks himself exempt from the condition and failings of men; or, if he does not, he had rather go to hell than be called to his way by an angry sermon, or driven back by the sword of an angel, or endure one blushing, for all his hopes and interests of heaven. It is no shame to be reproved, but to deserve it; but he that deserves it, and will do so still, shall increase his shame into confusion, and bring upon himself a sorrow bigger than the calamities of war, and plagues, and hospitals, and poverty. He only is truly wise, and will be certainly happy, that so understands himself and hates his sin, that he will not nurse it, but get to himself a reprover on purpose, whose warrant shall be liberty, whose thanks shall be amendment, whose entertainment shall be obedience; for a flattering word is like a bright sunshine to a sore eye, it increases the trouble, and lessens the sight;

Hæc demum sapiet dictio quæ feriet;

"The severe word of the reproving man is wise and healthful:" but because all times, and all circumstances, and all persons, are not fit for this employment:

——— Plurima sunt, quæ
Non audent homines pertusâ dicere lænâ; JUV.

"Some will not endure that a poor man, or an obliged person, should reprove them," and themselves are often so unprofitable servants, that they will rather venture their friend's damnation, than hazard their own interest; therefore, in the performance of this duty of useful communication, the following measures are fit to be observed.

1. Let not your reproof be public and personal:—if it be public, it must be in general; if it be personal, it must be in private; and this is expressly commanded by our blessed Saviour: "If thy brother offends, tell it him between him and thee;" for if it comes afterwards, in case of contumacy, to be declared in public, it passes from fraternal correption to ecclesiastical discipline. When Socrates reproved Plato at a feast, Plato told him, "it had been better he had told him his fault in private; for to speak it publicly is indecency:" Socrates replied; "And so it is for you, publicly to condemn that indecency." For it is the nature of man to be spiteful when he is shamed, and to esteem that the worst of evils, and therefore, to take impudence and perseverance for its cover, when his shame is naked; and for this indiscretion, Aristomenes, the tutor of Ptolemy, who, before the Corinthian ambassadors reproved the king for sleeping at the solemn audience, profited nothing, but enraged the prince, and was himself forced to drink poison. But this wariness is not always necessary. For, 1. A public and an authorized person may do it publicly, and may name the person as himself shall judge expedient.

—— secuit Lucilius urbem,—
Te Lupe, te Muti,—et genuinum fregit in illis.
Omne vafer vitium. PERS.

Lucilius was a censor of manners, and by his office he had warrant and authority. 2. There are also some cases in which a public reproof is prudent; and that is, when the crime is great, but not understood to be any at all; for then it is instruction and catechism, and lays aside the affront and trouble of reproof. Thus Ignatius the martyr did reprove Trajan sacrificing at the altar in the sight of all the officers of the army; and the Jews were commanded to reprove the Babylonians for idolatry in the

[a] Prov. xxvii. 6.

land of their captivity;[b] and if we see a prince, in the confidence of his pride, and carelessness of spirit, and heat of war, spoil a church, or rob God, it is then fit to tell him the danger of sacrilege, if otherwise he cannot well be taught his danger, and his duty. 3. There are some circumstances of person, in which, by interpretation, duty, or custom, a leave is indulged or presumed, that liberty may be prudently used, publicly to reprove the public vices; so it was in the old days of the Romans; vice had then so little footing and authority, so few friends and advocates, that the prophets and poets used a bolder liberty to disgrace whatsoever was amiss;

> ——————unde illa priorum
> Scribendi quodcunque animo flagrante liberet
> Simplicitas. JUV.

And much of the same liberty is still reserved to pulpits, and to the bishop's office, save only, that although they may reprove publicly, yet they may not often do it personally.

2. Use not to reprove thy brother for every thing, but for great things only;—for this is the office of a tutor, not of a friend; and few men will suffer themselves to abide always under pupilage. When the friend of Philotimus, the physician, came to him to be cured of a sore finger, he told him, "Heus tu, non tibi cum reduviâ est negotium!" he let his finger alone, and told him "that his liver was imposthumate:" and he that tells his friend that his countenance is not grave enough in the church, when it may be the man is an atheist, offers him a cure that will do him no good: and to chastise a trifle is not a worthy price of that noblest liberty and ingenuity, which becomes him that is to heal his brother's soul. But when a vice stains his soul, when he is a fool in his manners, when he is proud, and impatient of contradiction, when he disgraces himself by talking weakly, and yet believes himself wise, and above the confidence of a sober person, then it concerns a friend to rescue him from folly. So Solon reproved Crœsus, and Socrates Alcibiades, and Cyrus chid Cyaxares, and Plato told to Dion, that of all things in the world he should beware of that folly "by which men please themselves, and despise a better judgment:" "quia ei vitio adsidet solitudo," "because that folly hath in it singularity," and is directly contrary to all capacities of a friendship, or the entertainments of necessary reproof.

3. Use not liberty of reproof in the days of sorrow and affliction; for the calamity itself is enough to chastise the gaieties of sinning persons, and to bring them to repentance; it may be sometimes fit to insinuate the mention of the cause of that sorrow in order to repentance, and a cure: but severe and biting language is then out of season, and it is like putting vinegar to an inflamed and smarting eye, it increases the anguish, and tempts into impatience. In the accidents of a sad person, we must do as nurses to their falling children, snatch them up and still their cryings, and entertain their passion with some delightful avocation: but chide not then, when the sorrowful man needs to be refreshed. When Crates, the cynic, met Demetrius Phalereus in his banishment and trouble, he went to him and spoke to him friendly, and used his philosophy in the ministries of comfort, and taught him to bear his trouble nobly, and so wrought upon the criminal and wild Demetrius; and he moved him to repentance, who, if he had been chidden, (as he expected,) would have scorned the manners of the cynic, and hated his presence and institution; and Perseus killed Euchus and Eulæus, for reproving his rashness, when he was newly defeated by the Romans.

4. Avoid all the evil appendages of this liberty:—for since to reprove a sinning brother is, at the best, but an unwelcome and invidious employment, though it may also be understood to be full of charity; yet, therefore, we must not make it to be hateful by adding reproach, scorn, violent expressions, scurrility, derision, or bitter invectives. Jerome invited Epicharmus to supper; and he, knowing that Jerome had unfortunately killed his friend, replied to his invitation, "Atqui nuper cum amicos immolares, non vorâsti," "I think I may come, for when thou didst sacrifice thy friends, thou didst not devour them." This was a bitter sarcasm, and might, with more prudence and charity, have been avoided. They that intend charitably and conduct wisely, take occasions and proper seasons of reproof, they do it by way of question and similitude, by narrative and apologues, by commending something in him that is good, and discommending the same fault in other persons, by way that may disgrace that vice, and preserve the reputation of the man. Ammonius, observing that his scholars were nice and curious in their diet, and too effeminate for a philosophical life, caused his freed-man to chastise his boy for not dining without vinegar, and all the while looked upon the young gentlemen, and read to them a lecture of severity. Thus our dearest Lord reproved St. Peter; he looked upon him when the sign was given with the crowing of the cock, and so chid him into a shower of penitential tears. Some use to mingle praises with their reprehensions, and to invite their friend's patience to endure remedy, by ministering some pleasure with their medicine; for as no wise man can well endure to be praised by him that knows not how to dispraise, and to reprove; so neither will they endure to be reproved by him that knows not how to praise; for reproof from such a man betrays too great a love of himself, and an illiberal spirit: he that will reprove wisely, must efform himself into all images of things which innocently and wisely he can put on; not by changing his manners, his principles, and the consequences of his discourse, (as Alcibiades was supposed to do,) for it is best to keep the severity of our own principles, and the manner of our own living; for so Plato lived at Syracuse, just as he lived in the Academy; he was the same to Dionysius that he was to Dion: but this I mean, that he who means to win souls, and prevail to his brother's institution, must, as St. Paul did, effigiate and conform himself to those circumstances of living and discourse, by which he may prevail upon the per-

[b] Jer. x. 11.

suasions, by complying with the affections and usages of men.

These are the measures by which we are to communicate our counsels and advices to our erring brethren: to which I add this last advice, that no man should, at that time in which he is reproved, give counsel and reproof to his reprover, for that betrays an angry spirit, and makes discord out of piety, and changes charity into wrangling; and it looking like a revenge, makes it appear that himself took the first reproof for an injury.

That which remains now is, that I persuade men to do it, and that I persuade men to suffer it; it is sometimes hard to do it, but the cause is only, because it is hard to bear it; for if men were but apprehensive of their danger, and were not desirous to die, there were no more to be said in this affair; they would be as glad to entertain a severe reprover as a careful physician; of whom because most men are so willing to make use, so thankful for their care, so great valuers of their skill, such lovers of their persons,—no man is put to it to persuade men to be physicians, because there is no need to persuade men to live, or to be in health: if therefore men would as willingly be virtuous as be healthful, as willingly do no evil as suffer none, be as desirous of heaven as of a long life on earth, all the difficulties and temptations against this duty of reproving our sinning brother would soon be concealed; but let it be as it will, we must do it in duty and piety to him that needs, and if he be impatient of it, he needs more: "Et per hujusmodi offensas emetiendum est confragosum hoc iter:" it is a troublesome employment, but it is duty and charity; and therefore, when it can, with hope of success, with prudence and piety, be done, no other consideration ought to interpose. And for the other part, those I mean who ought to be reproved,—they are to remember, that themselves give pensions to the preacher on purpose to be reproved if they shall need it;—that God hath instituted a holy order of men to that very purpose, that they should be severally told of all that is amiss;—that themselves chide their children and their servants for their good, and that they may amend;—and that they endure thirst to cure their dropsies:—that they suffer burnings to prevent gangrenes;—and endure the cutting off a limb to preserve their lives;—and therefore, that it is a strange witchcraft and a prodigious folly, that, at so easy a mortification as the suffering of a plain friendly reproof, they will not set forward their interest of heaven, and suffer themselves to be set forward in their hopes of heaven:

——————dura fatemur
Esse; sed, ut valeas, multa dolenda feras.

And when all remember, that flattery and importune silence suffer the mighty to perish like fools and inconsiderate persons, it ought to awake our spirits, and make us to attend to the admonitions of a friend, with a silence great as midnight, and watchful as a widow's eyes. It was a strange thing, that Valentinian should, in the midst of so many christian prelates, make a law to establish polygamy, and that no bishop should dare to reprehend him. The effect of it was this, that he had a son by a second wife, the first being alive and not divorced, and he left him heir of a great part of the empire; and what the effect of that was to his soul, God, who is his judge, best knows.

If now at last it be inquired—whether every man is bound to reprove every man, if he sins, and if he converse with him,—I answer, that if it should be so, it were to no purpose, and therefore for it there is no commandment; every man that can, may instruct him that wants it; but every man may not reprove him that is already instructed. That it is an act of charity, for which there are no measures, but the other's necessity, and his own opportunity; but this is also an act of discipline, and must, in many cases, suppose an authority; and in all cases such a liberty as is not fit to be permitted to mean, and ignorant, and inferior persons. I end this with the saying of a wise person, advising to every one concerning the use of the tongue, "Aut lucrentur vitam loquendo, aut tacendo abscondant scientiam;" if they speak, let them minister to the good of souls; if they speak not, let them minister to sobriety; in the first, they serve the end of charity; in the other, of humility.

TWENTY-SEVEN SERMONS

PREACHED AT GOLDEN GROVE;

BEING

FOR THE SUMMER HALF-YEAR,

BEGINNING ON WHITSUNDAY, AND ENDING ON THE TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE AND TRULY NOBLE

RICHARD LORD VAUGHAN,

EARL OF CARBERY, BARON OF EMLIN AND MOLINGAR, KNIGHT OF THE HONOURABLE ORDER OF THE BATH.

My Lord,

I now present to your Lordship a copy of those Sermons, the publication of which was first designed by the appetites of that hunger and thirst of righteousness, which made your dear Lady (that rare soul) so dear to God, that he was pleased speedily to satisfy her, by carrying her from our shallow and impure cisterns, to drink out of the fountains of our Saviour. My Lord, I shall but prick your tender eye, if I shall remind your Lordship how diligent a hearer, how careful a recorder, how prudent an observer, how sedulous a practiser, of holy discourses she was; and that therefore it was, that what did slide through her ear, she was desirous to place before her eye, that by those windows they might enter in, and dwell in her heart: but because, by this truth, I shall do advantage to the following discourses, give me leave (My Lord) to fancy, that this book is derived upon your Lordship almost in the nature of a legacy from her, whose every thing was dearer to your Lordship than your own eyes; and that what she was pleased to believe apt to minister to her devotions, and the religions of her pious and discerning soul,—may also be allowed a place in your closet, and a portion of your retirement, and a lodging in your thoughts, that they may encourage and instruct your practice, and promote that interest which is, and ought to be, dearer to you, than all those blessings and separations, with which God hath remarked your family and person.

My Lord, I confess the publication of these Sermons can so little serve the ends of my reputation, that I am therefore pleased the rather to do it, because I cannot at all be tempted, in so doing, to minister to any thing of vanity. Sermons may please when they first strike the ear, and yet appear flat and ignorant when they are offered to the eye, and to an understanding that can consider at leisure. I remember, that a young gentleman of Athens, being to answer for his life, hired an orator to make his defence, and it pleased him well at his first reading; but when the young man, by often reading it that he might recite it publicly by heart, began to grow weary and displeased with it, the orator bade him consider, that the judges and the people were to hear him but once, and then it was likely they, at that first instant, might be as well pleased as he. This hath often represented to my mind the condition and fortune of sermons, and that I now part with the advantage they had in their delivery; but I have sufficiently answered myself in that, and am at rest perfectly in my thoughts as to that particular, if I can in any degree serve the interest of souls, and (which is next to that) obey the piety, and record the memory, of that dear saint, whose name and whose soul is blessed: for in both these ministries I doubt not but your Lordship will be pleased, and account as if I had done also some service to yourself; your religion makes me sure

of the first, and your piety puts the latter past my fears. However, I suppose in the whole account of this affair, this publication may be esteemed but like preaching to a numerous auditory; which if I had done, it would have been called either duty or charity; and therefore, will not now so readily be censured for vanity, if I make use of all the ways I can, to minister to the good of souls. But because my intentions are fair in themselves, and, I hope, are acceptable to God, and will be fairly expounded by your Lordship (whom for so great reason I so much value)—I shall not trouble you or the world with an apology for this so free publishing my weaknesses: I can better secure my reputation, by telling men how they ought to entertain sermons; for if they that read or hear, do their duty aright, the preacher shall soon be secured of his fame, and untouched by censure.

1. For it were well if men would not inquire after the learning of the sermon, or its deliciousness to the ear or fancy, but observe its usefulness; not what concerns the preacher, but what concerns themselves; not what may make a vain reflection upon him, but what may substantially serve their own needs; that the attending to his discourses may not be spent in vain talk concerning him or his disparagements, but may be used as a duty and a part of religion, to minister to edification and instruction. When St. John reckoned the principles of evil actions, he told but of three,—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. But there was then also in the world (and now it is grown into age, and strength, and faction) another lust, the lust of the ear,—and a fifth also, the lust of the tongue. Some people have an insatiable appetite in hearing; and hear only that they may hear, and talk, and make a party: they enter into their neighbour's house to kindle their candle, and espying there a glaring fire, sit down upon the hearth, and warm themselves all day, and forget their errand; and, in the mean time, their own fires are not lighted, nor their families instructed or provided for, nor any need served, but a lazy pleasure, which is useless and impudent. Hearing or reading sermons, is, or ought to be, in order to practise; for so God intended it, that faith should come by hearing, and that charity should come by faith, and by both together we may be saved. For a man's ears (as Plutarch calls them) are "virtutum ansæ," by them we are to hold and apprehend virtue; and unless we use them as men do vessels of dishonour, filling them with things fit to be thrown away, with any thing that is not necessary, we are by them more nearly brought to God than by all the senses beside. For although things placed before the eye affect the mind more readily than the things we usually hear; yet the reason of that is, because we hear carelessly, and we hear variety: the same species dwells upon the eye, and represents the same object in union and single representment; but the objects of the ear are broken into fragments of periods, and words, and syllables, and must be attended with a careful understanding: and because every thing diverts the sound, and every thing calls off the understanding, and the spirit of a man is truantly and trifling; therefore it is, that what men hear does so little affect them, and so weakly work toward the purposes of virtue: and yet nothing does so affect the mind of man as those vices, to which we cannot choose but attend; and thunder and all loud voices from heaven rend the most stony heart, and make the most obstinate pay to God the homage of trembling and fear; and the still voice of God usually takes the tribute of love, and choice, and obedience. Now since hearing is so effective an instrument of conveying impresses and images of things, and exciting purposes, and fixing resolutions, unless we hear weakly and imperfectly; it will be of the greater concernment that we be curious to hear in order to such purposes, which are perfective of the soul and of the Spirit, and not to dwell in fancy and speculation, in pleasures and trifling arrests, which continue the soul in its infancy and childhood, never letting it go forth into the wisdom and virtues of a man. I have read concerning Dionysius of Sicily, that, being delighted extremely with a minstrel that sung well, and struck his harp dexterously, he promised to give him a great reward; and that raised the fancy of the man, and made him play better. But when the music was done, and the man waited for his great hope, the king dismissed him empty, telling him, that he should carry away as much of the promised reward as himself did of the music, and that he had paid him sufficiently with the pleasure of the promise for the pleasure of the song: both their ears had been equally delighted, and the profit just none at all. So it is in many men's hearing sermons: they admire the preacher, and he pleases their ears, and neither of them both bear along with them any good; and the hearer hath as little good by the sermon, as the preacher by the air of the people's breath, when they make a noise, and admire, and understand not. And that also is a second caution I desire all men would take,

2. That they may never trouble the affairs of preaching and hearing respectively, with admiring the person of any man. To admire a preacher is such a reward of his pains and worth, as if you should crown a conqueror with a garland of roses, or a bride with laurel; it is an indecency, it is no part of the reward which could be intended for him. For though it be a good-natured folly, yet it hath in it much danger: for by that means the preacher may lead his hearers captive, and make them servants of a faction, or of a lust; it makes them so much the less to be servants of Christ, by how much they call any man "master upon earth;" it weakens the heart and hands of others: it places themselves in a rank much below their proper station, changing from hearing the word of God, to admiration of the persons and faces of men; and it being a fault that falls upon the more easy natures and softer understandings, does more easily abuse a man. And though such a person may have the good fortune to admire a good man and a wise; yet it is an ill disposition, and makes him liable to every man's abuse. "Stupidum hominem quâvis oratione percelli," said Heraclitus; "An undiscerning person is apt to be cozened by every oration." And, besides this, that preacher, whom some do admire, others will most certainly envy; and that also is to be

provided against with diligence: and you must not admire too forwardly, for your own sake, lest you fall into the hands of a worse preacher; and for his sake, whom, when you admire, you also love, for others will be apt to envy him.

3. But that must by all men be avoided; for envy is the worst counsellor in the world, and the worst hearer of a wise discourse. I pity those men who live upon flattery and wonder, and while they sit at the foot of the doctor's chair, stare in his face, and cry, Ἀκριβῶς, ὦ μεγάλου φιλοσόφου! "Rarely spoken, admirably done!" They are like callow and unfeathered birds, gaping perpetually to be fed from another's mouth, and they never come to the knowledge of the truth; such a knowledge as is effective, and expressed in a prudent and holy life. But those men that envy the preacher, besides that they are great enemies of the Holy Ghost, and are spitefully evil, because God is good to him, they are also enemies to themselves. He that envies the honours or the riches of another, envies for his own sake, and he would fain be rich with that wealth, which sweats in his neighbour's coffers: but he that envies him that makes good sermons, envies himself, and is angry because himself may receive the benefit, and be improved, or delighted, or instructed, by another. He that is apt fondly to admire any man's person, must cure himself by considering, that the preacher is God's minister and servant; that he speaks God's word, and does it by the divine assistance; that he hath nothing of his own but sin and imperfection; that he does but his duty, and that also hardly enough; that he is highly answerable for his talent, and stands deeply charged with the cure of souls; and therefore, that he is to be highly esteemed for the work's sake, not for the person: his industry and his charity are to be beloved, his ability is to be accounted upon another stock, and for it the preacher and the hearer are both to give God thanks; but nothing is due to the man for that, save only that it is the rather to be employed, because by it we may better be instructed: but if any other reflection be made upon his person, it is next to the sin and danger of Herod and the people, when the fine oration was made μετὰ πολλῆς φαντασίας, "with huge fancy;" the people were pleased, and Herod was admired, and God was angry, and an angel was sent to strike him with death and with dishonour. But the envy against a preacher is to be cured by a contrary discourse; and we must remember, that he is in the place of God, and hath received the gift of God, and the aids of the Holy Ghost; that by his abilities God is glorified, and we are instructed, and the interests of virtue and holy religion are promoted; that by this means God, who deserves that all souls should serve him for ever, is likely to have a fairer harvest of glory and service; and therefore, that envy is against him; that if we envy because *we* are not the instrument of this good to others, we must consider, that we desire the praise to ourselves, not to God. Admiration of a man supposes him to be inferior to the person so admired, but then he is pleased so to be; but envy supposes him as low, and he is displeased at it; and the envious man is not only less than the other man's virtue, but also contrary: the former is a vanity, but this is a vice; that wants wisdom, but this wants wisdom and charity too; that supposes an absence of some good, but this is a direct affliction and calamity.

4. And, after all this, if the preacher be not despised, he may proceed cheerfully in doing his duty, and the hearer may have some advantages by every sermon. I remember that Homer says, the wooers of Penelope laughed at Ulysses, because at his return he called for a loaf, and did not, to show his gallantry, call for swords and spears. Ulysses was so wise as to call for that he needed, and had it, and it did him more good than a whole armoury would in his case. So is the plainest part of an easy and honest sermon; it is the sincere milk of the word, and nourishes a man's soul, though represented in its own natural simplicity; and there is hardly any orator but you may find occasion to praise something of him. When Plato misliked the order and disposition of the oration of Lysias, yet he praised the good words and the elocution of the man. Euripides was commended for his fulness, Parmenides for his composition, Phocylides for his easiness, Archilochus for his argument, Sophocles for the unequalness of his style; so may men praise their preacher: he speaks pertinently, or he contrives wittily, or he speaks comely, or the man is pious, or charitable, or he hath a good text, or he speaks plainly, or he is not tedious, or, if he be, he is at least industrious, or he is the messenger of God; and that will not fail us, and let us love him for that. And we know those that love, can easily commend any thing, because they like every thing: and they say, fair men are like angels,—and the black are manly,—and the pale look like honey and the stars,—and the crook-nosed are like the sons of kings,—and if they be flat, they are gentle and easy,—and if they be deformed, they are humble, and not to be despised, because they have upon them the impresses of divinity, and they are the sons of God. He that despises his preacher, is a hearer of arts and learning, not of the word of God; and though, when the word of God is set off with advantages and entertainments of the better faculties of our humility, it is more useful and of more effect; yet, when the word of God is spoken truly, though but read in plain language, it will become the disciple of Jesus to love that man whom God sends, and the public order and the laws have employed,—rather than to despise the weakness of him who delivers a mighty word.

Thus it is fit that men should be affected and employed when they hear and read sermons; coming hither not as into a theatre, where men observe the gestures or noises of the people, the brow and eyes of the most busy censurers, and make parties, and go aside with them that dislike every thing, or else admire not the things, but the persons; but as to a sacrifice, and as to a school where virtue is taught and exercised, and none come but such as put themselves under discipline, and intend to grow wiser, and more virtuous to appease their passion, from violent to become smooth and even, to have their faith

established, and their hope confirmed, and their charity enlarged. They that are otherwise affected, do not do their duty: but if they be so minded as they ought, I and all men of my employment shall be secured against the tongues and faces of men, who are "ingeniosi in alieno libro," "witty to abuse and undervalue another man's book." And yet, besides these spiritual arts already reckoned, I have one security more: for (unless I deceive myself) I intend the glory of God sincerely, and the service of Jesus, in this publication: and therefore, being I do not seek myself or my own reputation, I shall not be troubled if they be lost in the voices of busy people, so that I be accepted of God, and found of him in the day of the Lord's visitation.

My Lord, it was your charity and nobleness that gave me opportunity to do this service (little or great) unto religion; and whoever shall find any advantage to their soul by reading the following discourses, if they know how to bless God, and to bless all them that are God's instruments in doing them benefit, will (I hope) help to procure blessings to your person and family, and say a holy prayer, and name your Lordship in their litanies, and remember, that at your own charges you have digged a well, and placed cisterns in the highways, that they may drink and be refreshed, and their souls may bless you. My Lord, I hope this, even because I very much desire it, and because you exceedingly deserve it; and, above all, because God is good and gracious, and loves to reward such a charity, and such a religion, as is yours, by which you have employed me in the service of God, and in the ministries to your family. My Lord, I am, most heartily, and for very many dear obligations,

Your Lordship's most obliged,

Most humble,

And most affectionate servant,

TAYLOR.

SERMON I. WHITSUNDAY.

OF THE SPIRIT OF GRACE.

But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead, because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.—Rom. viii. 9, 10.

THIS day, in which the church commemorates the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the apostles, was the first beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ. This was the first day that the religion was professed: now the apostles first opened their commission, and read it to all the people. "The Lord gave *his Spirit*, (or, the Lord gave his Word,) and great was the company of the preachers." For so I make bold to render that prophecy of David. Christ was "the Word" of God, "Verbum æternum;" but the Spirit was the Word of God, "Verbum patefactum:" Christ was the Word manifested *in* the flesh; the Spirit was the Word manifested *to* flesh, and set in dominion over, and in hostility against, the flesh. The gospel and the Spirit are the same thing; not in substance; but "the manifestation of the Spirit is the gospel of Jesus Christ:" and because he was this day manifested, the gospel was this day first preached, and it became a law to us, called "the law of the Spirit of life;"[a] that is, a law taught us by the Spirit, leading us to life eternal. But the gospel is called "the Spirit;" 1. Because it contains in it such glorious mysteries, which were revealed by the immediate inspirations of the Spirit, not only in the matter itself, but also in the manner and powers to apprehend them. For what power of human understanding could have found out the incarnation of a God; that two natures [a finite, and an infinite] could have been concentred into one hypostasis (or person); that a virgin should be a mother; that dead men should live again; that the κόνις ὀστέων λυθέντων, "the ashes of dissolved bones" should become bright as the sun, blessed as the angels, swift in motion as thought, clear as the purest noon; that God should so love us, as to be willing to be reconciled to us, and yet that himself must die that he might pardon us; that God's most holy Son should give us his body to eat, and his blood to crown our chalices, and his Spirit to sanctify our souls, to turn our bodies into temperance, our souls into minds, our minds into spirit, our spirit into glory; that he, who can give us all things, who is Lord of men and angels, and King of all the creatures, should pray to God for us without intermission; that he, who reigns over all the world, should, at the day of judgment, "give up the kingdom to God the Father," and yet, after this resignation, himself and we with him should for ever reign the more gloriously; that we should be justified by

[a] Rom. viii. 2.

faith in Christ, and that charity should be a part of faith, and that both should work as acts of duty, and as acts of relation; that God should crown the imperfect endeavours of his saints with glory, and that a human act should be rewarded with an eternal inheritance; that the wicked, for the transient pleasure of a few minutes, should be tormented with an absolute eternity of pains; that the waters of baptism, when they are hallowed by the Spirit, shall purge the soul from sin; and that the spirit of man shall be nourished with the consecrated and mysterious elements, and that any such nourishment should bring a man up to heaven: and, after all this, that all christian people, all that will be saved, must be partakers of the Divine nature, of the nature, the infinite nature, of God, and must dwell in Christ, and Christ must dwell in them, and they must be in the Spirit, and the Spirit must be for ever in them? These are articles of so mysterious a philosophy, that we could have inferred them from no premises, discoursed them upon the stock of no natural or scientifical principles; nothing but God and God's Spirit could have taught them to us: and therefore the gospel is "Spiritus patefactus," "the manifestation of the Spirit," "ad ædificationem,"[b] as the apostle calls it,) "for edification," and building us up to be a holy temple to the Lord.

2. But when we had been taught all these mysterious articles, we could not, by any human power, have understood them, unless the Spirit of God had given us a new light, and created in us a new capacity, and made us to be a new creature, of another definition. "Animalis homo," ψυχικὸς, that is, as St. Jude expounds the word, πνεῦμα μὴ ἔχων, "The animal, or the natural man, the man that hath not the Spirit, cannot discern the things of God, for they are spiritually discerned;"[c] that is, not to be understood but by the light proceeding from the Sun of righteousness, and by that eye whose bird is the holy Dove, whose candle is the gospel.

> Scio incapacem te sacramenti, impie,
> Non posse cœcis mentibus mysterium
> Haurire nostrum: nil diurnum nox capit. PRUDENT.

He that shall discourse Euclid's elements to a swine, or preach (as venerable Bede's story reports of him) to a rock, or talk metaphysics to a boar, will as much prevail upon his assembly, as St. Peter and St. Paul could do upon uncircumcised hearts and ears, upon the indisposed Greek, and prejudicate Jews. An ox will relish the tender flesh of kids with as much gust and appetite, as an unspiritual and unsanctified man will do the discourses of angels or of an apostle, if he should come to preach the secrets of the gospel. And we find it true by a sad experience. How many times doth God speak to us by his servants the prophets, by his Son, by his apostles, by sermons, by spiritual books, by thousands of homilies, and arts of counsel and insinuation; and we sit as unconcerned as the pillars of a church, and hear the sermons as the Athenians did a story, or as we read a gazette! And if ever it come to pass, that we tremble, as Felix did, when we hear a sad story of death, of "righteousness and judgment to come," then we put it off to another time, or we forget it, and think we had nothing to do but to give the good man a hearing; and as Anacharsis said of the Greeks, they used money for nothing but to cast account withal; so our hearers make use of sermons and discourses evangelical, but to fill up void spaces of their time, to help to tell an hour with, or pass it without tediousness. The reason of this is a sad condemnation to such persons; they have not yet entertained the Spirit of God, they are in darkness: they were washed in water, but never baptized with the Spirit; "for these things are spiritually discerned." They would think the preacher rude, if he should say,—they are not christians, they are not within the covenant of the gospel:—but it is certain, that "the Spirit of manifestation" is not yet upon them; and that is the first effect of the Spirit, whereby we can be called sons of God, or relatives of Christ. If we do not apprehend, and greedily suck in, the precepts of this holy discipline, as aptly as merchants do discourse of gain, or farmers of fair harvests, we have nothing but the name of christians; but we are no more such really, than mandrakes are men, or sponges are living creatures.

3. The gospel is called "Spirit," because it consists of spiritual promises and spiritual precepts, and makes all men that embrace it truly to be spiritual men; and therefore St. Paul adds an epithet beyond this, calling it "a quickening Spirit,"[d] that is, it puts life into our spirits, which the law could not. The law bound us to punishment, but did not help us to obedience, because it gave not the promise of eternal life to its disciples. "The Spirit," that is, "the gospel," only does this: and this alone is it which comforts afflicted minds, which puts activeness into wearied spirits, which inflames our cold desires, and does ἀναζωπυρεῖν, blows up sparks into live coals, and coals up to flames, and flames into perpetual burnings. And it is impossible that any man,—who believes and considers the great, the infinite, the unspeakable, the unimaginable, the never-ceasing joys, that are prepared for all the sons and daughters of the gospel,—should not desire them: and, unless he be a fool, he cannot but use means to obtain them, effective, hearty pursuances. For it is not directly in the nature of a man to neglect so great a good; there must be something in his manners, some obliquity in his will, or madness in his intellectuals, or incapacity in his naturals, that must make him sleep such a reward away, or change it for the pleasure of a drunken fever, or the vanity of a mistress, or the rage of a passion, or the unreasonableness of any sin. However, this promise is the life of all our actions, and the Spirit that first taught it is the life of our souls.

But, beyond this, is the reason which is the consummation of all the faithful. The "gospel" is called the "Spirit," because by and in the gospel, God hath given to us not only "the Spirit of manifestation," that is, of instruction and of catechism, of

[b] 1 Cor. xii. 7. [c] 1 Cor. ii. 14. [d] 1 Cor. xv. 45.

faith and confident assent; but the "Spirit of confirmation, or obsignation" to all them that believe and obey the gospel of Christ: that is, the power of God is come upon our hearts, by which, in an admirable manner, we are made sure of a glorious inheritance; made sure (I say) in the nature of the thing; and our own persuasions also are confirmed with an excellent, a comfortable, a discerning, and a reasonable hope: in the strength of which, and by whose aid, as we do not doubt of the performance of the promise, so we vigorously pursue all the parts of the condition, and are enabled to work all the work of God, so as not to be affrighted with fear, or seduced by vanity, or oppressed by lust, or drawn off by evil example, or abused by riches, or imprisoned by ambition and secular designs. This the Spirit of God does work in all his servants; and is called, "the Spirit of obsignation, or the confirming Spirit," because it confirms our hope, and assures our title to life eternal; and by means of it, and other its collateral assistances, it also confirms us in our duty, that we may not only profess in word, but live lives according to the gospel. And this is the sense of "the Spirit" mentioned in the text; "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you:" that is, if ye be made partakers of the gospel, or of "the Spirit of manifestation;" if ye be truly entitled to God, and have received the promise of the Father, then are ye not carnal men; ye are "spiritual," ye are "in the Spirit:" if ye have the Spirit in one sense to any purpose, ye have it also in another: if the Spirit be in you, you are in it; if it hath given you hope, it hath also enabled and ascertained your duty. For "the Spirit of manifestation" will but upbraid you in the shame and horrors of a sad eternity, if you have not "the Spirit of obsignation:" if the Holy Ghost be not come upon you to great purposes of holiness, all other pretences are vain,—ye are still in the flesh, which shall never inherit the kingdom of God.

"In the Spirit:" that is, in the power of the Spirit. So the Greeks call him ἔνθεον, "who is possessed by a spirit," whom God hath filled with a celestial immission; he is said to be in God, when God is in him. And it is a similitude taken from persons encompassed with guards; they are "in custodia," that is "in their power," under their command, moved at their dispose; they rest in their time, and receive laws from their authority, and admit visitors whom they appoint, and must be employed as they shall suffer: so are men who are in the Spirit; that is, they believe as he teaches, they work as he enables, they choose what he calls good, they are friends of his friends, and they hate with his hatred: with this only difference, that persons in custody are forced to do what their keepers please, and nothing is free but their wills; but they that are under the command of the Spirit, do all things which the Spirit commands, but they do them cheerfully; and their will is now the prisoner, but it is "in liberâ custodiâ," the will is where it ought to be, and where it desires to be, and it cannot easily choose any thing else, because it is extremely in love with this, as the saints and angels in their state of beatific vision cannot choose but love God; and yet the liberty of their choice is not lessened, because the object fills all the capacities of the will and the understanding. Indifferency to an object is the lowest degree of liberty, and supposes unworthiness or defect in the object, or the apprehension: but the will is then the freest and most perfect in its operation, when it entirely pursues a good with so certain determination and clear election, that the contrary evil cannot come into dispute or pretence. Such in our proportions is the liberty of the sons of God; it is a holy and amiable captivity to the Spirit: the will of man is in love with those chains, which draw us to God, and loves the fetters that confine us to the pleasures and religion of the kingdom. And as no man will complain that his temples are restrained, and his head is prisoner, when it is encircled with a crown; so when the Son of God hath made us free, and hath only subjected us to the service and dominion of the Spirit, we are free as princes within the circle of their diadem, and our chains are bracelets, and the law is a law of liberty, and "his service is perfect freedom;" and the more we are subjects, the more "we shall reign as kings;" and the faster we run, the easier is our burden; and Christ's yoke is like feathers to a bird, not loads, but helps to motion, without them the body falls; and we do not pity birds, when in summer we wish them unfeathered and callow, or bald as eggs, that they might be cooler and lighter. Such is the load and captivity of the soul, when we do the work of God, and are his servants, and under the government of the Spirit. They that strive to be quit of this subjection, love the liberty of outlaws, and the licentiousness of anarchy, and the freedom of sad widows and distressed orphans: for so rebels, and fools, and children, long to be rid of their princes, and their guardians, and their tutors, that they may be accursed without law, and be undone without control, and be ignorant and miserable without a teacher and without discipline. He that is in the Spirit, is under tutors and governors, until the time appointed of the Father, just as all great heirs are; only, the first seizure the Spirit makes is upon the will. He that loves the yoke of Christ, and the discipline of the gospel, he is in the Spirit, that is, in the Spirit's power.

Upon this foundation the apostle hath built these two propositions. 1. Whosoever hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his: he does not belong to Christ at all: he is not partaker of his Spirit, and therefore shall never be partaker of his glory. 2. Whosoever is in Christ is dead to sin, and lives to the Spirit of Christ: that is, lives a spiritual, a holy, and a sanctified life. These are to be considered distinctly.

1. All that belong to Christ have the Spirit of Christ. Immediately before the ascension, our blessed Saviour bid his disciples "tarry in Jerusalem, till they should receive the promise of the Father." Whosoever stay at Jerusalem, and are in the actual communion of the church of God, shall certainly receive this promise. "For it is made to

you and to your children," (saith St. Peter,) "and to as many as the Lord our God shall call."—All shall receive the Spirit of Christ, the promise of the Father, because this was the great instrument of distinction between the law and the gospel. In the law, God gave his Spirit, 1. to some; to them, 2. extra-regularly; 3. without solemnity; 4. in small proportions, like the dew upon Gideon's fleece; a little portion was wet sometimes with the dew of heaven, when all the earth besides was dry. And the Jews called it "filiam vocis," "the daughter of a voice," still, and small, and seldom, and that by secret whispers, and sometimes inarticulate, by way of enthusiasm, rather than of instruction; and God spake by the prophets, transmitting the sound as through an organ-pipe, things which themselves oftentimes understood not. But in the gospel, the Spirit is given without measure: first poured forth upon our head Christ Jesus; then descending upon the beard of Aaron, the fathers of the church; and thence falling, like the tears of the balsam of Judea, upon the foot of the plant, upon the lowest of the people. And this is given regularly to all that ask it, to all that can receive it, and by a solemn ceremony, and conveyed by a sacrament: and is now, not the daughter of a voice, but the mother of many voices, of divided tongues, and united hearts; of the tongues of prophets, and the duty of saints; of the sermons of apostles, and the wisdom of governors: it is the parent of boldness and fortitude to martyrs, the fountain of learning to doctors, an ocean of all things excellent to all who are within the ship and bounds of the catholic church: so that old men and young men, maidens and boys, the scribe and the unlearned, the judge and the advocate, the priest and the people, are full of the Spirit, if they belong to God. Moses's wish is fulfilled, and all the Lord's people are prophets in some sense or other.

In the wisdom of the ancients it was observed, that there are four great cords, which tie the heart of man to inconvenience, and a prison, making it a servant of vanity, and an heir of corruption; 1. pleasure, and, 2. pain; 3. fear, and, 4. desire.

> Πρὸς τὸ τετράχορδον δ' ὅλον,
> τὴν ἡδονὴν, ἐπιθυμίαν, λύπην, φόβον,
> ἀσκήσεώς γε καὶ πολλῆς μάχης δέοι.

These are they that exercise all the wisdom and resolutions of man, and all the powers that God hath given him.

> οὗτοι γὰρ, οὗτοι καὶ διὰ σπλάγχνων ἀεὶ
> χωροῦσι καὶ κυκῶσιν ἀνθρώπων κέαρ, said Agathon.

These are those evil spirits that possess the heart of man, and mingle with all his actions; so that either men are tempted to, 1. "lust by pleasure," or, 2. to "baser arts by covetousness," or, 3. to "impatience by sorrow," or, 4. to "dishonourable actions by fear:" and this is the state of man by nature, and under the law, and for ever, till the Spirit of God came, and by four special operations cured these four inconveniences, and restrained or sweetened these unwholesome waters.

1. God gave us his Spirit that we might be insensible of worldly pleasures, having our souls wholly filled with spiritual and heavenly relishes. For when God's Spirit hath entered into us, and possessed us as his temple, or as his dwelling, instantly we begin to taste manna, and to loathe the diet of Egypt; we begin to consider concerning heaven, and to prefer eternity before moments, and to love the pleasures of the soul above the sottish and beastly pleasures of the body. Then we can consider that the pleasures of a drunken meeting cannot make recompence for the pains of a surfeit, and that night's intemperance; much less for the torments of eternity: then we are quick to discern that the itch and scab of lustful appetites is not worth the charges of a chirurgeon: much less can it pay for the disgrace, the danger, the sickness, the death, and the hell, of lustful persons. Then we wonder that any man should venture his head to get a crown unjustly; or that, for the hazard of a victory, he should throw away all his hopes of heaven certainly.

A man that hath tasted God's Spirit, can instantly discern the madness that is in rage, the folly and the disease that are in envy, the anguish and tediousness that are in lust, the dishonour that is in breaking our faith and telling a lie; and understands things truly as they are; that is, that charity is the greatest nobleness in the world; that religion hath in it the greatest pleasures; that temperance is the best security of health; that humility is the surest way to honour. And all these relishes are nothing but antepasts of heaven, where the quintessence of all these pleasures shall be swallowed for ever; where the chaste shall follow the Lamb, and the virgins sing there where the mother of God shall reign; and the zealous converters of souls, and labourers in God's vineyard, shall worship eternally; where St. Peter and St. Paul do wear their crowns of righteousness; and the patient persons shall be rewarded with Job, and the meek persons with Christ and Moses, and all with God: the very expectation of which,—proceeding from a hope begotten in us by "the Spirit of manifestation," and bred up and strengthened by "the Spirit of obsignation,"—is so delicious an entertainment of all our reasonable appetites, that a spiritual man can no more be removed or enticed from the love of God and of religion, than the moon from her orb, or a mother from loving the son of her joys and of her sorrows.

This was observed by St. Peter; "As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby; if so be that ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." [f] When once we have tasted the grace of God, the sweetnesses of his Spirit; then no food but "the food of angels," no cup but "the cup of salvation," the "divining cup," in which we drink salvation to our God, and call upon the name of the Lord with ravishment and thanksgiving. And there is no greater external testimony that we are in the Spirit, and that the Spirit dwells in us, than if we find joy and delight and spiritual pleasure in the greatest mysteries of our religion; if we communicate often, and that with appetite, and a forward choice, and an unwearied devotion, and a heart truly

[f] 1 Pet. ii. 2.

fixed upon God, and upon the offices of a holy worship. He that loathes good meat, is sick at heart, or near it; and he that despises, or hath not a holy appetite to, the food of angels, the wine of elect souls, is fit to succeed the prodigal at his banquet of sin and husks, and to be partaker of the table of devils: but all they who have God's Spirit, love to feast at the supper of the Lamb, and have no appetites but what are of the Spirit, or servants to the Spirit. I have read of a spiritual person who saw heaven but in a dream, but such as made great impression upon him, and was represented with vigorous and pertinacious phantasms, not easily disbanding; and when he awaked he knew not his cell, he remembered not him that slept in the same dorter, nor could tell how night and day were distinguished, nor could discern oil from wine; but called out for his vision again: "Redde mihi campos meos floridos, columnam auream, comitem Hieronymum, assistentes angelos;" "Give me my fields again, my most delicious fields, my pillar of a glorious light, my companion St. Jerome, my assistant angels."—And this lasted till he was told of his duty, and matter of obedience, and the fear of a sin had disencharmed him, and caused him to take care, lest he lose the substance out of greediness to possess the shadow.

And if it were given to any of us to see paradise, or the third heaven, (as it was to St. Paul,) could it be that ever we should love any thing but Christ, or follow any guide but the Spirit, or desire any thing but heaven, or understand any thing to be pleasant but what shall lead thither? Now what a vision can do, that the Spirit doth certainly to them that entertain him. They that have him really, and not in pretence only, are certainly great despisers of the things of the world. The Spirit doth not create or enlarge our appetites of things below: spiritual men are not designed to reign upon earth, but to reign over their lusts and sottish appetites. The Spirit doth not inflame our thirst of wealth, but extinguishes it, and makes us to "esteem all things as loss, and as dung, so that we may gain Christ." No gain then is pleasant but godliness, no ambition but longings after heaven, no revenge but against ourselves for sinning; nothing but God and Christ: "Deus meus, et omnia:" and "date nobis animas, cætera vobis tollite," as the king of Sodom said to Abraham; "Secure but the souls to us, and take our goods." Indeed, this is a good sign that we have the Spirit.

St. John spake a hard saying, but by the Spirit of manifestation we are all taught to understand it: "Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."[g] The seed of God is the Spirit, which hath a plastic power to efform us "in similitudinem filiorum Dei," "into the image of the sons of God;" and as long as this remains in us, while the Spirit dwells in us, we cannot sin; that is, it is against our natures, our reformed natures, to sin. And as we say, we cannot endure such a potion, we cannot suffer such a pain; that is, we cannot without great trouble, we cannot without doing violence to our nature; so all spiritual men, all that are born of God, and the seed of God remains in them, "they cannot sin;" cannot *without trouble*, and doing against their natures, and their most passionate inclinations. A man, if you speak naturally, can masticate gums, and he can break his own legs, and he can sip up, by little draughts, mixtures of aloes, and rhubarb, of henbane, or the deadly nightshade; but he cannot do this naturally and willingly, cheerfully, or with delight. Every sin is against a good man's nature; he is ill at ease when he hath missed his usual prayers, he is amazed if he have fallen into an error, he is infinitely ashamed of his imprudence; he remembers a sin as he thinks of an enemy, or the horrors of a midnight apparition: for all his capacities, his understanding, and his choosing faculties, are filled up with the opinion and persuasions, with the love and with the desires, of God. And this, I say, is the great benefit of the Spirit, which God hath given to us as an antidote against worldly pleasures. And therefore, St. Paul joins them as consequent to each other: "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come," &c.[h] First, we are enlightened in baptism, and by "the Spirit of manifestation," the revelations of the gospel:—then we relish and taste interior excellencies, and we receive the Holy Ghost, "the Spirit of confirmation," and he gives us a taste of the powers of the world to come; that is, of the great efficacy that is in the article of eternal life, to persuade us to religion and holy living:—then we feel that as the belief of that article dwells upon our understanding, and is incorporated into our wills and choice, so we grow powerful to resist sin by the strengths of the Spirit, to defy all carnal pleasure, and to suppress and mortify it by the powers of this article: those are "the powers of the world to come."

2. The Spirit of God is given to all who truly belong to Christ, as an antidote against sorrows, against impatience, against the evil accidents of the world, and against the oppression and sinking of our spirits under the cross. There are in Scripture noted two births besides the natural; to which also by analogy we may add a third. The first is, to be born of water and the Spirit. It is ἓν διὰ δυοῖν, one thing signified by a divided appellative, by two substantives, "water *and* the Spirit," that is, "Spiritus aqueus," the "Spirit moving upon the waters of baptism." The second is, to be born of "Spirit and fire;" for so Christ was promised to "baptize us with the Holy Ghost and with fire;" that is, "cum Spiritu igneo," "with a fiery Spirit," the Spirit as it descended into Pentecost in the shape of fiery tongues. And as the watery Spirit washed away the sins of the church, so the Spirit of fire enkindles charity and the love of God. Τὸ πῦρ καθαίρει, τὸ ὕδωρ ἁγνίζει, (says Plutarch,) the Spirit is the same under both the titles, and it enables the church with

[g] 1 Epist. iii. 9.

[h] Heb. vi. 4.

gifts and graces. And from these there is another operation of the new birth, but the same Spirit, the Spirit of rejoicing, or "spiritus exultans, spiritus lætitiæ." "Now the God of hope fill you with all *joy* and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost."[i] There is a certain joy and spiritual rejoicing, that accompanies them in whom the Holy Ghost doth dwell; a joy in the midst of sorrow: a joy given to allay the sorrows of secular troubles, and to alleviate the burden of persecution. This St. Paul notes to this purpose: "And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost."[k] Worldly afflictions and spiritual joys may very well dwell together; and if God did not supply us out of his storehouses, the sorrows of this world would be more and unmixed, and the troubles of persecution would be too great for natural confidences. For who shall make him recompence that lost his life in a duel, fought about a draught of wine, or a cheaper woman? What arguments shall invite a man to suffer torments in testimony of a proposition of natural philosophy? And by what instruments shall we comfort a man who is sick and poor, and disgraced and vicious, and lies cursing, and despairs of any thing hereafter? That man's condition proclaims what it is to want the Spirit of God, "the Spirit of comfort." Now this Spirit of comfort is the hope and confidence, the certain expectation of partaking, in the inheritance of Jesus; this is the faith and patience of the saints; this is the refreshment of all wearied travellers, the cordial of all languishing sinners, the support of the scrupulous, the guide of the doubtful, the anchor of timorous and fluctuating souls, the confidence and the staff of the penitent. He that is deprived of his whole estate for a good conscience, by the Spirit he meets this comfort, that he shall find it again with advantage in the day of restitution; and this comfort was so manifest in the first days of christianity, that it was no unfrequent thing to see holy persons court a martyrdom, with a fondness as great as is our impatience and timorousness in every persecution. Till the Spirit of God comes upon us, we are ὀλιγόψυχοι. "Inopis nos atque pusilli finxerunt animi;" "we have little souls," little faith, and as little patience; we fall at every stumbling-block, and sink under every temptation; and our hearts fail us, and we die for fear of death, and lose our souls to preserve our estates or our persons, till the Spirit of God "fills us with joy in believing;" and the man that is in a great joy, cares not for any trouble that is less than his joy; and God hath taken so great care to secure this to us, that he hath turned it into a precept, "Rejoice evermore;" and, "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, Rejoice."[l] But this rejoicing must be only in the hope that is laid up for us, ἐν ἐλπίδι χαίροντες· so the apostle, "rejoicing in hope."[m] For although God sometimes makes a cup of sensible comfort to overflow the spirit of a man, and thereby loves to refresh his sorrows; yet that is from a secret principle not regularly given, not to be waited for, not to be prayed for, and it may fail us if we think upon it; but the hope of life eternal can never fail us, and the joy of that is great enough to make us suffer any thing, or to do any thing.

——— Ibimus, ibimus,
Ut cunque præcedes, supremum
Carpere iter comites parati. HOR.

To death, to bands, to poverty, to banishment, to tribunals, any whither in hope of life eternal; as long as this anchor holds, we may suffer a storm, but cannot suffer shipwreck. And I desire you, by the way, to observe how good a God we serve, and how excellent a religion Christ taught, when one of his great precepts is, that we should "rejoice and be exceeding glad:" and God hath given us the spirit of rejoicing, not a sullen melancholy spirit, not the spirit of bondage or of a slave, but the Spirit of his Son, consigning us by a holy conscience to "joys unspeakable and full of glory." And from hence you may also infer, that those who sink under a persecution, or are impatient in a sad accident, they put out their own fires which the Spirit of the Lord hath kindled, and lose those glories which stand behind the cloud.

SERMON II.

PART II.

3. The Spirit of God is given us as an antidote against evil concupiscences and sinful desires, and is then called "the Spirit of prayer and supplication." For, ever since the affections of the outward man prevailed upon the ruins of the soul, all our desires were sensual, and therefore hurtful; for, ever after, our body grew to be our enemy. In the loosenesses of nature, and amongst the ignorance or imperfection of gentile philosophy, men used to pray with their hands full of rapine, and their mouths full of blood; and their hearts full of malice; and they prayed accordingly, for an opportunity to steal, for a fair body, for a prosperous revenge, for a prevailing malice, for the satisfaction of whatsoever they could be tempted to by any object, by any lust, by any devil, whatsoever.

The Jews were better taught; for God was their teacher, and he gave the Spirit to them in single rays. But as the "Spirit of obsignation" was given to them under a seal, and within a veil, so the "Spirit of manifestation," or "patefaction," was like the gem of a vine, or the bud of a rose, plain "indices" and significations of life, and principles of juice and sweetness; but yet scarce out of the doors of their causes: they had the infancy of knowledge, and revelations to them were given as catechism is taught to our children: which they read with the eye of a bird, and speak with the

[i] Rom. xv. 13. [k] 1 Thess. i. 6. [l] 1 Thess. v. 16. [m] Rom. xii. 12.

tongue of a bee, and understand with the heart of a child; that is, weakly and imperfectly. And they understand so little, that, 1. they thought God heard them not, unless they spake their prayers, at least efforming their words within their lips; and, 2. their forms of prayer were so few and seldom, that to teach a form of prayer, or to compose a collect, was thought a work fit for a prophet, or the founder of an institution. 3. Add to this, that, as their promises were temporal, so were their hopes; as were their hopes, so were their desires; and, according to their desires, so were their prayers. And although the Psalms of David was their great office, and the treasury of devotion to their nation,—and very worthily; yet it was full of wishes for temporals, invocations of God the avenger, on God the Lord of hosts, on God the enemy of their enemies: and they desired their nation to be prospered, and themselves blessed, and distinguished from all the world by the effects of such desires. This was the state of prayer in their synagogues; save only that it had also this allay; 4. that their addresses to God were crass, material, typical, and full of shadows and imaginary, and patterns of things to come; and so in its very being and constitution was relative and imperfect. But that we may see how great things the Lord hath done for us, God hath poured his Spirit into our hearts, "the Spirit of prayer and supplication."

And now, 1. Christians "pray in their spirit," with sighs and groans, and know that God, who dwells within them, can as clearly distinguish those secret accents, and read their meaning in the Spirit, as plainly as he knows the voice of his own thunder, or could discern the letter of the law written in the tables of stone by the finger of God.

2. Likewise, "the Spirit helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought." This is, when God sends an affliction or persecution upon us, we are indeed extreme apt to lay our hand upon the wound, and never take it off, but when we lift it up in prayer to be delivered from that sadness; and then we pray fervently to be cured of a sickness, to be delivered from a tyrant, to be snatched from the grave, not to perish in the danger. But the Spirit of God hath, from all sad accidents, drawn the veil of error and the cloud of intolerableness, and hath taught us that our happiness cannot consist in freedom or deliverances from persecutions, but in patience, resignation, and noble sufferance; and that we are not then so blessed when God hath turned our scourges into ease and delicacy, as when we convert our very scorpions into the exercise of virtues: so that now the Spirit having helped our infirmities, that is, comforted our weaknesses and afflictions, our sorrow and impatience, by this proposition, that "All things work together for the good of them that fear God," he hath taught us to pray for grace, for patience under the cross, for charity to our persecutors, for rejoicing in tribulations, for perseverance and boldness in the faith, and for whatsoever will bring us safely to heaven.

3. Whereas only a Moses or a Samuel, a David or a Daniel, a John the Baptist or the Messias himself, could describe and indite forms of prayer and thanksgiving to the tune and accent of heaven; now every wise and good man is instructed perfectly in the Scriptures,—which are the writings of the Spirit,—what things he may, and what things he must, ask for.

4. The Spirit of God hath made our services to be spiritual, intellectual, holy, and effects of choice and religion, the consequence of a spiritual sacrifice, and of a holy union with God. The prayer of a christian is with the effects of the "Spirit of sanctification;" and then we pray with the Spirit, when we pray with holiness, which is the great fruit, the principal gift, of the Spirit. And this is by St. James called "the prayer of faith," and is said to be certain that it shall prevail. Such a praying with the Spirit when our prayers are the voices of our spirits, and our spirits are first taught, then sanctified by God's Spirit, shall never fail of its effect; because then it is that "the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us;" that is, hath enabled us to do it upon his strengths; we speak his sense, we live his life, we breathe his accents, we desire in order to his purposes, and our persons are gracious by his holiness, and are accepted by his interpellation and intercession in the act and offices of Christ. This is "praying with the Spirit."—To which, by way of explication, I add these two annexes of holy prayer, in respect of which also every good man prays with the Spirit.

5. The Spirit gives us great relish and appetite to our prayers; and this St. Paul calls [o] "serving of God in his spirit," ἐν πνεύματί μου; that is, with a willing mind: not as Jonas did his errand, but as Christ did die for us; he was straitened till he had accomplished it. And they—that say their prayers out of custom only, or to comply with external circumstances, or collateral advantages, or pray with trouble and unwillingness—give a very great testimony that they have not the Spirit of Christ within them, that Spirit which maketh intercession for the saints: but he that delighteth in his prayers, not by a sensible or fantastic pleasure, but whose choice dwells in his prayers, and whose conversation is with God in holy living, and praying accordingly, that man hath the Spirit of Christ, and therefore belongs to Christ; for by this Spirit it is that Christ prays in heaven for us: and if we do not pray on earth in the same manner according to our measures, we had as good hold our peace; our prayers are an abominable sacrifice, and send up to God no better a perfume, than if we burned "assa fœtida," or the raw flesh of a murdered man upon the altar of incense.

6. The Spirit of Christ and of prayer helps our infirmities, by giving us confidence and importunity. I put them together: for as our faith is, and our trust in God, so is our hope, and so is our prayer; weary or lasting, long or short, not in words, but in works and in desires: for the words of prayer are no part of the Spirit of prayer. Words may be the body of it, but the Spirit of prayer always consists

[o] Rom. i. 9.

in holiness, that is, in holy desires and holy actions. Words are not properly capable of being holy; all words are in themselves servants of things; and the holiness of a prayer is not at all concerned in the manner of its expression, but in the spirit of it, that is, in the violence of its desires, and the innocence of its ends, and the continuance of its employment. This is the verification of that great prophecy which Christ made, that "in all the world the true worshippers should worship in spirit and in truth;" that is, with a pure mind, with holy desires, for spiritual things, according to the mind of the Spirit, in the imitation of Christ's intercession, with perseverance, with charity or love. That is the Spirit of God, and these are the spiritualities of the gospel, and the formalities of prayers as they are christian and evangelical.

7. Some men have thought of a seventh way, and explicate our praying in the Spirit by a mere volubility of language: which indeed is a direct undervaluing the Spirit of God and of Christ, "the Spirit of manifestation and intercession:" it is to return to the materiality and imperfection of the law; it is to worship God in outward forms, and to think that God's service consists in shells and rinds, in lips and voices, in shadows and images of things; it is to retire from Christ to Moses, and, at the best, it is a going from real graces to imaginary gifts. And when praying with the Spirit hath in it so many excellencies, and consists of so many parts of holiness and sanctification, and is an act of the inner man; we shall be infinitely mistaken, if we let go this substance, and catch at the shadow, and sit down and rest in the imagination of an improbable, unnecessary, useless gift of speaking, to which the nature of many men, and the art of all learned men, and the very use and confidence of ignorant men, is too abundantly sufficient. Let us not so despise the Spirit of Christ, as to make it no other than the breath of our lungs. For though it might be possible, that at the first, and when forms of prayer were few and seldom, the Spirit of God might dictate the very words to the apostles, and first christians; yet, it follows not, that therefore he does so still, to all that pretend praying with the Spirit. For if he did not then, at the first, dictate words, (as we know not whether he did or no,) why shall he be supposed to do so now? If he did then, it follows that he does not now: because his doing it then, was sufficient for all men since: for so the forms taught by the Spirit were patterns for others to imitate, in all the descending ages of the church. There was once an occasion so great, that the Spirit of God did think it a work fit for him, to teach a man to weave silk, or embroider gold, or work in brass (as it happened to Bezaleel and Aholiah): but then, every weaver or worker in brass may, by the same reason, pretend that he works by the Spirit, as that he prays by the Spirit, if by prayer he means forming the words. For although in the case of working, it was certain that the Spirit did teach,—in the case of inditing or forming the words, it is not certain whether he did or no: yet because in both it was extraordinary, (if it was at all,) and ever since in both it is infinitely needless; to pretend the Spirit, in forms of every man's making, (even though they be of contrary religions, and pray one against the other,) it may serve an end of a fantastic and hypochondriacal religion, or a secret ambition, but not the ends of God, or the honour of the Spirit.

The Jews in their declensions to folly and idolatry did worship the stone of imagination, that is, certain smooth images, in which, by art-magic, pictures and little faces were represented, declaring hidden things and stolen goods; and God severely forbade this baseness.[p] But we also have taken up this folly, and worship the stone of imagination: we beget imperfect phantasms and speculative images in our fancy, and we fall down and worship them; never considering, that the Spirit of God never appears through such spectres. Prayer is one of the noblest exercises of christian religion; or rather, it is that duty in which all graces are concentred. Prayer is charity, it is faith, it is a conformity to God's will, a desiring according to the desires of heaven, an imitation of Christ's intercession, and prayer must suppose all holiness, or else it is nothing: and therefore, all that in which men need God's Spirit, all that is in order to prayer. Baptism is but a prayer, and the holy sacrament of the Lord's supper is but a prayer; a prayer of sacrifice representative, and a prayer of oblation, and a prayer of intercession, and a prayer of thanksgiving. And obedience is a prayer, and begs and procures blessings: and if the Holy Ghost hath sanctified the whole man, then he hath sanctified the prayer of the man, and not till then. And if ever there was, or could be, any other praying with the Spirit, it was such a one as a wicked man might have; and therefore, it cannot be a note of distinction between the good and bad, between the saints and men of the world. But this only, which I have described from the fountains of Scripture, is that which a good man can have, and therefore, this is it in which we ought to rejoice; "that he that glories, may glory in the Lord."

Thus, I have (as I could) described the effluxes of the Holy Spirit upon us in his great channels. But the great effect of them is this: that as, by the arts of the spirits of darkness and our own malice, our souls are turned into flesh, (not in the natural sense, but in the moral and theological,) and "*animalis* homo" is the same with "*carnalis*," that is, his soul is a servant of the passions and desires of the flesh, and is flesh in its operations and ends, in its principles and actions: so, on the other side, by the grace of God, and "the promise of the Father," and the influences of the Holy Ghost, our souls are not only recovered from the state of flesh, and reduced back to the entireness of animal operations, but they are heightened into spirit, and transformed into a new nature. And this is a new article, and now to be considered.

St. Jerome tells of the custom of the empire; when a tyrant was overcome, they used to break the head of his statues, and upon the same trunk to set

[p] Levit. xxvi. 1.

the head of the conqueror, and so it passed wholly for the new prince. So it is in the kingdom of grace. As soon as the tyrant sin is overcome, and a new heart is put into us, or that we serve under a new head, instantly we have a new name given us, and we are esteemed a new creation; and not only changed in manners, but we have a new nature within us, even a third part of an essential constitution. This may seem strange; and indeed it is so: and it is one of the great mysteriousnesses of the gospel. Every man naturally consists of soul and body; but every christian man that belongs to Christ, hath more: for he hath body, and soul, and spirit. My text is plain for it: "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." And by *Spirit* is not meant only the graces of God, and his gifts enabling us to do holy things: there is more belongs to a good man than so. But as when God made man, he made him after his own image, and breathed into him the spirit of life, and he was made "in animam viventem," "into a living soul;" then he was made a man: so in the new creation, Christ, "by whom God made the worlds," intends to conform us to his image, and he hath given us "the Spirit of adoption," by which we are made sons of God; and by the spirit of a new life we are made new creatures, capable of a new state, entitled to another manner of duration, enabled to do new and greater actions in order to higher ends; we have new affections, new understandings, new wills: "vetera transierunt, et ecce omnia nova facta sunt;" "all things are become new." And this is called "the seed of God," when it relates to the principle and cause of this production; but the thing that is produced, is a spirit, and that is as much in nature beyond a soul, as a soul is beyond a body. This great mystery I should not utter but upon the greatest authority in the world, and from an infallible doctor; I mean St. Paul, who from Christ taught the church more secrets than all the whole college besides; "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God that your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."[q] We are not sanctified wholly, nor preserved in safety, unless, besides our souls and bodies, our spirit also be kept blameless. This distinction is nice, and infinitely above human reason: but "The word of God" (saith the same apostle) "is sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder the soul and the spirit:"[r] and that hath taught us to distinguish the principle of a new life from the principle of the old, the celestial from the natural; and thus it is.

The Spirit (as I now discourse of it) is a principle infused into us by God, when we become his children, whereby we live the life of grace, and understand the secrets of the kingdom, and have passions and desires of things beyond and contrary to our natural appetites, enabling us not only to sobriety, which is the duty of the body,—not only to justice, which is the rectitude of the soul,—but to such a sanctity as makes us like to God: for so saith the Spirit of God, "Be ye holy, as I am: be pure, be perfect, as your heavenly Father is pure, as he is perfect:" which because it cannot be a perfection of degrees, it must be "in similitudine naturæ," "in the likeness of that nature" which God hath given us in the new birth, that by it we might resemble his excellency and holiness. And this I conceive to be the meaning of St. Peter, "According as his Divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness," (that is, to this new life of godliness,) "through the knowledge of him, that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these you might be partakers of the Divine nature:"[s] so we read it; but it is something mistaken: it is not the τῆς θείας φύσεως, "the Divine nature;" for God's nature is indivisible, and incommunicable; but it is spoken "participativè," or "per analogiam," "partakers of a Divine nature," that is, of this new and Godlike nature given to every person that serves God, whereby he is sanctified, and made the child of God, and framed into the likeness of Christ. The Greeks generally call this χάρισμα, "a gracious gift," an extraordinary super-addition to nature; not a single gift in order to single purposes, but a universal principle; and it remains upon all good men during their lives, and after their death, and is that "white stone" spoken of in the Revelation, "and in it a new name written, which no man knoweth but he that hath it:"[t] and by this, God's sheep, at the day of judgment, shall be discerned from goats. If their spirits be presented to God pure and unblamable, this great χάρισμα, this talent, which God hath given to all christians to improve in the banks of grace and religion, if they bring this to God increased and grown up to the fulness of the measure of Christ, (for it is Christ's Spirit; and as it is in us, it is called "the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,"[u]) then we shall be acknowledged for sons, and our adoption shall pass into an eternal inheritance in the portion of our elder Brother.

I need not to apply this discourse: the very mystery itself is in the whole world the greatest engagement of our duty that is imaginable, by the way of instrument, and by the way of thankfulness.

Quisquis magna dedit, voluit sibi magna rependi;

"He that gives great things to us, ought to have great acknowledgments:"—and Seneca said concerning wise men, "That he that doth benefits to others, hides those benefits; as a man lays up great treasures in the earth, which he must never see with his eyes, unless a great occasion forces him to dig the graves, and produce that which he buried; but all the while the man was hugely rich, and he had the wealth of a great relation." So it is with God and us: for this huge benefit of the Spirit, which God gives us, is for our good deposited into our souls; not made for forms and ostentation, not to be looked upon, or serve little ends; but growing in the secret of our souls, and swelling up to a treasure,

[q] 1 Thess. v. 23. [r] Heb. iv. 12. [s] 2 Epist. i. 3, 4. [t] Apoc. ii. 17. [u] Phil. i. 19.

making us in this world rich by title and relation; but it shall be produced in the great necessities of doomsday. In the mean time, if the fire be quenched, the fire of God's Spirit, God will kindle another in his anger that shall never be quenched: but if we entertain God's Spirit with our own purities, and employ it diligently, and serve it willingly, (for God's Spirit is a loving Spirit,) then we shall really be turned into spirits. Irenæus had a proverbial saying, "Perfecti sunt, qui tria sine querelâ Deo exhibent;" "They that present three things right to God, they are perfect;"—that is, a chaste body, a righteous soul, a holy spirit. And the event shall be this, which Maimonides expressed not amiss,—though he did not at all understand the secret of this mystery; the soul of man in this life is "in potentiâ ad esse spiritum," "it is designed to be a spirit," but in the world to come it shall be actually as very a spirit as an angel is. And this state is expressed by the apostle calling it "the earnest of the Spirit:" that is, here it is begun, and given us as an antepast of glory, and a principle of grace; but then we shall have it "in plenitudine."

——— regit idem spiritus artus
Orbe alio ———

Here and there it is the same; but here we have the earnest, there the riches and the inheritance.

But then, if this be a new principle, and be given us in order to the actions of a holy life, we must take care that we receive not "the Spirit of God in vain," but remember that it is a new life: and as no man can pretend that a person is alive, that doth not always do the works of life; so it is certain no man hath the Spirit of God, but he that lives the life of grace, and doth the works of the Spirit, that is, "in all holiness, and justice, and sobriety."

"Spiritus qui accedit animo, vel Dei est, vel dæmonis," said Tertullian: "Every man hath within him the Spirit of God or the spirit of the devil."—The spirit of fornication is an unclean devil, and extremely contrary to the Spirit of God; and so is the spirit of malice or uncharitableness; for the Spirit of God is the spirit of love: for as by purities God's Spirit sanctifies the body, so by love he purifies the soul, and makes the soul grow into a spirit, into a divine nature. But God knows that even in christian societies, we see the devils walk up and down every day and every hour; the devil of uncleanness, and the devil of drunkenness; the devil of malice, and the devil of rage; the spirit of filthy speaking, and the spirit of detraction; a proud spirit, and the spirit of rebellion: and yet all call "Christian." It is generally supposed, that unclean spirits walk in the night, and so it used to be; "for they that are drunk are drunk in the night," said the apostle. But Suidas tells of certain "empusæ" that used to appear at noon, at such times as the Greeks did celebrate the funerals of the dead; and at this day some of the Russians fear the noon-day devil, which appeareth like a mourning widow to reapers of hay and corn, and uses to break their arms and legs, unless they worship her. The prophet David speaketh of both kinds: "Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night;" and, "à ruina et dæmonio meridiano," "from the devil at noon thou shalt be free."[x] It were happy if we were so: but besides the solemn followers of the works of darkness, in the times and proper seasons of darkness, there are very many who act their scenes of darkness in the face of the sun, in open defiance of God, and all laws, and all modesty. There is in such men the spirit of impudence, as well as of impiety. And yet I might have expressed it higher; for every habitual sin doth not only put us into the power of the devil, but turns us into his very nature: just as the Holy Ghost transforms us into the image of God.

Here, therefore, I have a greater argument to persuade you to holy living than Moses had to the sons of Israel. "Behold, I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing;" so said Moses: but I add, that I have, upon the stock of this scripture, set before you the good Spirit and the bad, God and the devil: choose unto whose nature you will be likened, and into whose inheritance you will be adopted, and into whose possession you will enter. If you commit sin, "you are of your father the devil," ye are begot of his principles, and follow his pattern, and shall pass into his portion, when ye are led captive by him at his will; and remember what a sad thing it is to go into the portion of evil and accursed spirits, the sad and eternal portion of devils. But he that hath the Spirit of God, doth acknowledge God for his Father and his Lord, he despises the world, and hath no violent appetites for secular pleasures, and is dead to the desires of this life, and his hopes are spiritual, and God is his joy, and Christ is his pattern and support, and religion is his employment, and "godliness is his gain:" and this man understands the things of God, and is ready to die for Christ, and fears nothing but to sin against God; and his will is filled with love, and it springs out in obedience to God, and in charity to his brother. And of such a man we cannot make judgment by his fortune, or by his acquaintance; by his circumstances, or by his adherences; for they are the appendages of a natural man: but "the spiritual is judged of no man;" that is, the rare excellencies, that make him happy, do not yet make him illustrious, unless we will reckon virtue to be a great fortune, and holiness to be great wisdom, and God to be the best friend, and Christ the best relative, and the Spirit the hugest advantage, and heaven the greatest reward. He that knows how to value these things, may sit down and reckon the felicities of him that hath the Spirit of God.

The purpose of this discourse is this: that since the Spirit of God is a new nature, and a new life put into us, we are thereby taught and enabled to serve God by a constant course of holy living, without the frequent returns and intervening of such actions, which men are pleased to call "sins of infirmity." Whosoever hath the Spirit of God, lives the life of grace. The Spirit of God rules in him, and is strong according to its age and abode, and allows not of those often sins, which we think unavoidable, because we call them "natural infirmities."

[x] Psal. xci. 5.

"But if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." The state of sin is a state of death. The state of man under the law was a state of bondage and infirmity, as St. Paul largely describes him in the seventh chapter to the Romans: but he that hath the Spirit, is made alive, and free, and strong, and a conqueror over all the powers and violences of sin. Such a man resists temptations, falls not under the assault of sin, returns not to the sin which he last repented of, acts no more that error which brought him to shame and sorrow: but he that falls under a crime, to which he still hath a strong and vigorous inclination, he that acts his sin, and then curses it, and then is tempted, and then sins again, and then weeps again and calls himself miserable, but still the enchantment hath confined him to that circle; this man hath not the Spirit: "for where the Spirit of God is, there is liberty;" there is no such bondage, and a returning folly to the commands of sin. But, because men deceive themselves with calling this bondage a pitiable and excusable infirmity, it will not be useless to consider the state of this question more particularly, lest men, from the state of a pretended infirmity, fall into a real death.

1. No great sin is a sin of infirmity, or excusable upon that stock. But that I may be understood, we must know that every sin is, in some sense or other, a sin of infirmity. When a man is in the state of spiritual sickness or death, he is in a state of infirmity; for he is a wounded man, a prisoner, a slave, a sick man, weak in his judgment, and weak in his reasonings, impotent in his passions, of childish resolutions, great inconstancy, and his purposes untwist as easily as the rude contexture of uncombining cables in the violence of a northern tempest: and he that is thus in infirmity cannot be excused; for it is the aggravation of the state of his sin; he is so infirm that he is in a state unable to do his duty. Such a man is a "servant of sin," a slave of the devil, an heir of corruption, absolutely under command: and every man is so, who resolves for ever to avoid such a sin, and yet for ever falls under it. For what can he be but a servant of sin, who fain would avoid it, but cannot? that is, he hath not the Spirit of God within him; Christ dwells not in his soul; for "where the Son is, there is liberty:" and all that are in the Spirit, are the sons of God, and servants of righteousness, and therefore freed from sin.—But then there are also sins of infirmity which are single actions, intervening seldom, in little instances unavoidable, or through a faultless ignorance: such as these are always the allays of the life of the best men; and for these Christ hath paid, and they are never to be accounted to good men, save only to make them more wary and more humble. Now concerning these it is that I say, No great sin is a sin of excusable or unavoidable infirmity: because, whosoever hath received the Spirit of God, hath sufficient knowledge of his duty, and sufficient strengths of grace, and sufficient advertency of mind, to avoid such things as do great and apparent violence to piety and religion. No man can justly say, that it is a sin of infirmity that he was drunk: for there are but three causes of every sin; a fourth is not imaginable. 1. If ignorance cause it, the sin is as full of excuse as the ignorance was innocent. But no christian can pretend this to drunkenness, to murder, to rebellion, to uncleanness: for what christian is so uninstructed but that he knows adultery is a sin? 2. Want of observation is the cause of many indiscreet and foolish actions. Now at this gap many irregularities do enter and escape; because in the whole it is impossible for a man to be of so present a spirit, as to consider and reflect upon every word and every thought. But it is, in this case, in God's laws otherwise than in man's: the great flies cannot pass through without observation, little ones do; and a man cannot be drunk, and never take notice of it; or tempt his neighbour's wife before he be aware: therefore, the less the instance is, the more likely is it to be a sin of infirmity: and yet, if it be never so little, if it be observed, then it ceases to be a sin of infirmity. 3. But, because great crimes cannot pretend to pass undiscernibly, it follows that they must come in at the door of malice, that is, of want of grace, in the absence of the Spirit; they destroy wherever they come, and the man dies if they pass upon him.

It is true, there is flesh and blood in every regenerate man, but they do not both rule: the flesh is left to tempt, but not to prevail. And it were a strange condition, if both the godly and the ungodly were captives to sin, and infallibly should fall into temptation and death, without all difference, save only that the godly sins unwillingly, and the ungodly sins willingly. But if the same things be done by both, and God in both be dishonoured, and their duty prevaricated, the pretended unwillingness is the sign of a greater and a baser slavery, and of a condition less to be endured: for the servitude which is against me, is intolerable: but if I choose the state of a servant, I am free in my mind.

——— Libertatis servaveris umbram,
Si, quidquid jubeare, velis. Tot rebus iniquis
Paruimus victi: venia est hæc sola pudoris,
Degenerisque metûs, nil jam potuisse negari. LUCAN.

Certain it is, that such a person who fain would, but cannot, choose but commit adultery or drunkenness, is the veriest slave to sin that can be imagined, and not at all freed by the Spirit, and by the liberty of the sons of God; and there is no other difference, but that the mistaken good man feels his slavery, and sees his chains and his fetters; but therefore, it is certain that he is, because he sees himself to be, a slave. No man can be a servant of sin and a servant of righteousness at the same time; but every man that hath the Spirit of God is a servant of righteousness: and therefore, whosoever find great sins to be unavoidable, are in a state of death and reprobation, as to the present, because they willingly or unwillingly (it matters not much whether of the two) are servants of sin.

2. Sins of infirmity, as they are small in their instance, so they put on their degree of excusableness only according to the weakness or infirmity of a man's understanding. So far as men (without their own fault) understand not their duty, or are

possessed with weakness of principles, or are destitute and void of discourse, or discerning powers and acts,—so far, if a sin creeps upon them, it is as natural, and as free from a law, as is the action of a child; but if any thing else be mingled with it, if it proceed from any other principle, it is criminal, and not excused by our infirmity, because it is chosen! and a man's will hath no infirmity, but when it wants the grace of God, or is mastered with passions and sinful appetites: and that infirmity is the state of unregeneration.

3. The violence or strength of a temptation is not sufficient to excuse an action, or to make it accountable upon the stock of a pitiable and innocent infirmity, if it leaves the understanding still able to judge; because a temptation cannot have any proper strengths but from ourselves; and because we have in us a principle of baseness which this temptation meets, and only persuades me to act because I love it. Joseph met with a temptation as violent and as strong as any man; and it is certain there are not many christians but would fall under it, and call it a sin of infirmity, since they have been taught so to abuse themselves, by sewing fig-leaves before their nakedness: but because Joseph had a strength of God within him, the strength of chastity, therefore it could not at all prevail upon him. Some men cannot by any art of hell be tempted to be drunk; others can no more resist an invitation to such a meeting, than they can refuse to die if a dagger were drunk with their heart-blood, because their evil habits made them weak on that part. And some man that is fortified against revenge, it may be, will certainly fall under a temptation to uncleanness: for every temptation is great or small according as the man is; and a good word will certainly lead some men to an action of folly, while another will not think ten thousand pounds a considerable argument to make him tell one single lie against his duty or his conscience.

4. No habitual sin, that is, no sin that returns constantly or frequently: that is repented of and committed again, and still repented of, and then again committed; no such sin is excusable with a pretence of infirmity: because that sin is certainly noted, and certainly condemned, and therefore returns, not because of the weakness of nature, but the weakness of grace: the principle of this is an evil spirit, an habitual aversation from God, a dominion and empire of sin. And, as no man, for his inclinations and aptness to the sins of the flesh, is to be called carnal, if he corrects his inclinations, and turns them into virtues: so no man can be called spiritual for his good wishes and apt inclinations to goodness, if these inclinations pass not into acts, and these acts into habits and holy customs, and walkings and conversation with God. But as natural concupiscence corrected becomes the matter of virtue, so these good inclinations and condemnings of our sin, if they be ineffective and end in sinful actions, are the perfect signs of a reprobate and unregenerated state.

The sum is this: an animal man, a man under the law, a carnal man, (for as to this they are all one,) is sold under sin, he is a servant of corruption, he falls frequently into the same sin to which he is tempted, he commends the law, he consents to it that it is good, he does not commend sin, he does some little things against it; but they are weak and imperfect, his lust is stronger, his passions violent and unmortified, his habits vicious, his customs sinful, and he lives in the regions of sin, and dies and enters into its portion. But a spiritual man, a man that is in the state of grace, who is born anew of the Spirit, that is regenerate by the Spirit of Christ, he is led by the Spirit, he lives in the Spirit, he does the works of God cheerfully, habitually, vigorously; and although he sometimes slips, yet it is but seldom, it is in small instances; his life is such, as he cannot pretend to be justified by works and merit, but by mercy and the faith of Jesus Christ; yet he never sins great sins: if he does, he is for that present fallen from God's favour: and though possibly he may recover, (and the smaller or seldomer the sin is, the sooner may be his restitution,) yet, for the present, (I say,) he is out of God's favour. But he that remains in the grace of God, sins not by any deliberate, consultive, knowing act: he is incident to such a surprise as may consist with the weakness and judgment of a good man; but whatsoever is, or must be considered, if it cannot pass without consideration, it cannot pass without sin, and therefore cannot enter upon him while he remains in that state. For "he that is in Christ, in him the body is dead by reason of sin." And the gospel did not differ from the law, but that the gospel gives grace and strength to do whatsoever it commands; which the law did not: and the greatness of the promise of eternal life is such an argument to them that consider it, that it must needs be of force sufficient to persuade a man to use all his faculties and all his strength, that he may obtain it. God exacted all upon this stock; God knew this could do every thing: "Nihil non in hoc præsumpsit Deus," said one. This will make a satyr chaste, and Silenus to be sober, and Dives to be charitable, and Simon Magus himself to despise reputation, and Saul to turn from a persecutor to an apostle. For since God hath given us reason to choose, and a promise to exchange for our temperance, and faith, and charity, and justice; for these, (I say,) happiness, exceeding great happiness, that we shall be kings, that we shall reign with God, with Christ, with all the holy angels for ever, in felicity so great, that we have not now capacities to understand it, our heart is not big enough to think it; there cannot in the world be a greater inducement to engage us, a greater argument to oblige us, to do our duty. God hath not in heaven a bigger argument; it is not possible any thing in the world should be bigger; which because the Spirit of God hath revealed to us, if by this strength of his we walk in his ways, and be ingrafted into his stock, and bring forth his fruits, "the fruits of the Spirit," —then "we are in Christ," and "Christ in us,"—then we walk in the Spirit,—and "the Spirit dwells in us," —and our portion shall be there, where "Christ by the Spirit maketh intercession for us,"—that is, at the right hand of his Father, for ever and ever. Amen.

SERMON III.

THE DESCENDING AND ENTAILED CURSE CUT OFF.

PART I.

I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me: And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.—Exod. xx. 5, 6.

IT is not necessary that a commonwealth should give pensions to orators, to dissuade men from running into houses infected with the plague, or to entreat them to be out of love with violent torments, or to create in men evil opinions concerning famine or painful deaths: every man hath a sufficient stock of self-love, upon the strength of which he hath entertained principles strong enough to secure himself against voluntary mischiefs, and from running into states of deaths and violence. A man would think that this I have now said, were in all cases certainly true; and I would to God it were: for that which is the greatest evil, that which makes all evils, that which turns good into evil, and every natural evil into a greater sorrow, and makes that sorrow lasting and perpetual; that which sharpens the edge of swords, and makes agues to be fevers, and fevers to turn into plagues; that which puts stings into every fly, and uneasiness to every trifling accident, and strings every whip with scorpions,—you know I must needs mean SIN; that evil men suffer patiently, and choose willingly, and run after it greedily, and will not suffer themselves to be divorced from it: and therefore, God hath hired servants to fight against this evil; he hath set angels with fiery swords to drive us from it, he hath employed advocates to plead against it, he hath made laws and decrees against it, he hath despatched prophets to warn us of it, and hath established an order of men, men of his own family, and who are fed at his own charges,—I mean the whole order of the clergy, whose office is like watchmen, to give an alarm at every approach of sin, with as much affrightment as if an enemy were near, or the sea broke in upon the flat country; and all this only to persuade men not to be extremely miserable, for nothing, for vanity, for a trouble, for a disease: for some sins naturally are diseases, and all others are natural nothings, mere privations or imperfections, contrary to goodness, to felicity, to God himself. And yet God hath hedged sin round about with thorns, and sin of itself too brings thorns; and it abuses a man in all his capacities, and it places poison in all those seats and receptions, where he could possibly entertain happiness: for if sin pretend to please the sense, it doth first abuse it shamefully, and then humours it: it can only feed an imposthume; no natural, reasonable, and perfective appetite: and besides its own essential appendages and properties, things are so ordered, that a fire is kindled round about us, and every thing within us, above, below us, and on every side of us, is an argument against, and an enemy to sin; and, for its single pretence, that it comes to please one of the senses, one of those faculties which are in us, the same they are in a cow, it hath an evil so communicative, that it doth not only work like poison, to the dissolution of soul and body, but it is a sickness like the plague, it infects all our houses, and corrupts the air and the very breath of heaven: for it moves God first to jealousy, and that takes off his friendship and kindness towards us; and then to anger, and that makes him a resolved enemy; and it brings evil, not only upon ourselves, but upon all our relatives, upon ourselves and our children, even the children of our nephews, "ad natos natorum, et qui nascentur ab illis,"[a] to the third and fourth generation. And therefore, if a man should despise the eye or sword of man, if he sins, he is to contest with the jealousy of a provoked God: if he doth not regard himself, let him pity his pretty children: if he be angry, and hates all that he sees, and is not solicitous for his children, yet let him pity the generations which are yet unborn; let him not bring a curse upon his whole family, and suffer his name to rot in curses and dishonours; let not his memory remain polluted with an eternal stain. If all this will not deter a man from sin, there is no instrument left for that man's virtue, no hopes of his felicity, no recovery of his sorrows and sicknesses; but he must sink under the strokes of a jealous God into the dishonour of eternal ages, and the groanings of a never-ceasing sorrow.

"God is a jealous God"—That is the first and great stroke he strikes against sin; he speaks after the manner of men; and, in so speaking, we know that he is jealous,—is suspicious,—he is inquisitive,—he is implacable. 1. God is pleased to represent himself a person very "suspicious," both in respect of persons and things. For our persons we give him cause enough; for we are sinners from our mother's womb: we make solemn vows, and break them instantly; we cry for pardon, and still renew the sin; we desire God to try us once more, and we provoke him ten times further; we use the means of grace to cure us, and we turn them into vices and opportunities of sin; we curse our sins, and yet long for them extremely; we renounce them publicly, and yet send for them in private, and show them kindness; we leave little offences, but our faith and our charity are not strong enough to master great ones; and sometimes we are shamed out of great ones, but yet entertain little ones; or if we disclaim both, yet we love to remember them, and delight in their past actions, and bring them home to us, at least by fiction of imagination, and we love to be betrayed into them; we would fain have things so ordered by chance or power, that it may seem necessary to sin, or that it may become excusable, and dressed fitly for our own circumstances; and for ever we long after the flesh-pots of Egypt, the garlic and the onions; and we do so little esteem manna, the food of angels, we so loathe

[a] Virgil.

the bread of heaven, that any temptation will make us return to our fetters and our bondage. And if we do not tempt ourselves, yet we do not resist a temptation; or if we pray against it, we desire not to be heard; and if we be assisted, yet we will not work together with those assistances; so that unless we be forced, nothing will be done. We are so willing to perish, and so unwilling to be saved, that we minister to God reason enough to suspect us, and therefore it is no wonder that God is jealous of us. We keep company with harlots and polluted persons; we are kind to all God's enemies, and love that which he hates; how can it be otherwise but that we should be suspected? Let us make our best of it, and see if we can recover the good opinion of God; for as yet we are but suspected persons. 2. And therefore God is "inquisitive;" he looks for that which he fain would never find; God sets spies upon us; he looks upon us himself through the curtains of a cloud, and he sends angels to espy us in all our ways, and permits the devil to winnow us and to accuse us, and erects a tribunal and witnesses in our own consciences, and he cannot want information concerning our smallest irregularities. Sometimes the devil accuses; but he sometimes accuses us falsely, either maliciously or ignorantly, and we stand upright in that particular by innocence; and sometimes by penitence; and all this while our conscience is our friend. Sometimes our conscience does accuse us unto God; and then we stand convicted by our own judgment. Sometimes, if our conscience acquit us, yet we are not thereby justified; for, as Moses accused the Jews, so do Christ and his apostles accuse us, not in their persons, but by their works and by their words, by the thing itself, by confronting the laws of Christ and our practices. Sometimes the angels, who are the observers of all our works, carry up sad tidings to the court of heaven against us. Thus two angels were the informers against Sodom; but yet these were the last; for before that time the cry of their iniquity had sounded loud and sadly in heaven. And all this is the direct and proper effect of his jealousy, which sets spies upon all the actions, and watches the circumstances, and tells the steps, and attends the business, the recreations, the publications, and retirements, of every man, and will not suffer a thought to wander, but he uses means to correct its error, and to reduce it to himself. For he that created us, and daily feeds us, he that entreats us to be happy with an importunity so passionate as if not we, but himself were to receive the favour; he that would part with his only Son from his bosom and the embraces of eternity, and give him over to a shameful and cursed death for us, cannot but be supposed to love us with a great love, and to own us with an entire title, and therefore, that he would fain secure us to himself with an undivided passion. And it cannot but be infinitely reasonable; for to whom else should any of us belong but to God? Did the world create us? or did lust ever do us any good? Did Satan ever suffer one stripe for our advantage? Does not he study all the ways to ruin us? Do the sun or the stars preserve us alive? or do we get understanding from the angels? Did ever any joint of our body knit, or our heart ever keep one true minute of a pulse, without God? Had we not been either nothing, or worse, that is, infinitely, eternally miserable, but that God made us capable, and then pursued us with arts and devices of great mercy to force us to be happy? Great reason therefore there is, that God should be jealous lest we take any of our duty from him, who hath so strangely deserved it all, and give it to a creature, or to our enemy, who cannot be capable of any. But, however, it will concern us with much caution to observe our own ways, since "we are made a spectacle to God, to angels, and to men." God hath set so many spies upon us, the blessed angels and the accursed devils, good men and bad men, the eye of heaven, and eye of that eye, God himself,—all watching lest we rob God of his honour, and ourselves of our hopes. For by this prime intention he hath chosen so to get his own glory, as may best consist with our felicity; his great design is to be glorified in our being saved. 3. God's jealousy hath a sadder effect than all this. For all this is for mercy; but if we provoke this jealousy, if he finds us in our spiritual whoredoms, he is implacable, that is, he is angry with us to eternity, unless we return in time; and if we do, it may be, he will not be appeased in all instances; and when he forgives us, he will make some reserves of his wrath; he will punish our persons or our estate, he will chastise us at home or abroad, in our bodies or in our children; for he will visit our sins upon our children from generation to generation; and if they be made miserable for our sins, they are unhappy in such parents; but we bear the curse and the anger of God, even while they bear his rod. "God visits the sins of the fathers upon the children." That is the second great stroke he strikes against sin, and is now to be considered.

That God doth so is certain, because he saith he doth; and that this is just in him so to do, is also as certain therefore, because he doth it. For as his laws are our measures, so his actions and his own will are his own measures. He that hath right over all things and all persons, cannot do wrong to any thing. He that is essentially just, (and there could be no such thing as justice, or justice itself could not be good, if it did not derive from him,) it is impossible for him to be unjust. But since God is pleased to speak after the manner of men, it may well consist with our duty to inquire into those manners of consideration, whereby we may understand the equity of God in this proceeding, and to be instructed also in our own danger if we persevere in sin.

1. No man is made a sinner by the fault of another man without his own consent: for to every one God gives his choice, and sets life and death before every of the sons of Adam; and therefore, this death is not a consequent to any sin but our own. In this sense it is true, that if "the fathers eat sour grapes, the children's teeth shall not be set on edge;" and therefore the sin of Adam, which

was derived to all the world, did not bring the world to any other death but temporal, by the intermedial stages of sickness and temporal infelicities. And it is not said that "*sin* passed upon all men," but "*death*;" and that also no otherwise but ἐφ ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον, "inasmuch as all men have sinned;" as they have followed the steps of their father, so they are partakers of his death. And therefore, it is very remarkable, that death brought in by sin was nothing superinduced to man; man only was reduced to his own natural condition, from which before Adam's fall he stood exempted by supernatural favour: and therefore, although the taking away that extraordinary grace or privilege was a punishment; yet the suffering the natural death was directly none, but a condition of his creation, natural, and therefore not primarily evil; but, if not good, yet at least indifferent. And the truth and purpose of this observation will extend itself, if we observe, that before any man died, Christ was promised, by whom death was to lose its sting, by whom death did cease to be an evil, and was, or might be, if we do belong to Christ, a state of advantage. So that we, by occasion of Adam's sin, being returned to our natural certainty of dying, do still, even in this very particular, stand between the blessing and the cursing. If we follow Christ, death is our friend; if we imitate the prevarication of Adam, then death becomes an evil; the condition of our nature becomes the punishment of our own sin, not of Adam's. For although his sin brought death in, yet it is only our sin that makes death to be evil. And I desire this to be observed, because it is of great use in vindicating the Divine justice in the matter of this question. The material part of the evil came from our father upon us: but the formality of it, the sting and the curse, is only by ourselves.

2. For the fault of others many may become miserable, even all or any of those whose relation is such to the sinner, that he in any sense may, by such inflictions, be punished, execrable, or oppressed. Indeed it were strange, if, when a plague were in Ethiopia, the Athenians should be infected; or if the house of Pericles were visited, Thucydides should die for it. For although there are some evils which (as Plutarch saith) are "ansis et propagationibus prædita, incredibili celeritate in longinquum penetrantia," such which can dart evil influences, as porcupines do their quills; yet as at so great distances the knowledge of any confederate events must needs be uncertain, so it is also useless, because we neither can join their causes, nor their circumstances, nor their accidents, into any neighbourhood of conjunction. Relations are seldom noted at such distances; and if they were, it is certain so many accidents will intervene, that will outweigh the efficacy of such relations, that by any so far distant events we cannot be instructed in any duty, nor understand ourselves reproved for any fault. But when the relation is nearer, and is joined under such a head and common cause, that the influence is perceived, and the parts of it do usually communicate in benefit, notice, or infelicity,—especially if they relate to each other as superior and inferior,—then it is certain the sin is infectious; I mean, not only in example, but also in punishment.

And of this I shall show, 1. In what instances usually it is so. 2. For what reasons it is so, and justly so. 3. In what degree, and in what cases, it is so. 4. What remedies there are for this evil.

1. It is so in kingdoms, in churches, in families, in political, artificial, and even in accidental societies.

When David numbered the people, God was angry with him; but he punished the people for the crime; seventy thousand men died of the plague. And when God gave to David the choice of three plagues, he chose that of the pestilence, in which the meanest of the people, and such which have the least society with the acts and crimes of kings, are most commonly devoured; whilst the powerful and sinning persons, by arts of physic, and flight, by provisions of nature, and accidents, are more commonly secured. But the story of the kings of Israel hath furnished us with an example fitted with all the stranger circumstances in this question. Joshua had sworn to the Gibeonites, who had craftily secured their lives by exchanging it for their liberties: almost five hundred years after, Saul, in zeal to the men of Israel and Judah, slew many of them. After this Saul dies, and no question was made of it: but, in the days of David, there was a famine in the land three years together; and God, being inquired of, said, it was because of Saul's killing the Gibeonites.[b] What had the people to do with their king's fault? Or, at least, the people of David with the fault of Saul? That we shall see anon. But see the way that was appointed to expiate the crime and the calamity. David took seven of Saul's sons, and hung them up against the sun; and after that, God was entreated for the land. The story observes one circumstance more; that, for the kindness of Jonathan, David spared Mephibosheth. Now this story doth not only instance in kingdoms, but in families too. The father's fault is punished upon the sons of the family, and the king's fault upon the people of his land; even after the death of the king, after the death of the father. Thus God visited the sin of Ahab partly upon himself, partly upon his sons: "I will not bring the evil in his days, but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house."[c] Thus did God slay the child of Bathsheba for the sin of his father David: and the whole family of Eli, all his kindred of the nearer lines, were thrust from the priesthood, and a curse made to descend upon his children for many ages, "that all the males should die young, and in the flower of their youth." The boldness and impiety of Cham made his posterity to be accursed, and brought slavery into the world. Because Amalek fought with the sons of Israel at Rephidim, God took up a quarrel against the nation for ever. And, above all examples, is that of the Jews, who put to death the Lord of life, and made their nation to be an ana-

[b] 2 Sam. xxi. 1.

[c] 1 Kings xxi. 29.

thema for ever, until the day of restitution: "His blood be upon us, and upon our children." If we shed innocent blood, if we provoke God to wrath, if we oppress the poor, if we "crucify the Lord of life again, and put him to an open shame," the wrath of God will be upon us and upon our children, to make us a cursed family; and we are the sinners, to be the stock and original of the curse; the pedigree of the misery shall derive from us.

This last instance went farther than the other of families and kingdoms. For not only the single families of the Jews were made miserable for their fathers' murdering the Lord of life, nor also was the nation alone extinguished for the sins of their rulers, but the religion was removed; it ceased to be God's people; the synagogue was rejected, and her veil rent, and her privacies dismantled; and the gentiles were made to be God's people, when the Jews' enclosure was disparked. I need not further to instance this proposition in the case of national churches; though it is a sad calamity that is fallen upon all the seven churches of Asia, to whom the Spirit of God wrote seven epistles by St. John; and almost all the churches of Africa, where Christ was worshipped, and now Mahomet is thrust in substitution, and the people are servants, and the religion is extinguished; or, where it remains, it shines like the moon in an eclipse, or like the least spark of the Pleiades, seen but seldom, and that rather shining like a glow-worm than a taper enkindled with a beam of the Sun of righteousness. I shall add no more instances to verify the truth of this, save only I shall observe to you, that even there is danger in being in evil company, in suspected places, in the civil societies and fellowship of wicked men.

> ——— Vetabo, qui Cereris sacrum
> Vulgarit arcanæ, sub îsdem
> Sit trabibus, fragilemque mecum
> Solvat phaselum. Sæpe Diespiter
> Neglectus, incesto addidit integrum. HOR. Od. 3. 2.

And it happened to the mariners who carried Jonah, to be in danger with a horrid storm, because Jonah was there, who had sinned against the Lord. Many times the sin of one man is punished by the falling of a house or a wall upon him, and then all the family are like to be crushed with the same ruin: so dangerous, so pestilential, so infectious a thing is sin, that it scatters the poison of its breath to all the neighbourhood, and makes that the man ought to be avoided like a person infected with a plague.

Next I am to consider, why this is so, and why it is justly so. To this I answer, 1. Between kings and their people, parents and their children, there is so great a necessitude, propriety, and intercourse of nature, dominion, right, and possession,—that they are by God and the laws of nations reckoned as their goods and their blessings. "The honour of a king is in the multitude of his people;—and, Children are a gift that cometh of the Lord,—and, Happy is that man that hath his quiver full of them:—and, Lo, thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord; his wife shall be like the fruitful vine by the walls of his house, his children like olive-branches round about his table."—Now if children be a blessing, then to take them away in anger is a curse: and if the loss of flocks and herds, the burning of houses, the blasting of fields, be a curse; how much greater is it to lose our children, and to see God slay them before our eyes, in hatred to our persons, and detestation and loathing of our baseness! When Job's messengers told him the sad stories of fire from heaven, the burning his sheep, and that the Sabeans had driven his oxen away, and the Chaldeans had stolen his camels; these were sad arrests to his troubled spirit: but it was reserved as the last blow of that sad execution, that the ruins of a house had crushed his sons and daughters to their graves. Sons and daughters are greater blessings than sheep and oxen: they are not servants of profit, as sheep are, but they secure greater ends of blessing; they preserve your names; they are so many titles of provision and providence; every new child is a new title of God's care of that family: they serve the ends of honour, of commonwealths and kingdoms; they are images of our souls, and images of God, and therefore are great blessings; and, by consequence, they are great riches, though they are not to be sold for money: and surely he that hath a cabinet of invaluable jewels, will think himself rich, though he never sells them. "Does God take care for oxen?" said our blessed Saviour: much more for you: yea, all and every one of your children are of more value than many oxen. When therefore God, for your sins, strikes them with crookedness, with deformity, with foolishness, with impertinent and caitiff spirits, with hasty or sudden deaths; it is a greater curse to you than to lose whole herds of cattle, of which, it is certain, most men would be very sensible. They are our goods; they are our blessings from God; therefore we are stricken when for our sakes they die. Therefore, we may properly be punished by evils happening to our relatives.

2. But as this is a punishment to us, so it is not unjust as to them, though they be innocent. For all the calamities of this life are incident to the most godly persons in the world: and since the King of heaven and earth was made a man of sorrows, it cannot be called unjust or intolerable, that innocent persons should be pressed with temporal infelicities; only in such cases we must distinguish the misery from the punishment: for that all the world dies is a punishment of Adam's sin; but it is no evil to those single persons that "die in the Lord," for they are blessed in their death. Jonathan was killed the same day with his father the king; and this was a punishment to Saul indeed, but to Jonathan it was a blessing: for since God had appointed the kingdom to his neighbour, it was more honourable for him to die fighting the Lord's battle, than to live and see himself the lasting testimony of God's curse upon his father, who lost the kingdom from his family by his disobedience. That death is a blessing, which ends an honourable and prevents an inglorious life. And our children, it may be, shall be sanctified by a sorrow, and purified by the fire of

affliction, and they shall receive the blessing of it; but it is to their fathers a curse, who shall wound their own hearts with sorrow, and cover their heads with a robe of shame, for bringing so great evil upon their house.

3. God hath many ends of providence to serve in this dispensation of his judgments. 1. He expresses the highest indignation against sin, and makes his examples lasting, communicative, and of great effect; it is a little image of hell; and we shall the less wonder that God with the pains of eternity punishes the sins of time, when with our eyes we see him punish a transient action with a lasting judgment. 2. It arrests the spirits of men, and surprises their loosenesses, and restrains their gaiety, when we observe that the judgments of God find us out in all relations, and turn our comforts into sadness, and make our families the scene of sorrows, and we can escape him no where; and by sin are made obnoxious not alone to personal judgments, but are made like the fountains of the Dead sea, springs of the lake of Sodom; instead of refreshing our families with blessings, we leave them brimstone, and drought, and poison, and an evil name, and the wrath of God, and a treasure of wrath, and their fathers' sins for their portion and inheritance. Naturalists say, that when the leading goats in the Greek islands have taken an "eryngus," or sea holly, into their mouths, all the herd will stand still, till the herdsman comes and forces it out, as apprehending the evil that will come to them all, if any of them, especially their principals, taste an unwholesome plant. And, indeed, it is of a general concernment, that the master of a family, or the prince of a people, from whom, as from a fountain, many issues do derive upon their relatives, should be springs of health, and sanctity, and blessing. It is a great right and propriety that a king hath in his people, or a father in his children, that even their sins can do these a mischief, not only by a direct violence, but by the execution of God's wrath. God hath made strange bands and vessels, or channels of communication between them, when even the anger of God shall be conveyed by the conduits of such relations. That would be considered. It binds them nearer than our new doctrine will endure. But it also binds us to pray for them, and for their holiness, and good government, as earnestly as we would to be delivered from death, or sickness, or poverty, or war, or the wrath of God in any instance. 3. This also will satisfy the fearfulness of such persons, who think the evil prosperous, and call the proud happy. No man can be called happy till he be dead; nor then neither, if he lived viciously. Look how God handles him in his children, in his family, in his grand-children: and as it tells that generation which sees the judgment, that God was all the while angry with him; so it supports the spirits of men in the interval, and entertains them with the expectation of a certain hope: for if I do not live to see his sin punished, yet his posterity may find themselves accursed, and feel their father's sins in their own calamity; and the expectation or belief of that may relieve my oppression and ease my sorrows, while I know that God will bear my injury in a lasting record, and when I have forgot it, will bring it forth to judgment. The Athenians were highly pleased when they saw honours done to the posterity of Cimon, a good man and a rare citizen, but murdered for being wise and virtuous: and when at the same time they saw a decree of banishment pass against the children of Lacharis and Aristo, they laid their hands upon their mouths, and with silence did admire the justice of the Power above.

The sum of this is, that, in sending evils upon the posterity of evil men, God serves many ends of providence, some of wisdom, some of mercy, some of justice, and contradicts none. For the evil of the innocent son is the father's punishment upon the stock of his sin, and his relation; but the sad accident happens to the son upon the score of nature, and many ends of providence and mercy. To which I add, that if any, even the greatest temporal evil, may fall upon a man, as blindness did upon the blind man in the gospel, when "neither he nor his parents have sinned;" much more may it do so, when his parents have though he have not. For there is a nearer or more visible commensuration of justice between the parent's sin and the son's sickness, than between the evil of the son and the innocence of the father and son together. The dispensation therefore is righteous and severe.

3. I am now to consider in what degree and in what cases this is usual, or to be expected. It is in the text instanced in the matter of worshipping images. God is so jealous of his honour, that he will not suffer an image of himself to be made, lest the image dishonour the substance; nor any image of a creature to be worshipped, though with a less honour, lest that less swell up into a greater. And he that is thus jealous of his honour, and therefore so instances it, is also very curious of it in all other particulars: and though to punish the sins of fathers upon the children be more solemnly threatened in this sin only, yet we find it inflicted indifferently in any other great sin, as appears in the former precedents.

This one thing I desire to be strictly observed; that it is with much error and great indiligence usually taught in this question, that the wrath of God descends from fathers to children, only in case the children imitate and write after their fathers' copy; supposing these words—"of them that hate me"—to relate to the children. But this is expressly against the words of the text, and the examples of the thing. God afflicts good children of evil parents for their fathers' sins; and the words are plain and determinate, God visits the sins of the fathers "in tertiam et quartam generationem eorum qui oderunt me," "to the third generation of them, of those fathers that hate me;" that is, upon the great-grandchildren of such parents. So that if the great-grandfathers be haters of God and lovers of iniquity, it may entail a curse upon so many generations, though the children be haters of their father's hatred, and lovers of God. And this hath been observed even by wise men among the heathens, whose

stories tell, that Antigonus was punished for the tyranny of his father Demetrius, Phyleus for his father Augeas, pious and wise Nestor for his father Neleus: and it was so in the case of Jonathan, who lost the kingdom and his life upon the stock of his father's sins; and the innocent child of David was slain by the anger of God, not against the child, who never had deserved it, but the father's adultery. I need not here repeat what I said in vindication of the Divine justice; but I observed this, to represent the danger of a sinning father or mother, when it shall so infect the family with curses, that it shall ruin a wise and innocent son; and that virtue and innocence, which shall by God be accepted as sufficient through the Divine mercy to bring the son to heaven, yet, it may be, shall not be accepted to quit him from feeling the curse of his father's crime in a load of temporal infelicities: and who but a villain would ruin and undo a wise, a virtuous, and his own son? But so it is in all the world. A traitor is condemned to suffer death himself, and his posterity are made beggars and dishonourable; his escutcheon is reversed, his arms of honour are extinguished, the nobleness of his ancestors is forgotten; but his own sin is not, while men, by the characters of infamy, are taught to call that family accursed which had so base a father. Tiresias was esteemed unfortunate, because he could not see his friends and children: the poor man was blind with age. But Athamas and Agave were more miserable, who did see their children, but took them for lions and stags: the parents were miserably frantic. But of all, they deplored the misery of Hercules, who, when he saw his children, took them for enemies, and endeavoured to destroy them. And this is the case of all vicious parents. That "a man's enemies were they of his own house," was accounted a great calamity: but it is worse when we love them tenderly and fondly, and yet do them all the despite we wish to enemies. But so it is, that in many cases we do more mischief to our children, than if we should strangle them when they are newly taken from their mother's knees, or tear them in pieces as Medea did her brother Absyrtus. For to leave them to inherit a curse, to leave them to an entailed calamity, a misery, a disease, the wrath of God for an inheritance, that it may descend upon them, and remark the family like their coat of arms; is to be the parent of evil, the ruin of our family, the causes of mischief to them who ought to be dearer to us than our own eyes. And let us remember this when we are tempted to provoke the jealous God; let us consider, that his anger hath a progeny, and a descending line, and it may break out in the days of our nephews. A Greek woman was accused of adultery, because she brought forth a blackamoor; and could not acquit herself, till she had proved that she had descended in the fourth degree from an Ethiopian: her great-grandfather was a Moor. And if naturalists say true, that nephews are very often liker to their grandfathers than to their fathers; we see that the semblance of our souls, and the character of the person, is conveyed by secret and undiscernible conveyances. Natural production conveys original sin; and therefore, by the channels of the body, it is not strange that men convey an hereditary sin. And lustful sons are usually born to satyrs; and monsters of intemperance to drunkards: and there are also hereditary diseases; which if in the fathers they were effects of their sin, as it is in many cases, it is notorious that the father's sin is punished, and the punishment conveyed by natural instruments. So that it cannot be a wonder, but it ought to be a huge affrightment from a state of sin; if a man can be capable of so much charity as to love himself in his own person, or in the images of his nature, and heirs of his fortunes, and the supports of his family, in the children that God hath given him. Consider therefore that you do not only act your own tragedies when you sin, but you represent and effect the fortune of your children; you slay them with your own barbarous and inhuman hands. Only be pleased to compare the variety of estates, of your own and your children. If they on earth be miserable many times for their father's sins, how great a state of misery is that in hell which they suffer for their own! And how vile a person is that father or mother, who for a little money, or to please a lust, will be a parricide, and imbrue his hands in the blood of his own children!

SERMON IV.

PART II.

4. I AM to consider what remedies there are for sons to cut off this entail of curses; and whether, and by what means, it is possible for sons to prevent the being punished for their fathers' sins. And since this thing is so perplexed and intricate, hath so easy an objection, and so hard an answer, looks so like a cruelty, and so unlike a justice (though it be infinitely just, and very severe, and a huge enemy to sin); it cannot be thought but that there are not only ways left to reconcile God's proceeding to the strict rules of justice, but also the condition of man to the possibilities of God's usual mercies. One said of old, "Ex tarditate si Dii sontes prætereant, et insontes plectant, justitiam suam non sic rectè resarciunt:" "If God be so slow to punish the guilty, that the punishment be deferred till the death of the guilty person; and that God shall be forced to punish the innocent, or to let the sin quite escape unpunished; it will be something hard to join that justice with mercy, or to join that action with justice." Indeed, it will seem strange, but the reason of its justice I have already discoursed: if now we can find how to reconcile this to God's mercy too, or can learn how it may be turned into a mercy, we need to take no other care, but that, for our own particular, we take heed we never tempt God's anger upon our families, and that by competent and apt instruments we endeavour to cancel the

decree, if it be gone out against our families; for then we make use of that severity which God intended: and ourselves shall be refreshed in the shades, and by the cooling brooks of the Divine mercy, even then when we see the wrath of God breaking out upon the families round about us.

First; the first means to cut off the entail of wrath and cursings from a family, is, for the sons to disavow those signal actions of impiety, in which their fathers were deeply guilty, and by which they stained great parts of their life, or have done something of very great unworthiness and disreputation. "Si quis paterni vitii, nascitur hæres, nascitur et pœnæ;" "The heir of his father's wickedness is the heir of his father's curse." And a son comes to inherit a wickedness from his father three ways.

1. By approving, or any ways consenting to his father's sin: as by speaking of it without regret or shame; by pleasing himself in the story; or by having an evil mind, apt to counsel or do the like, if the same circumstances should occur. For a son may contract a sin, not only by derivation and the contagion of example, but by approbation; not only by a corporal, but by a virtual contact; not only by transcribing an evil copy, but by commending it: and a man may have "animum leprosum in cute munda," "a leprous and a polluted mind," even for nothing, even for an empty and ineffective lust. An evil mind may contract the curse of an evil action. And though the son of a covetous father prove a prodigal; yet, if he loves his father's vice, for ministering to his vanity, he is disposed not only to a judgment for his own prodigality, but also to the curse of his father's avarice.

2. The son may inherit the father's wickedness by imitation and direct practice; and then the curse is like to come to purpose; a curse by accumulation, a treasure of wrath: and then the children, as they arrive to the height of wickedness by a speedy passage, as being thrust forward by an active example, by countenance, by education, by a seldom restraint, by a remiss discipline; so they ascertain a curse to the family, by being a perverse generation, a family set up in opposition against God, by continuing and increasing the provocation.

3. Sons inherit their fathers' crimes by receiving and enjoying the purchases of their rapine, injustice, and oppression, by rising upon the ruin of their fathers' souls, by sitting warm in the furs which their fathers stole, and walking in the grounds which are watered with the tears of oppressed orphans and widows. Now, in all these cases, the rule holds. If the son inherits the sin, he cannot call it unjust if he inherits also his father's punishment. But, to rescind the fatal chain, and break in sunder the line of God's anger, a son is tied in all these cases to disavow his father's crime. But because the cases are several, he must also in several manners do it.

1. Every man is bound not to glory in, or speak honour of, the powerful and unjust actions of his ancestors: but as all the sons of Adam are bound to be ashamed of that original stain, which they derived from the loins of their abused father, they must be humbled in it, they must deplore it as an evil mother, and a troublesome daughter; so must children account it amongst the crosses of their family, and the stains of their honour, that they passed through so impure channels, that in the sense of morality as well as nature they can "say to corruption, Thou art my father, and to rottenness, Thou art my mother." I do not say that sons are bound to publish or declaim against their fathers' crimes, and to speak of their shame in piazzas and before tribunals; that indeed were a sure way to bring their fathers' sins upon their own heads, by their own faults. No: like Shem and Japhet, they must go backward, and cast a veil upon their nakedness and shame, lest they bring the curse of their fathers' angry dishonour upon their own impious and unrelenting heads. Noah's drunkenness fell upon Ham's head, because he did not hide the openness of his father's follies: he made his father ridiculous; but did not endeavour either to amend the sin, or to wrap the dishonour in a pious covering. He that goes to disavow his father's sin by publishing his shame, hides an ill face with a more ugly vizor, and endeavours by torches and fantastic lights to quench the burning of that house which his father set on fire: these fires are to be smothered, and so extinguished. I deny not, but it may become the piety of a child to tell a sad story, to mourn, and represent a real grief for so great a misery, as is a wicked father or mother: but this is to be done with a tenderness as nice as we would dress an eye withal: it must be only with designs of charity, of counsel, of ease, and with much prudence, and a sad spirit. These things being secured, that which in this case remains, is that in all intercourses between God and ourselves we disavow the crime.

Children are bound to pray to God to sanctify, to cure, to forgive their parents: and even, concerning the sins of our forefathers, the church hath taught us in her litanies, to pray that God would be pleased to forgive them, so that neither we, nor they, may sink under the wrath of God for them: "Remember not, Lord, our offences, nor the offences of our forefathers, neither take thou vengeance of our sins:" *ours*, in common and conjunction. And David confessed to God, and humbled himself for the sins of his ancestors and decessors: "Our fathers have done amiss, and dealt wickedly, neither kept they thy great goodness in remembrance, but were disobedient at the sea, even at the Red sea." So did good King Josiah; "Great is the wrath of the Lord, which is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book."[a] But this is to be done between God and ourselves; or, if in public, then to be done by general accusation; that God only may read our particular sorrows in the single shame of our families, registered in our hearts, and represented to him with humiliation, shame, and a hearty prayer.

2. Those curses, which descend from the fathers to the children by imitation of the crimes of their progenitors, are to be cut off by special and personal

[a] 2 Kings xxii. 13.

repentance and prayer, as being a state directly opposite to that which procured the curse: and if the sons be pious, or return to an early and severe course of holy living, they are to be remedied as other innocent and pious persons are, who are sufferers under the burdens of their relatives, whom I shall consider by and by. Only observe this; that no public or imaginative disavowings, no ceremonial and pompous rescission of our fathers' crimes, can be sufficient to interrupt the succession of the curse, if the children do secretly practise or approve what they in pretence or ceremony disavow. And this is clearly proved; and it will help to explicate that difficult saying of our blessed Saviour, "Woe unto you, for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers; for they killed them, and ye build their sepulchres:" [b] that is, the Pharisees were huge hypocrites, and adorned the monuments of the martyr-prophets, and in words disclaimed their fathers' sin, but in deeds and design they approved it; 1. Because they secretly wished all such persons dead; "colebant mortuos, quos nollent superstites." In charity to themselves some men wish their enemies in heaven, and would be at charges for a monument for them, that their malice, and their power, and their bones, might rest in the same grave; and yet that wish and that expense is no testimony of their charity, but of their anger. 2. These men were willing that the monuments of those prophets should remain, and be a visible affrightment to all such bold persons and severe reprehenders as they were; and therefore they builded their sepulchres to be as beacons and publications of danger to all honest preachers. And this was the account St. Chrysostom gave of the place. 3. To which also the circumstances of the place concur. For they only said, "If they had lived in their fathers' days, they would not have done as they did;" [c] but it is certain they approved it, because they pursued the same courses; and, therefore, our blessed Saviour calls them γενεὰν ἀποκτείνουσαν, not only the children of them that did kill the prophets, but "a killing generation;" the sin also descends upon you, for ye have the same killing mind: and although you honour them that are dead, and cannot shame you; yet you design the same usages against them that are alive, even against the Lord of the prophets, against Christ himself, whom ye will kill. And as Dion said of Caracalla, Πᾶσι τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς ἀνδράσιν ἀχθόμενος, τιμᾷν τινὰς αὐτῶν ἀποθανοντας ἐπλάττετο, "The man was troublesome to all good men when they were alive, but did them hohour when they were dead;" [d] and when Herod had killed Aristobulus, yet he made him a most magnificent funeral: so, because the Pharisees were of the same humour, therefore our blessed Saviour bids them "to fill up the measure of their father's iniquity;" [e] for they still continued the malice, only they painted it over with a pretence of piety, and of disavowing their fathers' sin; which if they had done really, their being children of persecutors, much less the "adorning of the prophets' sepulchres, could not have been just cause of a woe from Christ; this being an act of piety, and the other of nature, inevitable and not chosen by them, and therefore not chargeable upon them. He therefore that will to real purposes disavow his father's crimes, must do it heartily, and humbly, and charitably, and throw off all affections to the like actions. For he that finds fault with his father for killing Isaiah or Jeremy, and himself shall kill Aristobulus and John the Baptist; he that is angry because the old prophets were murdered, and shall imprison and beggar and destroy the new ones; he that disavows the persecution in the primitive times and honours the memory of the dead martyrs, and yet every day makes new ones; he that blames the oppression of the country by any of his predecessors, and yet shall continue to oppress his tenants, and all that are within his gripe; that man cannot hope to be eased from the curse of his father's sins: he goes on to imitate them, and, therefore, to fill up their measure, and to heap up a full treasure of wrath.

3. But, concerning the third, there is yet more difficulty. Those sons that inherit their fathers' sins by possessing the price of their fathers' souls, that is, by enjoying the goods gotten by their fathers' rapine, may certainly quit the inheritance of the curse, if they quit the purchase of the sin, that is, if they pay their fathers' debts; his debts of contract and his debts of justice; his debts of intercourse, and his debts of oppression. I do not say that every man is bound to restore all the land which his ancestors have unjustly snatched: for when by law the possession is established, though the grandfather entered like a thief, yet the grandchild is "bonæ fidei" possessor, and may enjoy it justly; and the reasons of this are great and necessary; for the avoiding eternal suits, and perpetual diseases of rest and conscience; because there is no estate in the world that could be enjoyed by any man honestly, if posterity were bound to make restitution of all the wrongs done by their progenitors. But although the children of the far-removed lines are not obliged to restitution, yet others are; and some for the same, some for other reasons.

1. Sons are tied to restore what their fathers did usurp, or to make agreement and an acceptable recompence for it, if the case be visible, evident, and notorious, and the oppressed party demands it: because in this case the law hath not settled the possession in the new tenant; or if a judge hath, it is by injury; and there is yet no collateral accidental title transferred by long possession, as it is in other cases: and therefore, if the son continues to oppress the same person whom his father first injured, he may well expect to be the heir of his father's curse, as well as of his cursed purchase.

2. Whether by law and justice, or not, the person be obliged, nay, although by all the solemnities of law the unjust purchase be established, and that in conscience the grandchildren be not obliged to restitution in their own particulars, but may continue to enjoy it without a new sin; yet if we see a curse

[b] Luke xi. 47, 48. [c] Matt. xxiii. 30. [d] Reimar. [e] Matt. xxiii. 32.

descending upon the family for the old oppression done in the days of our grandfathers, or if we probably suspect that to be the cause; then, if we make restitution, we also most certainly remove the curse, because we take away the matter upon which the curse is grounded. I do not say, we sin, if we do not restore; but that, if we do not, we may still be punished. The reason of this is clear and visible: for as without our faults, in many cases, we may enjoy those lands which our forefathers got unjustly; so without our faults we may be punished for them. For as they have transmitted the benefit to us, it is but reasonable we should suffer the appendant calamity. If we receive good, we must also venture the evil that comes along with it. "Res transit cum suo onere:" "All lands and possessions pass with their proper burdens."—And if any of my ancestors was a tenant, and a servant, and held his lands as a villain to his lord; his posterity also must do so, though accidentally they become noble. The case is the same. If my ancestors entered unjustly, there is a curse and a plague that is due to that oppression and injustice; and that is "the burden of the land," and it descends all along with it. And although I, by the consent of laws, am a just possessor, yet I am obliged to the burden that comes with the land: I am indeed another kind of person than my grandfather; he was a usurper, but I am a just possessor; but, because in respect of the land this was but an accidental change, therefore I still am liable to the burden, and the curse that descends with it. But the way to take off the curse is to quit the title: and yet a man may choose. It may be, to lose the land would be the bigger curse: but, if it be not, the way is certain how you may be rid of it. There was a custom among the Greeks, that the children of them that died of consumptions or dropsies, all the while their fathers' bodies were burning on their funeral piles, did sit with their feet in cold water, hoping that such a lustration and ceremony would take off the lineal and descending contagion from the children. I know not what cure they found by their superstition: but we may be sure, that if we wash (not our feet, but) our hands of all the unjust purchases which our fathers have transmitted to us, their hydropic thirst of wealth shall not transmit to us a consumption of estate, or any other curse. But this remedy is only in the matter of injury or oppression, not in the case of other sins; because other sins were transient; and, as the guilt did not pass upon the children, so neither did the exterior and permanent effect: and, therefore, in other sins (in case they do derive a curse) it cannot be removed, as in the matter of unjust possession it may be; whose effect (we may so order it) shall no more stick to us, than the guilt of our fathers' personal actions.

The sum is this: as kingdoms use to expiate the faults of others by acts of justice; and as churches use to "remove the accursed thing" from sticking to the communities of the faithful, and the sins of christians from being required of the whole congregation, by excommunicating and censuring the delinquent persons; so the heirs and sons of families are to remove from their house the curse descending from their fathers' loins—1. by acts of disavowing the sins of their ancestors; 2. by praying for pardon; 3. by being humbled for them; 4. by renouncing the example; and, 5. quitting the affection to the crimes; 6. by not imitating the actions in kind, or in semblance and similitude; and lastly, 7. by refusing to rejoice in the ungodly purchases, in which their fathers did amiss, and dealt wickedly.

Secondly; but, after all this, many cases do occur, in which we find that innocent sons are punished. The remedies I have already discoursed of, are for such children, who have, in some manner or other, contracted and derived the sin upon themselves: but if we inquire how those sons—who have no intercourse or affinity with their fathers' sins, or whose fathers' sins were so transient that no benefit or effect did pass upon their posterity—may prevent, or take off, the curse that lies upon the family for their fathers' faults; this will have some distinct considerations.

1. The pious children of evil parents are to stand firm upon the confidence of the Divine grace and mercy, and upon that persuasion to begin to work upon a new stock. For it is as certain, that he may derive a blessing upon his posterity, as that his parents could transmit a curse: and if any man by piety shall procure God's favour to his relatives and children, it is certain that he hath done more than to escape the punishment of his father's follies. "If sin doth abound," and evils by sin are derived from his parents; "much more shall grace superabound," and mercy by grace. If he was in danger from the crimes of others, much rather shall he be secured by his own piety. For if God punishes the sins of the fathers to four generations; yet he rewards the piety of fathers to ten, to hundreds, and to thousands. Many of the ancestors of Abraham were persons not noted for religion, but suffered in the public impiety and almost universal idolatry of their ages: and yet all the evils that could thence descend upon the family, were wiped off; and God began to reckon with Abraham upon a new stock of blessings and piety; and he was, under God, the original of so great a blessing, that his family, for fifteen hundred years together, had from him a title to many favours; and whatever evils did chance to them in the descending ages, were but single evils in respect of that treasure of mercies, which the father's piety had obtained to the whole nation. And it is remarkable to observe, how blessings did stick to them for their fathers' sakes, even whether they would or no. For, first, his grandchild Esau proved a naughty man, and he lost the great blessing which was entailed upon the family; but he got, not a curse, but a less blessing; and yet, because he lost the greater blessing, God excluded him from being reckoned in the elder line: for God, foreseeing the event, so ordered it, that he should first lose his birthright, and then lose the blessing; for it was to be certain, the family must be reckoned for prosperous in the proper line, and yet God blessed Esau into a great nation, and made

him the father of many princes. Now the line of blessing being reckoned in Jacob, God blessed his family strangely, and by miracle, for almost five generations. He brought them from Egypt by mighty signs and wonders: and when for sin they all died in their way to Canaan, two only excepted, God so ordered it, that they were all reckoned as single deaths; the nation still descended, like a river, whose waters were drunk up for the beverage of an army, but still it keeps its name and current, and the waters are supplied by showers, and springs, and providence. After this, iniquity still increased, and then God struck deeper, and spread curses upon whole families; he translated the priesthood from line to line, he removed the kingdom from one family to another: and still they sinned worse; and then we read that God smote almost a whole tribe; the tribe of Benjamin was almost extinguished about the matter of the Levite's concubine: but still God remembered his promise, which he made with their forefathers, and that breach was made up. After this we find a greater rupture made, and ten tribes fell into idolatry, and ten tribes were carried captives into Assyria, and never came again: but still God remembered his covenant with Abraham, and left two tribes. But they were restless in their provocation of the God of Abraham; and they also were carried captive: but still God was the God of their fathers, and brought them back, and placed them safe, and they grew again into a kingdom, and should have remained for ever, but that they killed one that was greater than Abraham, even the Messias; and then they were rooted out, and the old covenant cast off, and God delighted no more to be called "the God of Abraham," but the "Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." As long as God kept that relation, so long for the fathers' sakes they had a title and an inheritance to a blessing: for so saith St. Paul, "As touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes."[f]

I insist the longer upon this instance, that I may remonstrate how great, and how sure, and how preserving mercies a pious father of a family may derive upon his succeeding generations: and if we do but tread in the footsteps of our father Abraham, we shall inherit as certain blessings. But then, I pray, add these considerations.

2. If a great impiety and a clamorous wickedness hath stained the honour of a family, and discomposed its title to the Divine mercies and protection, it is not an ordinary piety that can restore this family. An ordinary even course of life, full of sweetness and innocence, will secure every single person in his own eternal interest: but that piety, which must be a spring of blessings, and communicative to others, that must plead against the sins of their ancestors, and begin a new bank of mercies for the relatives; that must be a great and excellent, a very religious state of life. A small pension will maintain a single person: but he that hath a numerous family, and many to provide for, needs a greater providence of God, and a bigger provision for their maintenance: and a small revenue will not keep up the dignity of a great house; especially if it be charged with a great debt. And this is the very state of the present question. That piety that must be instrumental to take off the curse imminent upon a family, to bless a numerous posterity, to secure a fair condition to many ages, and to pay the debts of their fathers' sins, must be so large, as that, all necessary expenses and duties for his own soul being first discharged, it may be remarkable in great expressions, it may be exemplary to all the family, it may be of universal efficacy, large in the extension of parts, deep in the intention of degrees: and then, as the root of a tree receives nourishment not only sufficient to preserve its own life, but to transmit a plastic juice to the trunk of the tree, and from thence to the utmost branch and smallest germ that knots in the most distant part; so shall the great and exemplary piety of the father of a family not only preserve to the interest of his own soul the life of grace and hopes of glory, but shall be a quickening spirit, active and communicative of a blessing, not only to the trunk of the tree, to the body and rightly-descending line, but even to the collateral branches, to the most distant relatives, and all that shall claim a kindred shall have a title to a blessing. And this was the way that was prescribed to the family of Eli, upon whom a sad curse was entailed, that there should not be an old man of the family for ever, and that they should be beggars, and lose the office of priesthood: by the connsel of R. Johanan, the son of Zaccheus, all the family betook themselves to a great, a strict, and a severe religion; and God was entreated to revoke his decree, to be reconciled to the family, to restore them to the common condition of men, from whence they stood separate by the displeasure of God against the crime of Eli, and his sons Hophni and Phineas. This course is sure either to take off the judgment, or to change it into a blessing; to take away the rod, or the smart and evil of it; to convert the punishment into a mere natural or human chance, and that chance to the opportunity of a virtue, and that virtue to the occasion of a crown.

3. It is of great use for the securing of families, that every master of a family order his life so, that his piety and virtue be as communicative as is possible; that is, that he secure the religion of his whole family by a severe supravision and animadversion, and by cutting off all those unprofitable and hurtful branches which load the tree, and hinder the growth, and stock and disimprove the fruit, and revert evil juice to the very root itself. Calvisius Sabinus laid out vast sums of money upon his servants to stock his house with learned men; and brought one that could recite all Homer by heart, a second that was ready at Hesiod,—a third, at Pindar,—and for every of the lyrics, one; having this fancy, that all that learning was his own, and whatsoever his servants knew made him so much the more skilful. It was noted in the man for a rich and prodigal folly: but if he had changed his instance, and brought none but virtuous servants into his house, he might better have reckoned his wealth upon their stock, and the piety of his family

[f] Rom. xi. 28.

might have helped to bless him, and to have increased the treasure of the master's virtue. Every man that would either cut off the title of an old curse, or secure a blessing upon a new stock, must make virtue as large in the fountain as he can, that it may the sooner water all his relatives with fruitfulness and blessings. And this was one of the things that God noted in Abraham, and blessed his family for it, and his posterity: "I know that Abraham will teach his sons to fear me." When a man teaches his family to know and fear God, then he scatters a blessing round about his habitation. And this helps to illustrate the reason of the thing, as well as to prove its certainty. We hear it spoken in our books of religion, that the faith of the parents is imputed to their children to good purposes, and that a good husband sanctifies an ill wife, and "a believing wife, an unbelieving husband;" and either of them makes the children to be sanctified, "else they were unclean and unholy;" that is, the very designing children to the service of God is a sanctification of them; and therefore St. Jerome calls christian children "candidatos fidei christianæ." And if this very designation of them makes them holy, that is, acceptable to God, entitled to the promises, partakers of the covenant, within the condition of sons; much more shall it be effectual to greater blessings, when the parents take care that the children shall be actually pious, full of sobriety, full of religion; then it becomes a holy house, a chosen generation, an elect family; and then there can no evil happen to them, but such which will bring them nearer to God; that is, no cross, but the cross of Christ; no misfortune, but that which shall lead them to felicity; and if any semblance of a curse happens in the generations, it is but like the anathema of a sacrifice; not an accursed, but a devoted thing; for so the sacrifice, upon whose neck the priest's knife doth fall, is so far from being accursed, that it helps to get a blessing to all that join in the oblation. So every misfortune, that shall discompose the ease of a pious and religious family, shall but make them fit to be presented unto God; and the rod of God shall be like the branches of fig-trees, bitter and sharp in themselves, but productive of most delicious fruit. No evil can curse the family whose stock is pious, and whose "branches are holiness to the Lord." If any leaf or any boughs shall fall untimely, God shall gather them up, and place them in his temple, or at the foot of his throne; and that family must needs be blessed, whom infelicity itself cannot make accursed.

4. If a curse be feared to descend upon a family for the fault of their ancestors, pious sons have yet another way to secure themselves, and to withdraw the curse from the family, or themselves from the curse; and that is, by doing some very great and illustrious act of piety, an action, "in gradu heroico," as Aristotle calls it, "an heroical action." If there should happen to be one martyr in a family, it would reconcile the whole kindred to God, and make him, who is more inclined to mercy than to severity, rather to be pleased with the relatives of the martyr, than to continue to be angry with the nephews of a deceased sinner. I cannot insist long upon this; but you may see it proved by one great instance in the case of Phineas, who killed an unclean prince, and turned the wrath of God from his people. He was zealous for God and for his countrymen, and did an heroical action of zeal: "Wherefore" (saith God) "behold I give unto him my covenant of peace, and he shall have it, and his seed after him; even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel." Thus the sons of Rechab obtained the blessing of an enduring and blessed family, because they were most strict and religious observers of their fathers' precepts, and kept them after his death, and abstained from wine for ever; and no temptation could invite them to taste it; for they had as great reverence to their father's ashes, as, being children, they had to his rod and to his eyes. Thus a man may turn the wrath of God from his family, and secure a blessing for posterity, by doing some great noble acts of charity; or a remarkable chastity like that of Joseph; or an expensive, an affectionate religion and love to Christ and his servants, as Mary Magdalen did. Such things as these, which are extraordinary egressions and transvolations beyond the ordinary course of an even piety, God loves to reward with an extraordinary favour; and gives them testimony by an extra-regular blessing.

One thing more I have to add by way of advice; and that is, that all parents and fathers of families, from whose loins a blessing or a curse usually does descend, be very careful, not only generally in all the actions of their lives, (for that I have already pressed,) but particularly in the matter of repentance; that they be curious that they finish it, and do it thoroughly; for there are certain ὑστερήματα μετανοίας, "leavings of repentance," which make that God's anger is taken from us so imperfectly; and although God, for his sake who died for us, will pardon a returning sinner, and bring him to heaven through tribulation and a fiery trial; yet,—when a man is weary of his sorrow, and his fastings are a load to him, and his sins are not so perfectly renounced or hated as they ought,—the parts of repentance, which are left unfinished, do sometimes fall upon the heads or upon the fortunes of the children. I do not say this is regular and certain; but sometimes God deals thus; for this thing hath been so, and therefore it may be so again. We see it was done in the case of Ahab; he "humbled himself, and went softly, and lay in sackcloth," and called for pardon, and God took from him a judgment which was falling heavily upon him; but we all know his repentance was imperfect and lame; the same evil fell upon his sons; for so said God: "I will bring the evil upon his house in his son's days." Leave no arrears for thy posterity to pay; but repent with an integral, a holy, and excellent repentance, that God being reconciled to thee thoroughly, for thy sake also he may bless thy seed after thee.

And, after all this, add a continual, a fervent, a

hearty, a never-ceasing prayer for thy children, ever remembering, when they beg a blessing, that God hath put much of their fortune into your hands; and a transient formal "God bless thee," will not outweigh the load of a great vice, and the curse which scatters from thee by virtual contact, and by the channels of relation, if thou beest a vicious person: nothing can issue from thy fountain but bitter waters. And, as it were a great impudence for a condemned traitor to beg of his injured prince a province for his son for his sake; so it is an ineffective blessing we give our children, when we beg for them what we have no title to for ourselves; nay, when we can convey to them nothing but a curse. The prayer of a sinner, the unhallowed wish of a vicious parent, is but a poor donative to give to a child who sucked poison from his nurse, and derives cursing from his parents. They are punished with a double torture in the shame and pain of the damned, who, dying enemies to God, have left an inventory of sins and wrath to be divided amongst their children. But they that can truly give a blessing to their children, are such as live a blessed life, and pray holy prayers, and perform an integral repentance, and do separate from the sins of their progenitors, and do illustrious actions, and begin the blessing of their family upon a new stock. For as from the eyes of some persons there shoots forth an evil influence, and some have an evil eye, and are infectious, some look healthfully as a friendly planet, and innocent as flowers; and as some fancies convey private effects to confederate and allied bodies; and between the very vital spirits of friends and relatives there is a cognation, and they refresh each other like social plants; and a good man is a[g] friend to every good man; and (they say) that a usurer knows a usurer, and one rich man another, there being by the very manners of men contracted a similitude of nature, and a communication of effects: so in parents and their children there is so great a society of nature and of manners, of blessing and cursing, that an evil parent cannot perish in a single death; and holy parents never eat their meal of blessing alone, but they make the room shine like the fire of a holy sacrifice; and a father's or a mother's piety makes all the house festival and full of joy from generation to generation. Amen.

[g] Διαμένει οὖν ἡ τούτων φιλία, ἕως ἂν ἀγαθοὶ ὦσιν· ἡ δ' ἀρετὴ μόνιμον.—ARIST.

SERMON V.

THE INVALIDITY OF A LATE OR DEATH-BED REPENTANCE.

PART I.

Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains, and, while ye look for light, (or, lest while ye look for light,) he shall turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness. —Jeremiah xiii. 16.

GOD is the eternal fountain of honour and the spring of glory; in him it dwells essentially, from him it derives originally; and when an action is glorious, or a man is honourable, it is because the action is pleasing to God, in the relation of obedience or imitation, and because the man is honoured by God, and by God's vicegerent: and therefore, God cannot be dishonoured, because all honour comes from himself; he cannot but be glorified, because to be himself is to be infinitely glorious. And yet he is pleased to say, that our sins dishonour him, and our obedience does glorify him. But as the sun, the great eye of the world, prying into the recesses of rocks and the hollowness of valleys, receives species or visible forms from these objects, but he beholds them only by that light which proceeds from himself: so does God, who is the light of that eye; he receives reflexes and returns from us, and these he calls "glorifications" of himself, but they are such which are made so by his own gracious acceptation. For God cannot be glorified by any thing but by himself, and by his own instruments, which he makes as mirrors to reflect his own excellency; that by seeing the glory of such emanations, he may rejoice in his own works, because they are images of his infinity. Thus when he made the beauteous frame of heaven and earth, he rejoiced in it, and glorified himself; because it was the glass in which he beheld his wisdom and almighty power. And when God destroyed the old world, in that also he glorified himself; for in those waters he saw the image of his justice,—they were the looking-glass for that attribute; and God is said "to laugh at" and rejoice in the destruction of a sinner," because he is pleased with the economy of his own laws, and the excellent proportions he hath made of his judgments consequent to our sins. But, above all, God rejoiced in his holy Son; for he was the image of the Divinity, "the character and express image of his person;" in him he beheld his own essence, his wisdom, his power, his justice, and his person; and he was that excellent instrument designed from eternal ages to represent, as in a double mirror, not only the glories of God to himself, but also to all the world; and he glorified God by the instrument of obedience, in which God beheld his own dominion and the sanctity of his laws clearly represented; and he saw his justice

glorified, when it was fully satisfied by the passion of his Son: and so he hath transmitted to us a great manner of the divine glorification, being become to us the author and example of giving glory to God after the manner of men, that is, by well-doing and patient suffering, by obeying his laws and submitting to his power, by imitating his holiness and confessing his goodness, by remaining innocent or becoming penitent; for this also is called in the text "giving glory to the Lord our God."

For he that hath dishonoured God by sins, that is, hath denied, by a moral instrument of duty and subordination, to confess the glories of his power, and the goodness of his laws, and hath dishonoured and despised his mercy, which God intended as an instrument of our piety, hath no better way to glorify God, than by returning to his duty, to advance the honour of the Divine attributes, in which he is pleased to communicate himself, and to have intercourse with man. He that repents, confesses his own error, and the righteousness of God's laws,—and by judging himself confesses that he deserves punishment,—and therefore, that God is righteous if he punishes him: and, by returning, confesses God to be the fountain of felicity, and the foundation of true, solid, and permanent joys, saying in the sense and passion of the disciples, "Whither shall we go? for thou hast the words of eternal life:" and, by humbling himself, exalts God, by making the proportions of distance more immense and vast. And as repentance does contain in it all the parts of holy life, which can be performed by a returning sinner (all the acts and habits of virtue being but parts, or instances, or effects of repentance); so all the actions of a holy life do constitute the mass and body of all those instruments, whereby God is pleased to glorify himself. For if God is glorified in the sun and moon, in the rare fabric of the honeycombs, in the discipline of bees, in the economy of pismires, in the little houses of birds, in the curiosity of an eye, God being pleased to delight in those little images and reflexes of himself from those pretty mirrors, which, like a crevice in the wall, through a narrow perspective, transmit the species of a vast excellency: much rather shall God be pleased to behold himself in the glasses of our obedience, in the emissions of our will and understanding; these being rational and apt instruments to express him, far better than the natural, as being nearer communications of himself.

But I shall no longer discourse of the philosophy of this expression: certain it is, that in the style of Scripture, repentance is the great "glorification of God;" and the prophet, by calling the people to "give God glory," calls upon them "to repent," and so expresses both the duty and the event of it; the event being "glory to God on high, peace on earth, and good-will towards men" by the sole instrument of repentance. And this was it which Joshua said to Achan, "Give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him:"[k] that one act of repentance is one act of glorifying God. And this David acknowledged; "Against thee only have I sinned: 'ut tu justificeris,' that thou mightest be justified or cleared:"[l] that is, that God may have the honour of being righteous, and we the shame of receding from so excellent a perfection; or, as St. Paul quotes and explicates the place, "Let God be true, and every man a liar; as it is written, that thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged."[m] But to clear the sense of this expression of the prophet, observe the words of St. John; "And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, who hath power over those plagues: and they repented not to give him glory."[n]

So that having strength and reason from these so many authorities, I may be free to read the words of my text thus; "Repent of all your sins, before God cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains." And then we have here the duty of repentance, and the time of its performance. It must be *μετάνοια εὔκαιρος*, "a seasonable and timely repentance," a repentance which must begin before our darkness begin, a repentance in the day-time: "ut dum dies est, operemini," "that ye may work while it is to-day:" lest, if we "stumble upon the dark mountains," that is, fall into the ruins of old age, which makes a broad way narrow, and a plain way to be a craggy mountain: or if we stumble and fall into our last sickness, instead of health God send us to our grave,—and instead of light and salvation, which we then confidently look for, he make our state to be outer darkness, that is, misery irremediable, misery eternal.

This exhortation of the prophet was always full of caution and prudence, but now it is highly necessary; since men, who are so clamorously called to repentance, that they cannot avoid the necessity of it, yet, that they may reconcile an evil life with the hopes of heaven, have crowded this duty into so little room, that it is almost strangled and extinct; and they have lopped off so many members, that they have reduced the whole body of it to the dimensions of a little finger, sacrificing their childhood to vanity, their youth to lust and to intemperance, their manhood to ambition and rage, pride and revenge, secular desires, and unholy actions; and yet still further, giving their old age to covetousness and oppression, to the world and the devil: and, after all this, what remains for God and for religion? Oh, for that they will do well enough: upon their death-bed they will think a few godly thoughts, they will send for a priest to minister comfort to them, they will pray and ask God forgiveness, and receive the holy sacrament, and leave their goods behind them, disposing them to their friends and relatives, and some dole and issues of the alms-basket to the poor; and if after all this they die quietly, and like a lamb, and be canonized by a bribed flatterer in a funeral sermon, they make no doubt but they are children of the kingdom, and perceive not their folly, till, without hope of remedy, they roar in their expectations of a certain but a horrid eternity of pains. Certainly nothing hath

[k] Joshua vii. 19. [l] Psal. li. 4. [m] Rom. iii. 4. [n] Rev. xvi. 9.

made more ample harvests for the devil, than the deferring of repentance upon vain confidences, and lessening it in the extension of parts as well as intention of degrees, while we imagine that a few tears and scatterings of devotion, are enough to expiate the baseness of a fifty or threescore years' impiety. This I shall endeavour to cure, by showing what it is to repent, and that repentance implies in it the duty of a life, or of many and great, of long and lasting parts of it; and then, by direct arguments, showing that repentance put off to our death-bed, is invalid and ineffectual, sick, languid, and impotent, like our dying bodies and disabled faculties.

1. First, therefore, repentance implies a deep sorrow, as the beginning and introduction of this duty: not a superficial sigh or tear, not a calling ourselves sinners and miserable persons: this is far from that "godly sorrow that worketh repentance;" and yet I wish there were none in the world, or none amongst us, who cannot remember that ever they have done this little towards the abolition of their multitudes of sins: but yet, if it were not a hearty, pungent sorrow, a sorrow that shall break the heart in pieces, a sorrow that shall so irreconcile us to sin, as to make us rather choose to die than to sin, it is not so much as the beginning of repentance. But in Holy Scripture, when the people are called to repentance, and sorrow (which is ever the prologue to it) marches sadly, and first opens the scene, it is ever expressed to be great, clamorous, and sad: it is called "a weeping sorely" in the next verse after my text; "a weeping with the bitterness of heart;" "a turning to the Lord with weeping, fasting, and mourning;"[o] "a weeping day and night;" the "sorrow of heart;" the "breaking of the spirit;" the "mourning like a dove," and "chattering like a swallow."[p] And if we observe the threnes and sad accents of the prophet Jeremy, when he wept for the sins of his nation; the heart-breakings of David, when he mourned for his adultery and murder; and the bitter tears of St. Peter, when he washed off the guilt and baseness of his fall, and the denying his Master; we shall be sufficiently instructed in this "præludium" or "introduction" to repentance; and that it is not every breath of a sigh, or moisture of a tender eye, not every crying "Lord have mercy upon me," that is such a sorrow, as begins our restitution to the state of grace and Divine favour; but such a sorrow, that really condemns ourselves, and by an active effectual sentence, declares us worthy of stripes and death, of sorrow and eternal pains, and willingly endures the first to prevent the second; and weeps, and mourns, and fasts, to obtain of God but to admit us to a possibility of restitution. And although all sorrow for sins hath not the same expression, nor the same degree of pungency and sensitive trouble, which differs according to the temper of the body, custom, the sex, and accidental tenderness;[q] yet it is not a godly sorrow, unless it really produce these effects: that is, 1. that it makes us really to hate, and 2. actually to decline sin; and 3. produce in us a fear of God's anger, a sense of the guilt of his displeasure; and 4. then such consequent trouble as can consist with such apprehension of the Divine displeasure: which, if it express not in tears and hearty complaints, must be expressed in watchings and strivings against sin; in confessing the goodness and justice of God threatening or punishing us; in patiently bearing the rod of God; in confession of our sins; in accusation of ourselves; in perpetual begging of pardon, and mean and base opinions of ourselves; and in all the natural productions from these, according to our temper and constitution: it must be a sorrow of the reasonable faculty, the greatest in its kind: and if it be less in kind, or not productive of these effects, it is not a godly sorrow, nor the "exordium" of repentance.

But I desire that it be observed that sorrow for sins is not repentance; not that duty which gives glory to God, so as to obtain of him that he will glorify us. Repentance is a great volume of duty; and godly sorrow is but the frontispiece or title-page; it is the harbinger or first introduction to it: or, if you will consider it in the words of St. Paul, "Godly sorrow worketh repentance:"[r] sorrow is the parent, and repentance is the product. And, therefore, it is a high piece of ignorance to suppose, that a crying out and roaring for our sins upon our death-bed can reconcile us to God: our crying to God must be so early and so lasting, as to be able to teem and produce such a daughter, which must live long, and grow from an embryo to an infant, from infancy to childhood, from thence to the fulness of the stature of Christ; and then it is a holy and a happy sorrow. But if it be a sorrow only of a death-bed, it is a fruitless shower; or like the rain of Sodom, not the beginning of repentance, but the kindling of a flame, the commencement of an eternal sorrow. For Ahab had a great sorrow, but it wrought nothing upon his spirit; it did not reconcile his affections to his duty, and his duty to God. Judas had so great a sorrow for betraying the innocent blood of his Lord, that it was intolerable to his spirit, and he "burst in the middle." And if mere sorrow be repentance, then hell is full of penitents; for "there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth, for evermore."

Let us, therefore, beg of God, as Caleb's daughter did of her father; "Dedisti mihi terram aridam, da etiam et irriguam," "Thou hast given me a dry land, give me also a land of waters, a dwelling-place in tears, rivers of tears:" "Ut, quoniam non sumus digni oculos orando ad cœlum levare, at simus digni oculos plorando cæcare," as St. Austin's expression is; "That because we are not worthy to lift up our eyes to heaven in prayer, yet we may be worthy to weep our eyes blind for sin."—The meaning is, that we beg sorrow of God, such a sorrow as may be sufficient to quench the flames of lust, and surmount the hills of our pride, and may extinguish our thirst of covetousness; that is, a sorrow that shall be an effective principle of arming all our faculties

[o] Ezek. xxvii. 31. [p] Joel ii. 13.
[q] See Rule of H. Living, D. of Repentance, p. 494.
[r] 2 Cor. vii. 10.

against sin, and heartily setting upon the work of grace, and the persevering labours of a holy life. I shall only add one word to this: that our sorrow for sin is not to be estimated by our tears and our sensible expressions, but by our active hatred and dereliction of sin; and is many times unperceived in outward demonstration. It is reported of the mother of Peter Lombard, Gratian, and Comestor, that she having had three sons begotten in unhallowed embraces, upon her death-bed did omit the recitation of those crimes to her confessor; adding this for apology, that her three sons proved persons so eminent in the church, that their excellence was abundant recompence for her demerit; and therefore, she could not grieve, because God had glorified himself so much by three instruments so excellent; and that although her sin had abounded, yet God's grace did superabound. Her confessor replied, "At dole saltem, quod dolere non possis," "Grieve that thou canst not grieve." And so must we always fear, that our trouble for sin is not great enough, that our sorrow is too remiss, that our affections are indifferent: but we can only be sure that our sorrow is a godly sorrow, when it worketh repentance: that is, when it makes us hate and leave all our sin, and take up the cross of patience or penance; that is, confess our sin, accuse ourselves, condemn the action by hearty sentence: and then, if it hath no other emanation but fasting and prayer for its pardon, and hearty industry towards its abolition, our sorrow is not reprovable.

2. For sorrow alone will not do it; there must follow a total dereliction of our sin; and this is the first part of repentance. Concerning which I consider, that it is a sad mistake amongst many that do some things towards repentance, that they mistake the first addresses and instruments of this part of repentance for the whole duty itself. Confession of sins is in order to the dereliction of them: but then confession must not be like the unlading of a ship to take in new stowage; or the vomits of intemperance, which ease the stomach that they may continue the merry meeting. But such a confession is too frequent, in which men either comply with custom, or seek to ease a present load or gripe of conscience, or are willing to dress up their souls against a festival, or hope for pardon upon so easy terms: these are but retirings back to leap the farther into mischief; or but approaches to God with the lips. No confession can be of any use, but as it is an instrument of shame to the person, of humiliation to the man, and dereliction of the sin; and receives its recompence but as it adds to these purposes: all other is like "the bleating of the calves and the lowing of the oxen," which Saul reserved after the spoil of Agag; they proclaim the sin, but do nothing towards its cure; they serve God's end to make us justly to be condemned out of our own mouths, but nothing at all towards our absolution. Nay, if we proceed further to the greatest expressions of humiliation; (parts of which, I reckon fasting, praying for pardon, judging and condemning of ourselves by instances of a present indignation against a crime;) yet unless this proceed so far as to a total deletion of the sin, to the extirpation of every vicious habit, God is not glorified by our repentance, nor we secured in our eternal interest. Our sin must be brought to judgment, and, like Antinous in Homer, laid in the midst, as the sacrifice and the cause of all the mischief.

Ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν ἤδη κεῖται, ὃς αἴτιος ἔπλετο πάντων.

This is the murderer, this is the "Achan," this is "he that troubles Israel:" let the sin be confessed and carried with the pomps and solemnities of sorrow to its funeral, and so let the murderer be slain. But if after all the forms of confession and sorrow, fasting and humiliation, and pretence of doing the will of God, we "spare Agag and the fattest of the cattle," our delicious sins,—and still leave an unlawful king and a tyrant sin to reign in our mortal bodies, we may pretend what we will towards repentance, but we are no better penitents than Ahab; no nearer to the obtaining of our hopes than Esau was to his birthright, "for whose repentance there was no place left, though he sought it carefully with tears."

3. Well, let us suppose our penitent advanced thus far, as that he decrees against all sin, and in his hearty purposes resolves to decline it, as in a severe sentence he hath condemned it as his betrayer and his murderer; yet we must be curious (for now only the repentance properly begins) that it be not only like the springings of the thorny or high-way ground, soon up and soon down: for some men, when a sadness or an unhandsome accident surprises them, then they resolve against their sin; but like the goats in Aristotle, they give their milk no longer than they are stung; as soon as the thorns are removed, these men return to their first hardness, and resolve then to act their first temptation. Others there are who never resolve against a sin, but either when they have no temptation to it, or when their appetites are newly satisfied with it; like those who immediately after a full dinner resolve to fast at supper, and they keep it till their appetite returns, and then their resolution unties like the cords of vanity, or the gossamer against the violence of the northern wind. Thus a lustful person fills all the capacity of his lust; and when he is wearied, and the sin goes off with unquietness and regret, and the appetite falls down like a horse-leech, when it is ready to burst with putrefaction and an unwholesome plethory, then he resolves to be a good man, and could almost vow to be a hermit; and hates his lust, as Amnon hated his sister Tamar, just when he had newly acted his unworthy rape: but the next spring-tide that comes, every wave of the temptation makes an inroad upon the resolution, and gets ground, and prevails against it, more than his resolution prevailed against his sin. How many drunken persons, how many swearers, resolve daily and hourly against their sins, and yet act them not once the less for all their infinite heap of shamefully-retreating purposes! That resolution that begins upon just grounds of sorrow and severe judgment, upon fear and love, that is made in the midst of a temptation, that is inquisitive into all the

means and instruments of the cure, that prays perpetually against a sin, that watches continually against a surprise, and never sinks into it by deliberation; that fights earnestly, and carries on the war prudently, and prevails, by a never-ceasing diligence, against the temptation; that only is a pious and well-begun repentance. They that have their fits of a quartan, well and ill for ever, and think themselves in perfect health when the ague is retired till its period returns, are dangerously mistaken. Those intervals of imperfect and fallacious resolution are nothing but states of death: and if a man should depart this world in one of those godly fits, as he thinks them, he is no nearer to obtain his blessed hope, than a man in the stone-colic is to health when his pain is eased for the present, his disease still remaining, and threatening an unwelcome return. That resolution only is the beginning of a holy repentance, which goes forth into act, and whose acts enlarge into habits, and whose habits are productive of the fruits of a holy life.

From hence we are to take our estimate, whence our resolutions of piety must commence. He that resolves not to live well, till the time comes that he must die, is ridiculous in his great design, as he is impertinent in his intermedial purposes, and vain in his hope. Can a dying man to any real effect resolve to be chaste? For virtue must be an act of election, and chastity is the contesting against a proud and an imperious lust, active flesh, and insinuating temptation. And what doth he resolve against, who can no more be tempted to the sin of unchastity, than he can return back again to his youth and vigour? And it is considerable, that since all the purposes of a holy life which a dying man can make, cannot be reduced to act; by what law, or reason, or covenant, or revelation, are we taught to distinguish the resolution of a dying man from the purposes of a living and vigorous person? Suppose a man in his youth and health, moved by consideration of the irregularity and deformity of sin, the danger of its productions, the wrath and displeasure of Almighty God, should resolve to leave the puddles of impurity, and walk in the paths of righteousness; can this resolution alone put him into the state of grace? Is he admitted to pardon and the favour of God, before he hath in some measure performed actually, what he so reasonably hath resolved? by no means. For resolution and purpose is, in its own nature and constitution, an imperfect act, and therefore can signify nothing without its performance and consummation. It is as a faculty is to the act, as spring is to the harvest, as seed-time is to the autumn, as eggs are to birds, or as a relative is to its correspondent: nothing without it. And can it be imagined, that a resolution in our health and life shall be ineffectual without performance? and shall a resolution, barely such, do any good upon our death-bed? Can such purposes prevail against a long impiety rather than against a young and a newly-begun state of sin? Will God at an easier rate pardon the sins of fifty or sixty years, than the sins of our youth only, or the iniquity of five years, or ten? If a holy life be not necessary to be lived, why shall it be necessary to resolve to live it? But if a holy life be necessary, then it cannot be sufficient merely to resolve it, unless this resolution go forth in an actual and real service. Vain therefore is the hope of those persons, who either go on in their sins before their last sickness, never thinking to return into the ways of God, from whence they have wandered all their life, never renewing their resolutions and vows of holy living: or if they have, yet their purposes are for ever blasted with the next violent temptation. More prudent was the prayer of David; "Oh spare me a little, that I may recover my strength, before I go hence and be no more seen." And something like it was the saying of the emperor Charles the Fifth; "Inter vitæ negotia et mortis diem oportet spatium intercedere." Whenever our holy purposes are renewed, unless God gives us time to act them, to mortify and subdue our lusts, to conquer and subdue the whole kingdom of sin, to rise from our grave, and be clothed with nerves and flesh and a new skin, to overcome our deadly sicknesses, and by little and little to return to health and strength; unless we have grace and time to do all this, our sins will lie down with us in our graves. For when a man hath contracted a long habit of sin, and it hath been growing upon him ten or twenty, forty or fifty years, whose acts he hath daily or hourly repeated, and they are grown to a second nature to him,—and have so prevailed upon the ruins of his spirit, that the man is taken captive by the devil at his will, he is fast bound, as a slave tugging at the oar; that he is grown in love with his fetters, and longs to be doing the work of sin:—is it likely that after all this progress and growth in sin (in the ways of which he runs fast without any impediment); is it, I say, likely, that a few days or weeks of sickness can recover him? The special hinderances of that state I shall afterward consider. But, can a man supposed so prompt to piety and holy living, a man, I mean, that hath lived wickedly a long time together, can he be of so ready and active a virtue upon the sudden, as to recover, in a month or a week, what he hath been undoing in twenty or thirty years? Is it so easy to build, that a weak and infirm person, bound hand and foot, shall be able to build more in three days than was a-building above forty years? Christ did it in a figurative sense; but in this, it is not in the power of any man so suddenly to be recovered from so long a sickness. Necessary therefore it is that all these instruments of our conversion,—confession of sins,—praying for their pardon,—and resolution to lead a new life,—should begin "before our feet stumble upon the dark mountains;" lest we leave the work only resolved upon to be begun, which it is necessary we should in many degrees finish, if ever we mean to escape the eternal darkness. "For that we should actually abolish the whole body of sin and death,—that we should crucify the old man with his lusts,—that we should lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us,—that we should cast away the works of darkness,—that we should awake from sleep, and arise from death,—that we should

redeem the time,—that we should cleanse our hands and purify our hearts,—that we should have escaped the corruption (all the corruption) that is in the whole world through lust,—that nothing of the old leaven should remain in us,—but that we be wholly a new lump, thoroughly transformed and changed in the image of our mind;"—these are the perpetual precepts of the Spirit, and the certain duty of man: and that to have all these in purpose only, is merely to no purpose, without the actual eradication of every vicious habit; and the certain abolition of every criminal adherence, is clearly and dogmatically decreed every where in the Scripture. "For" (they are the words of St. Paul) "they that are Christ's, have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts:"[s] the work is actually done, and sin is dead or wounded mortally, before they can in any sense belong to Christ, to be a portion of his inheritance: and, "He that is in Christ, is a new creature."[t] For "in Christ Jesus nothing can avail but a new creature;"[u] nothing but a "keeping the commandments of God."[x] Not all our tears, though we should weep like David and his men at Ziklag, "till they could weep no more," or the women of "Ramah," or like "the weeping in the valley of Hinnom," could suffice, if we retain the affection to any one sin, or have any unrepented of, or unmortified. It is true, that "a contrite and a broken heart God will not despise;" no, he will not. For if it be a hearty and permanent sorrow, it is an excellent beginning of repentance; and God will to a timely sorrow give the grace of repentance; he will not give pardon to sorrow alone; but that which ought to be the proper effect of sorrow, that God shall give. He shall then open the gates of mercy, and admit you to a possibility of restitution: so that you may be within the covenant of repentance, which if you actually perform, you may expect God's promise. And in this sense confession will obtain our pardon, and humiliation will be accepted, and our holy purposes and pious resolutions shall be accounted for; that is, these being the first steps and addresses to that part of repentance which consists in the abolition of sins, shall be accepted so far as to procure so much of the pardon, to do so much of the work of restitution, that God will admit the returning man to a further degree of emendation, to a nearer possibility of working out his salvation. But then, if this sorrow, and confession, and these strong purposes, begin then when our life is declined towards the west, and is now ready to set in darkness and a dismal night; because of themselves they could not procure an admission to repentance, not at all to pardon and plenary absolution, by showing that on our death-bed these are too late and ineffectual, they call upon us to begin betimes, when these imperfect acts may be consummate and perfect, in the actual performing those parts of holy life, to which they were ordained in the nature of the thing and the purposes of God.

4. Lastly, suppose all this be done, and that by a long course of strictness and severity, mortification and circumspection, we have overcome all our vicious and baser habits, contracted and grown upon us like the ulcers and evils of a long surfeit, and that we are clean and swept; suppose that he hath wept and fasted, prayed and vowed to excellent purposes; yet all this is but the one half of repentance: (so infinitely mistaken is the world, to think any thing to be enough to make up repentance:) but to renew us, and restore us to the favour of God, there is required far more than what hath been yet accounted for. See it in the second of St. Peter, chap. i. verse 4, 5. "Having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust: and besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge temperance, to temperance patience, and so on, to godliness, to brotherly kindness, and to charity: these things must be in you and abound." This is the sum total of repentance: we must not only have overcome sin, but we must after great diligence have acquired the habits of all those christian graces, which are necessary in the transaction of our affairs, in all relations to God and our neighbour, and our own persons. It is not enough to say, "Lord, I thank thee, I am no extortioner, no adulterer, not as this publican;" all the reward of such a penitent is, that when he hath escaped the corruption of the world, he hath also escaped those heavy judgments which threatened his ruin.

"Nec furtum feci, nec fugi," si mihi dicat
Servus: "Habes pretium; loris non ureris," aio;
"Non hominem occidi:"—"Non pasces in cruce corvos."
HOR.

"If a servant have not robbed his master, nor offered to fly from his bondage, he shall escape the 'furca,' his flesh shall not be exposed to birds or fishes;" but this is but the reward of innocent slaves. It may be, we have escaped the rod of the exterminating angel, when our sins are crucified; but we shall never "enter into the joy of the Lord," unless after we have "put off the old man with his affections and lusts," we also "put on the new man in righteousness and holiness of life."[y] And this we are taught in most plain doctrine by St. Paul: "Let us lay aside the weight that doth so easily beset us;" that is the one half: and then it follows, "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us." These are the "fruits meet for repentance," spoken of by St. John Baptist; that is, when we renew our first undertaking in baptism, and return to our courses of innocence.

Parcus Deorum cultor et infrequens,
Insanientis dum sapientiæ
Consultus erro, nunc retrorsum
Vela dare, atque iterare cursus
Cogor relictos. HOR.

The sense of which words is well given us by St. John; "Remember whence thou art fallen; repent, and do thy first works."[z] For all our hopes of heaven rely upon that covenant which God made with us in baptism; which is, "That being redeemed from our vain conversation, we should serve him in holiness and righteousness all our days."

[s] Gal. v. 24. [t] Gal. vi. 15. [u] Gal. v. 6. [x] 1 Cor. vii. 19. [y] Heb xii. 1. [z] Rev. ii. 5.

Now when any of us hath prevaricated our part of the covenant, we must return to that state, and redeem the intermedial time spent in sin, by our doubled industry in the ways of grace: we must be reduced to our first estate, and make some proportionable returns of duty for our sad omissions, and great violations of our baptismal vow. For God having made no covenant with us but that which is consigned in baptism; in the same proportion in which we retain or return to that, in the same we are to expect the pardon of our sins, and all the other promises evangelical; but no otherwise, unless we can show a new gospel, or be baptized again by God's appointment. He, therefore, that by a long habit, by a state and continued course of sin, hath gone so far from his baptismal purity, as that he hath nothing of the christian left upon him but his name; that man hath much to do to make his garments clean, to purify his soul, to take off all the stains of sin, that his spirit may be presented pure to the eyes of God, who beholds no impurity. It is not an easy thing to cure a long-contracted habit of sin. Let any intemperate person but try in his own instance of drunkenness; or the swearer, in the sweetening his unwholesome language: but then so to command his tongue that he never swear, but that his speech be prudent, pious, and apt to edify the hearer, or in some sense to glorify God; or to become temperate, to have got a habit of sobriety, or chastity, or humility, is the work of a life. And if we do but consider that he that lives well from his younger years, or takes up at the end of his youthful heats, and enters into the courses of a sober life early, diligently, and vigorously, shall find himself, after the studies and labours of twenty or thirty years' piety, but a very imperfect person, many degrees of pride left unrooted up, many inroads of intemperance or beginnings of excess, much indevotion and backwardness in religion, many temptations to contest against, and some infirmities which he shall never say he hath mastered; we shall find the work of a holy life is not to be deferred till our days are almost done, till our strengths are decayed, our spirits are weak, and our lust strong, our habits confirmed, and our longings after sin many and impotent: for what is very hard to be done, and is always done imperfectly, when there is length of time, and a less work to do, and more abilities to do it withal; when the time is short, and almost expired, and the work made difficult and vast, and the strengths weaker, and the faculties are disabled, will seem little less than absolutely impossible. I shall end this general consideration with the question of the apostle; "If the righteous scarcely be saved," if it be so difficult to overcome our sins, and obtain virtuous habits; difficult, I say, to a righteous, a sober, and well-living person,—"where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" what shall become of him, who, by his evil life, hath not only removed himself from the affections, but even from the possibilities of virtue?—He that hath lived in sin, will die in sorrow.

SERMON VI.

PART II.

But I shall pursue this great and necessary truth, First, by showing what parts and ingredients of repentance are assigned, when it is described in Holy Scripture: Secondly, by showing the necessities, the absolute necessities, of a holy life, and what it means in Scripture to "live holily:" Thirdly, by considering what directions or intimations we have concerning the last time of beginning to repent; and what is the longest period that any man may venture with safety. And in the prosecution of these particulars, we shall remove the objections, those aprons of fig-leaves, which men use for their shelter to palliate their sin, and to hide themselves from that from which no rocks or mountains shall protect them, though they fall upon them; that is, the wrath of God.

First, That repentance is not only an abolition and extinction of the body of sin, a bringing it to the altar, and slaying it before God and all the people; but that we must also χρυσὸν κέρασι περιχεύειν, "mingle gold and rich presents," the oblation of good works and holy habits with the sacrifice, I have already proved: but now if we will see repentance in its stature and integrity of constitution described, we shall find it to be the one-half of all that which God requires of christians. Faith and repentance are the whole duty of a christian. Faith is a sacrifice of the understanding to God; repentance sacrifices the whole will: that gives the knowing; this gives us all the desiring faculties: that makes us disciples; this makes us servants of the holy Jesus. Nothing else was preached by the apostles, nothing was enjoined as the duty of man, nothing else did build up the body of christian religion. So that as faith contains all that knowledge which is necessary to salvation; so repentance comprehends in it all the whole practice and working duty of a returning christian. And this was the sum total of all that St. Paul preached to the gentiles, when, in his farewell-sermon to the bishops and priests of Ephesus, he professed that he "kept back nothing that was profitable" to them;[a] and yet it was all nothing but this, "repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ." So that whosoever believes in Jesus Christ and repents towards God, must make his accounts according to this standard, that is, to believe all that Christ taught him, and to do all that Christ commanded. And this is remarked in St. Paul's catechism,[b] where he gives a more particular catalogue of fundamentals: he reckons nothing but sacraments and faith; of which he enumerates two principal articles, "resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment." Whatsoever is practical, all the whole duty of man, the practice of all obedience, is called "repentance from dead works:" which, if we observe the singularity of the phrase, does not mean "sorrow;" for

[a] Acts xx. 21. [b] Heb. vi. 1.

sorrow from dead works, is not sense; but it must mean "mutationem status," a conversion from dead works, which (as in all motions) supposes two terms; from dead works to living works; from "the death of sin" to "the life of righteousness."

I will add but two places more, out of each Testament one; in which, I suppose, you may see every lineament of this great duty described, that you may no longer mistake a grasshopper for an eagle; sorrow and holy purposes, for the entire duty of repentance. In Ezekiel xviii. 21. you shall find it thus described: "But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die." Or, as it is more fully described in Ezekiel xxxiii. 14. "When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die: if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right; if the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he hath robbed, walk in the statutes of life without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die." Here only is the condition of pardon; to leave all your sins, to keep all God's statutes, to walk in them, to abide, to proceed, and make progress in them; and this, without the interruption by a deadly sin,—"without committing iniquity,"—to make restitution of all the wrongs he hath done, all the unjust money he hath taken, all the oppressions he hath committed, all that must be satisfied for, and repaid according to our ability: we must make satisfaction for all injury to our neighbour's fame, all wrongs done to his soul; he must be restored to that condition of good things thou didst in any sense remove him from; when this is done according to thy utmost power, then thou hast repented truly, then thou hast a title to the promise; "Thou shalt surely live, thou shalt not die," for thy old sins thou hast formerly committed. Only be pleased to observe this one thing; that this place of Ezekiel is it which is so often mistaken for that common saying, "At what time soever a sinner repents him of his sins from the bottom of his heart, I will put all his wickedness out of my remembrance, saith the Lord." For although "at what time soever a sinner does repent," as repentance is now explained, God will forgive him,—and that repentance, as it is now stated, cannot be done "at what time soever," not upon a man's death-bed; yet there are no such words in the whole Bible, nor any nearer to the sense of them, than the words I have now read to you out of the prophet Ezekiel. Let that, therefore, no more deceive you, or be made a colour to countenance a persevering sinner, or a death-bed penitent.

Neither is the duty of repentance to be bought at an easier rate in the New Testament. You may see it described in 2 Cor. vii. 10, 11. "Godly sorrow worketh repentance." Well! but what is that repentance which is so wrought? This it is: "Behold this selfsame thing that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge!" These are the fruits of that sorrow that is effectual; these are the parts of repentance: "clearing ourselves" of all that is past, and great "carefulness" for the future; "anger" at ourselves for our old sins, and "fear" lest we commit the like again; "vehement desires" of pleasing God, and "zeal" of holy actions, and "a revenge" upon ourselves for our sins, called by St. Paul, in another place, "a judging ourselves, lest we be judged of the Lord."[e] And in pursuance of this truth, the primitive church did not admit a sinning person to the public communions with the faithful, till, besides their sorrow, they had spent some years in an ἀγαθοεργία, in "doing good works," and holy living; and especially in such actions which did contradict that wicked inclination, which led them into those sins, whereof they were now admitted to repent. And therefore, we find that they stood in the station of penitents seven years, thirteen years, and sometimes till their death, before they could be reconciled to the peace of God, and his holy church.

——— Scelerum si bene pœnitet,
Eradenda cupidinis
Pravi sunt elementa; et teneræ nimis
Mentes asperioribus
Formandæ studiis. HOR. l. 3. od. 24.

Repentance is the institution of a philosophical and severe life, an utter extirpation of all unreasonableness and impiety, and an address to, and a final passing through, all the parts of holy living.

Now consider, whether this be imaginable or possible to be done upon our death-bed, when a man is frighted into an involuntary, a sudden, and unchosen piety. Ὁ μετανοῶν οὐ φόβῳ τῶν ἐναντίων τὴν τοῦ κακοῦ πρᾶξιν αἱρήσεται, saith Hierocles.[d] He that never repents till a violent fear be upon him, till he apprehend himself to be in the jaws of death, ready to give up his unready and unprepared accounts, till he sees the Judge sitting in all the addresses of dreadfulness and majesty, just now, as he believes, ready to pronounce that fearful and intolerable sentence of, "Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire;" this man does nothing for the love of God, nothing for the love of virtue: it is just as a condemned man repents that he was a traitor; but repented not till he was arrested, and sure to die: such a repentance as this may still consist with as great an affection to sin as ever he had;[e] and, it is no thanks to him, if, when the knife is at his throat, then he gives good words and flatters. But, suppose this man in his health, and in the midst of all his lust, it is evident that there are some circumstances of action, in which the man would have refused to commit his most pleasing sin. Would not the son of Tarquin have refused to ravish Lucretia, if Junius Brutus had been by him? Would the impurest person in the world act his lust in the market-place? or drink off an intemperate goblet, if a dagger were placed at his throat? In these

[c] 1 Cor. xi. 31.

[d] ἡ δὲ μετάνοια αὐτὴ φιλοσοφίας ἀρχὴ γίνεται, καὶ τῶν ἀνοήτων ἔργων τε καὶ λόγων φυχὴ, καὶ τῆς ἀμεταμελήτου ζωῆς ἡ πρώτη παρασκευή.—HIEROCLES.

[e] See Life of Jesus, Disc. of Repentance, part 2.

circumstances their fear would make them declare against the present acting their impurities. But does this cure the intemperance of their affections? Let the impure person retire to his closet, and Junius Brutus be engaged in a far-distant war, and the dagger be taken from the drunkard's throat, and the fear of shame, or death, or judgment, be taken from them all; and they shall no more resist their temptation, than they could before remove their fear: and you may as well judge the other persons holy, and haters of their sin, as the man upon his death-bed to be penitent; and rather they than he, by how much this man's fear, the fear of death, and of the infinite pains of hell, the fear of a provoked God, and an angry eternal Judge, are far greater than the apprehensions of a public shame, or an abused husband, or the poniard of an angry person. These men then sin not, because they dare not; they are frighted from the act, but not from the affection; which is not to be cured but by discourse, and reasonable acts, and human considerations; of which that man is not naturally capable, who is possessed with the greatest fear, the fear of death and damnation. If there had been time to cure his sin, and to live the life of grace, I deny not but God might have begun his conversion with so great a fear, that he should never have wiped off its impression:[f] but if the man dies then, dies when he only declaims against and curses his sin, as being the author of his present fear and apprehended calamity; it is very far from reconciling him to God or hopes of pardon, because it proceeds from a violent,[g] unnatural, and an intolerable cause; no act of choice, or virtue, but of sorrow, a deserved sorrow, and a miserable, unchosen, unavoidable fear;

——moriensque recepit
Quas nollet victurus aquas.——

He curses sin upon his death-bed, and makes a panegyric of virtue, which, in his life-time, he accounted folly, and trouble, and needless vexation.

Quæ mens est hodie, cur eadem non puero fuit?
Vel cur his animis incolumes non redeunt genæ?
HOR. l. 4. od. 10.

I shall end this first consideration with a plain exhortation; that, since repentance is a duty of so great and giant-like bulk, let no man crowd it up into so narrow room, as that it be strangled in its birth for want of time and air to breathe in: let it not be put off to that time when a man hath scarce time enough to reckon all those particular duties, which make up the integrity of its constitution. Will any man hunt the wild boar in his garden, or bait a bull in his closet? Will a woman wrap her child in her handkerchief, or a father send his son to school when he is fifty years old? These are indecencies of providence, and the instrument contradicts the end: and this is our case. There is no room for the repentance, no time to act all its essential parts; and a child, who hath a great way to go before he be wise, may defer his studies, and hope to become learned in his old age, and upon his death-bed; as well as a vicious person may think to recover from all his ignorances and prejudicate opinions, from all his false principles and evil customs, from his wicked inclinations and ungodly habits, from his fondnesses of vice and detestations of virtue, from his promptness to sin and unwillingness to grace, from his spiritual deadness and strong sensuality, upon his death-bed, (I say,) when he hath no natural strength, and as little spiritual; when he is criminal and impotent, hardened in his vice and soft in his fears, full of passion and empty of wisdom; when he is sick, and amazed, and timorous, and confounded, and impatient, and extremely miserable.

And now when any of you is tempted to commit a sin, remember that sin will ruin you, unless you repent of it. But this, you say, is no news, and so far from affrighting you from sin, that (God knows) it makes men sin the rather. For, therefore, they venture to act the present temptation, because they know, if they repent, God will forgive them; and therefore, they resolve upon both, to sin now, and repent hereafter.

Against this folly I shall not oppose the consideration of their danger, and that they neither know how long they shall live, nor whether they shall die or no in this very act of sin; though this consideration is very material, and if they should die in it, or before it is washed off, they perish: but I consider these things. 1. That he that resolves to sin upon a resolution to repent, by every act of sin makes himself more incapable of repenting, by growing more in love with sin, by remembering its pleasures, by serving it once more, and losing one degree more of the liberty of our spirit. And if you resolve to sin now, because it is pleasant, how do you know that your appetite will alter? Will it not appear pleasant to you next week, and the next week after that, and so for ever? And still you sin, and still you will repent; that is, you will repent when the sin can please you no longer; for so long as it can please you, so long you are tempted not to repent, as well as now to act the sin: and the longer you lie in it, the more you will love it. So that it is in effect to say, I love my sin now, but I will hereafter hate it; only I will act it awhile longer, and grow more in love with it, and then I will repent; that is, then I will be sure to hate it, when I shall most love it. 2. To repent, signifies to be sorrowful, to be ashamed, and to wish it had never been done. And then see the folly of this temptation; I would not sin, but that I hope to repent of it: that is, I would not do this thing, but that I hope to be sorrowful for doing it, and I hope to come to shame for it, heartily to be ashamed of my doings, and I hope to be in that condition, that I would give all the world I had never done it; that is, I hope to feel and apprehend an evil infinitely greater than the pleasures of my sin. And are these arguments fit to move a man to sin? What can affright a man from it, if these invite him to it? It is as if a man should invite one to be a partner

[f] Cogimur à suetis animum suspendere rebus;
Atque ut vivamus, vivere desinimus.—CORNEL. GAL.

[g] Nec ad rem pertinet ubi inciperet, quod placuerat ut fieret.

of his treason, by telling him, If you will join with me, you shall have all these effects by it; you shall be hanged, drawn, and quartered, and your blood shall be corrupted, and your estate forfeited, and you shall have many other reasons to wish you had never done it. He that should use this rhetoric, in earnest, might well be accounted a madman; this is to scare a man, not to allure him: and so is the other when we understand it truly. 3. For I consider, he that repents, wishes he had never done that sin. Now I ask, does he wish so upon reason, or without reason? Surely, if he may, when he hath satisfied his lust, ask God pardon, and be admitted upon as easy terms for the time to come, as if he had not done the sin, he hath no reason to be sorrowful, or wish he had not done it. For though he hath done it, and pleased himself by "enjoying the pleasure of sin for that season," yet all is well again; and let him only be careful now, and there is no hurt done, his pardon is certain. How can any man, that understands the reason of his actions and passions, wish that he had never done that sin in which then he had pleasure, and now he feels no worse inconvenience. But he that truly repents, wishes and would give all the world he had never done it; surely then his present condition in respect of his past sin hath some very great evil in it, why else should he be so much troubled? True, and this it is. He that hath committed sins after baptism, is fallen out of the favour of God, is tied to hard duty for the time to come, to cry vehemently unto God, to call night and day for pardon, to be in great fear and tremblings of heart, lest God should never forgive him, lest God will never take off his sentence of eternal pains; and in this fear, and in some degrees of it, he will remain all the days of his life; and if he hopes to be quit of that, yet he knows not how many degrees of God's anger still hang over his head; how many sad miseries shall afflict, and burn, and purify him in this world, with a sharpness so poignant as to divide the marrow from the bones; and for these reasons, as a considering man that knows what it is to repent, wishes with his soul he had never sinned, and, therefore, grieves in proportion to his former crimes, and present misery, and future danger.

And now suppose that you can repent when you will, that is, that you can grieve when you will;—though no man can do it, no man can grieve when he please, though he could shed tears when he list, he cannot grieve without a real or apprehended felicity; but, suppose it;—and that he can fear when he please, and that he can love when he please, or what he please; that is, suppose a man be able to say to his palate, Though I love sweetmeats, yet to-morrow will I hate and loathe them, and believe them bitter and distasteful things; suppose, I say, all these impossibilities; yet since repentance does suppose a man to be in a state of such real misery, that he hath reason to curse the day in which he sinned, is this a fit argument to invite a man that is in his wits to sin? to sin in hope of repentance? as if danger of falling into hell, and fear of the Divine anger, and many degrees of the Divine judgments, and a lasting sorrow, and a perpetual labour, and a never-ceasing trembling, and a troubled conscience, and a sorrowful spirit, were fit things to be desired or hoped for.

The sum is this: he that commits sins shall perish eternally, if he never does repent. And, if he does repent, and yet untimely, he is not the better; and if he does not repent with an entire, a perfect, and complete repentance, he is not the better. But if he does, yet repentance is a duty full of fears, and sorrow, and labour; a vexation to the spirit; an afflictive, penal, or punitive duty; a duty which suffers for sin, and labours for grace, which abides and suffers little images of hell in the way to heaven; and though it be the only way to felicity, yet it is beset with thorns and daggers of sufferance, and with rocks and mountains of duty. Let no man therefore dare to sin upon the hopes of repentance: for he is a fool and a hypocrite, that now chooses and approves what he knows hereafter he must condemn.

2. The second general consideration is, the necessity, the absolute necessity, of holy living. God hath made a covenant with us, that we must give up ourselves, "bodies" and souls, not a dying, but "a living" and healthful "sacrifice."[h] He hath forgiven all our old sins, and we have bargained to quit them, from the time that we first come to Christ, and give our names to him, and to keep all his commandments. We have taken the sacramental oath, like that of the old Roman militia, *πειθαρχήσειν, καὶ ποιήσειν τὸ προσταττόμενον ὑπὸ τῶν ἀρχόντων κατὰ δύναμιν*, we must "believe," and "obey," and "do all that is commanded us," and keep our station, and fight against the flesh, the world, and the devil, not to throw away our military girdle; and we are to do what is bidden us, or to die for it, even all that is bidden us, "according to our power." For, pretend not that God's commandments are impossible. It is dishonourable to think God enjoins us to do more than he enables us to do; and it is a contradiction to say we cannot do all that we can; and "through Christ which strengthens me, I can do all things," saith St. Paul. However, we can do to the utmost of our strength, and beyond that we cannot take thought; impossibilities enter not into deliberation; but, according to our abilities and natural powers, assisted by God's grace, so God hath covenanted with us to live a holy life. "For in Christ Jesus, nothing availeth but a new creature, nothing but faith working by charity, nothing but keeping the commandments of God." They are all the words of St. Paul before quoted; to which he adds, "and as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them and mercy." This is the covenant, "they are the Israel of God;" upon those "peace and mercy" shall abide. If they become a new creature, wholly "transformed in the image of their mind;" if they have faith, and this faith be an operative working faith, a faith that produces a holy life, "a faith that works by charity;" if they "keep the commandments of God," then they are within the covenant of mercy, but not else: for "in Christ Jesus

[h] Rom. xii. 1.

nothing else availeth." To the same purpose are those words, (Heb. xii. 14.) "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." "Peace with all men" implies both justice and charity, without which it is impossible to preserve peace; "holiness" implies all our duty towards God, universal diligence; and this must be "followed," that is, pursued with diligence, in a lasting course of life and exercise: and without this we shall never see the face of God. I need urge no more authorities to this purpose; these two are as certain and convincing as two thousand: and since thus much is actually required, and is the condition of the covenant; it is certain that sorrow for not having done what is commanded to be done, and a purpose to do what is necessary to be actually performed, will not acquit us before the righteous judgment of God. "For the grace of God hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live godly, justly, and soberly, in this present world." For upon these terms alone we must "look for the blessed hope, the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ."[i] I shall no longer insist upon this particular, but only propound it to your consideration. To what purpose are all those commandments in Scripture, of every page almost in it, of living holily, and according to the commandments of God,—of adorning the gospel of God,—of walking as in the day,—of walking in light,—of pure and undefiled religion,—of being holy as God is holy,—of being humble and meek, as Christ is humble,—of putting on the Lord Jesus,—of living a spiritual life,—but that it is the purpose of God, and the intention and design of Christ dying for us, and the covenant made with man, that we should expect heaven upon no other terms in the world, but of a holy life, in the faith and obedience of the Lord Jesus?

Now if a vicious person, when he comes to the latter end of his days, one that hath lived a wicked, ungodly life, can, for any thing he can do upon his death-bed, be said to live a holy life; then his hopes are not desperate: but he that hopes upon this only, for which God hath made him no promise, I must say of him as Galen said of consumptive persons, Ἢ πλέον ἐλπίζουσιν, ταύτῃ μᾶλλον κακῶς ἔχουσι, "The more they hope, the worse they are:" and the relying upon such hopes is an approach to the grave and a sad eternity.

Peleos et Priami transit, vel Nestoris ætas,
Et fuerat serum jam tibi desinere.
Eja age, rumpe moras; quò te spectabimus usque?
Dum, quid sis dubitas, jam potes esse nihil.
MART. l. 2. ep. 24.

And now it will be a vain question to ask, whether or no God cannot save a dying man that repents after a vicious life. For it is true God can do it if he please, and he "can raise children to Abraham out of the stones," and he can make ten thousand worlds, if he sees good; and he can do what he list, and he can save an ill-living man though he never repent at all, so much as upon his death-bed: all this he can do. But God's power is no ingredient into this question: we are never the better that God can do it, unless he also will: and whether he will or no, we are to learn from himself, and what he hath declared to be his will in Holy Scripture. Nay, since God hath said, that "without actual holiness no man shall see God," God by his own will hath restrained his power; and though absolutely he can do all things, yet he cannot do against his own word. And, indeed, the rewards of heaven are so great and glorious, and Christ's "burden is so light, his yoke is so easy," that it is a shameless impudence to expect so great glories at a less rate than so little a service, at a lower rate than a holy life. It cost the eternal Son of God his life's blood to obtain heaven for us upon that condition: and who then shall die again for us, to get heaven for us upon easier conditions? What would you do, if God should command you to kill your eldest son, or to work in the mines for a thousand years together, or to fast all thy life-time with bread and water? were not heaven a great bargain even after all this? And when God requires nothing of us but to live soberly, justly, and godly,—which very things of themselves to men are a very great felicity, and necessary to his present well-being,—shall we think this to be a load, and an insufferable burden? and that heaven is so little a purchase at that price, that God in mere justice will take a death-bed sigh or groan, and a few unprofitable tears and promises, in exchange for all our duty? Strange it should be so; but stranger, that any man should rely upon such a vanity, when from God's word he hath nothing to warrant such a confidence. But these men do like the tyrant Dionysius, who stole from Apollo his golden cloak, and gave him a cloak of Arcadian homespun, saying, that this was lighter in summer, and warmer in winter. These men sacrilegiously rob God of the service of all their golden days, and serve him in their hoary head, in their furs and grave-clothes, and pretend that this late service is more agreeable to the Divine mercy on one side, and human infirmity on the other, and so dispute themselves into an irrecoverable condition; having no other ground to rely upon a death-bed or late-begun repentance, but because they resolve to enjoy the pleasures of sin: and for heaven, they will put that to the venture of an after-game. These men sow in the flesh, and would reap in the Spirit; live to the devil, and die to God: and therefore, it is but just in God that their hopes should be desperate, and their craft be folly, and their condition be the unexpected, unfeared inheritance of an eternal sorrow.

3. Lastly; our last inquiry is into the time, the last or latest time of beginning our repentance. Must a man repent a year or two, or seven years, or ten, or twenty, before his death? or what is the last period, after which all repentance will be untimely and ineffectual? To this captious question I have many things to oppose. 1. We have entered into covenant with God, to serve him from the day of our baptism to the day of our death. He hath "sworn this oath to us, that he would grant unto us, that we, being delivered from fear of our enemies,

[i] Tit. ii. 11, 12.

might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life."[k] Now although God will not τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης καὶ κοινῆς ἀσθενείας ἐπιλανθάνεσθαι, "forget our infirmities," but pass by the weaknesses of an honest, a watchful, and industrious person; yet the covenant he makes with us, is from the day of our first voluntary profession to our grave; and according as we by sins retire from our first undertaking, so our condition is insecure: there is no other covenant made with us, no new beginnings of another period; but if we be returned, and sin be cancelled, and grace be actually obtained, then we are in the first condition of pardon: but because it is uncertain when a man can have mastered his vices, and obtained the graces, therefore no man can tell any set time when he must begin. 2. Scripture, describing the duty of repenting sinners, names no other time but "to-day:" "*to-day* if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." 3. The duty of a christian is described in Scripture to be such as requires length of time, and a continual industry. "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us:"[l] and "consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." So great a preparation is not for the agony and contention of an hour, or a day, or a week, but for the whole life of a christian, or for great parts of its abode. 4. There is a certain period and time set for our repentance, and beyond that all our industry is ineffectual. There is a "day of visitation, our own day;" and there is "a day of visitation," that is "God's day." This appeared in the case of Jerusalem: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, if thou hadst known the time of thy visitation, at least in this thy day." Well, they neglected it; and then there was a time of God's visitation, which was "his day," called in Scripture "the day of the Lord;" and because they had neglected their own day, they fell into inevitable ruin: no repentance could have prevented their final ruin. And this which was true in a nation, is also clearly affirmed true in the case of single persons. "Look diligently, lest any fail of the grace of God; lest there be any person among you as Esau, who sold his birth-right, and afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place for his repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears."[m] Esau had time enough to repent his bargain as long as he lived; he wept sorely for his folly, and carefulness sat heavy upon his soul; and yet he was not heard, nor his repentance accepted; for the time was past. And "take heed," saith the apostle, lest it come to pass to any of you to be in the same case. Now if ever there be a time, in which repentance is too late, it must be the time of our death-bed, and the last time of our life. And after a man is fallen into the displeasure of Almighty God, the longer he lies in his sin without repentance and emendation, the greater is his danger, and the more of his allowed time is spent; and no man can antecedently, or beforehand, be sure that the time of his repentance is not past; and those who neglect the call of God, and refuse to hear him call in the day of grace, "God will laugh at them when their calamity comes: they shall call, and the Lord shall not hear them." And this was the case of the five foolish virgins, when the arrest of death surprised them: they discovered their want of oil, they were troubled at it; they begged oil, they were refused; they did something towards the procuring of the oil of grace, for they went out to buy oil: and, after all this stir, the Bridegroom came before they had finished their journey, and they were shut out from the communion of the Bridegroom's joys.

Therefore, concerning the time of beginning to repent, no man is certain but he that hath done his work. "Mortem venientem nemo hilaris excipit, nisi qui se ad eam diu composuerat," said Seneca.[n] "He only dies cheerfully, who stood waiting for death in a ready dress of a long preceding preparation." He that repents to-day, repents late enough that he did not begin yesterday: but he that puts it off till to-morrow, is vain and miserable.

> ——— hodie jam vivere, Postume, serum est:
> Ille sapit, quisquis, Postume, vixit heri.
> MART. l. 5. ep. 59.

Well; but what will you have a man do that hath lived wickedly, and is now cast upon his death-bed? shall this man despair, and neglect all the actions of piety, and the instruments of restitution in his sickness? No, God forbid. Let him do what he can then: it is certain it will be little enough; for all those short gleams of piety and flashes of lightning will help towards alleviating some degrees of misery; and if the man recover, they are good beginnings of a renewed piety: and Ahab's tears and humiliation, though it went no farther, had a proportion of reward, though nothing to the portions of eternity. So that he that says, it is every day necessary to repent, cannot be supposed to discourage the piety of any day: a death-bed piety, when things are come to that sad condition, may have many good purposes: therefore, even then neglect nothing that can be done.—Well; but shall such persons despair of salvation? To them I shall only return this: that they are to consider the conditions, which, on one side, God requires of us; and, on the other side, whether they have done accordingly. Let them consider upon what terms God hath promised salvation, and whether they have made themselves capable, by performing their part of the obligation. If they have not, I must tell them, that, not to hope where God hath made no promise, is not the sin of despair, but the misery of despair. A man hath no ground to hope, that ever he shall be made an angel, and yet that not hoping is not to be called despair: and no man can hope for heaven without repentance; and for such a man to despair, is not the sin, but the misery. If such persons have a promise of heaven, let them show it, and hope it, and enjoy it: if they have no promise, they must thank themselves, for bringing themselves into a condition without the covenant, without a promise, hopeless and miserable.

But will not trusting in the merits of Jesus Christ

[k] Luke i. 73. 74. [l] Heb. xii. 1. 3. [m] Heb. xii. 15, &c. [n] Epist. 30.

save such a man? For that, we must be tried by the word of God, in which there is no contract at all made with a dying person, that lived in name a christian, in practice a heathen: and we shall dishonour the sufferings and redemption of our blessed Saviour, if we think them to be an umbrella to shelter our impious and ungodly living. But that no such person may, after a wicked life, repose himself on his death-bed upon Christ's merits, observe but these two places of Scripture: "Our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us"[o]—what to do? that we might live as we list, and hope to be saved by his merits? no:—but "that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These things speak and exhort," saith St. Paul.—But, more plainly yet in St. Peter; "Christ bare our sins in his own body on the tree,"—to what end? "that we, being dead unto sin, should live unto righteousness."[p] Since therefore our living a holy life is the end of Christ's dying that sad and holy death for us, he that trusts on it to evil purposes, and to excuse his vicious life, does, as much as in him lies, make void the very purpose and design of Christ's passion, and dishonours the blood of the everlasting covenant; which covenant was confirmed by the blood of Christ; but, as it brought peace from God, so it requires a holy life from us.[q]

But why may not we be saved, as well as the thief upon the cross? even because our case is nothing alike. When Christ dies once more for us, we may look for such another instance; not till then. But this thief did but then come to Christ, he knew him not before; and his case was, as if a Turk, or heathen, should be converted to christianity, and be baptized, and enter newly into the covenant upon his death-bed: then God pardons all his sins. And so God does to christians when they are baptized, or first give up their names to Christ by a voluntary confirmation of their baptismal vow: but when they have once entered into the covenant, they must perform what they promise, and do what they are obliged. The thief had made no contract with God in Jesus Christ, and therefore failed of none; only the defailances of the state of ignorance Christ paid for at the thief's admission: but we, that have made a covenant with God in baptism, and failed of it all our days, and then return at "night, when we cannot work," have nothing to plead for ourselves; because we have made all that to be useless to us, which God, with so much mercy and miraculous wisdom, gave us to secure our interest and hopes of heaven.

And therefore, let no christian man, who hath covenanted with God to give him the service of his life, think that God will be answered with the sighs and prayers of a dying man: for all that great obligation, which lies upon us, cannot be transacted in an instant, when we have loaded our souls with sin, and made them empty of virtue; we cannot so soon grow up to "a perfect man in Christ Jesus:" *οὐδὲν τῶν μεγάλων ἄφνω γίνεται.*[r] You cannot have an apple or a cherry, but you must stay its proper periods, and let it blossom and knot, and grow and ripen; "and in due season we shall reap, if we faint not," saith the apostle: far much less may we expect that the fruits of repentance, and the issues and degrees of holiness, shall be gathered in a few days or hours. *Γνώμης δ' ἀνθρώπου καρπὸν θέλεις οὕτω δι' ὀλίγου καὶ εὐκόλως κτήσασθαι.* You must not expect such fruits in a little time, nor with little labour.

Suffer not therefore yourselves to be deceived by false principles and vain confidences: for no man can in a moment root out the long-contracted habits of vice, nor upon his death-bed make use of all that variety of preventing, accompanying, and persevering grace, which God gave to man in mercy, because man would need it all, because without it he could not be saved; nor, upon his death-bed, can he exercise the duty of mortification, nor cure his drunkenness then, nor his lust, by any act of christian discipline, nor run with patience, nor "resist unto blood," nor "endure with long-sufferance;" but he can pray, and groan, and call to God, and resolve to live well when he is dying. But this is but just as the nobles of Xerxes, when in a storm they were to lighten the ship, to preserve their king's life; they did *προσκυνέοντας ἐπιπηδᾶν εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν*, they "did their obeisance, and leaped into the sea:" so, I fear, do these men pray, and mourn, and worship, and so leap overboard into an ocean of eternal and intolerable calamity: from which God deliver us, and all faithful people.

Hunc volo laudari qui sine morte potest.
MART. ep. l. 1.

Vivere quòd propero pauper, nec inutilis annis,
Da veniam; properat vivere nemo satìs.
Differat hoc, patrios optat qui vincere census,
Atriaque immodicis arctat imaginibus.
MART. l. 2. ep. 90.

SERMON VII.

THE DECEITFULNESS OF THE HEART.

PART I.

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?—Jeremiah xvii. 9.

FOLLY and subtilty divide the greatest part of mankind; and there is no other difference but this; that some are crafty enough to deceive, others foolish enough to be cozened and abused: and yet the scales also turn; for they that are the most crafty to cozen others, are the veriest fools, and most of all abused themselves. They rob their neighbour of his money, and lose their own innocency; they disturb his rest,

[o] Titus ii. 14.
[p] 1 Pet. ii. 24.
[q] See Life of Jesus, Disc. of Repentance, part 2.
[r] Arrian. Epictet. l. 1. c. 15.

and vex their own conscience; they throw him into prison, and themselves into hell; they make poverty to be their brother's portion, and damnation to be their own. Man entered into the world first alone; but as soon as he met with one companion, he met with three to cozen him: the serpent, and Eve, and himself, all joined,—first to make him a fool, and to deceive him, and then to make him miserable. But he first cozened himself, "giving up himself to believe a lie;" and, being desirous to listen to the whispers of a tempting spirit, he sinned before he fell; that is, he had within him a false understanding and a depraved will: and these were the parents of his disobedience, and this was the parent of his infelicity, and a great occasion of ours. And then it was that he entered, for himself and his posterity, into the condition of an ignorant, credulous, easy, wilful, passionate, and impotent person; apt to be abused, and so loving to have it so, that if nobody else will abuse him, he will be sure to abuse himself; by ignorance and evil principles being open to an enemy, and by wilfulness and sensuality doing to himself the most unpardonable injuries in the whole world. So that the condition of man, in the rudenesses and first lines of its visage, seems very miserable, deformed, and accursed.

For a man is helpless and vain; of a condition so exposed to calamity, that a raisin is able to kill him; any trooper out of the Egyptian army, a fly can do it, when it goes on God's errand; the most contemptible accident can destroy him, the smallest chance affright him, every future contingency, when but considered as possible, can amaze him; and he is encompassed with potent and malicious enemies, subtle and implacable: what shall this poor helpless thing do? Trust in God? him he hath offended, and he fears him as an enemy; and, God knows, if we look only on ourselves, and on our own demerits, we have too much reason so to do. Shall he rely upon princes? God help poor kings; they rely upon their subjects, they fight with their swords, levy forces with their money, consult with their counsels, hear with their ears, and are strong only in their union, and many times they use all these things against them; but, however, they can do nothing without them while they live, and yet if ever they can die, they are not to be trusted to. Now kings and princes die so sadly and notoriously, that it was used for a proverb in Holy Scripture, "Ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes." Whom then shall we trust in? In our friend? Poor man! he may help thee in one thing, and need thee in ten: he may pull thee out of the ditch, and his foot may slip and fall into it himself: he gives thee counsel to choose a wife, and himself is to seek how prudently to choose his religion: he counsels thee to abstain from a duel, and yet slays his own soul with drinking: like a person void of all understanding, he is willing enough to preserve thy interest, and is very careless of his own: for he does highly despise to betray or be false to thee, and in the mean time is not his own friend, and is false to God; and then his friendship may be useful to thee in some circumstances of fortune, but no security to thy condition. But what then? shall we rely upon our patron, like the Roman clients, who waited hourly upon their persons, and daily upon their baskets, and nightly upon their lusts, and married their friendships, and contracted also their hatred and quarrels? this is a confidence will deceive us. For they may lay us by, justly or unjustly; they may grow weary of doing benefits, or their fortunes may change; or they may be charitable in their gifts, and burdensome in their offices; able to feed you, but unable to counsel you; or your need may be longer than their kindnesses, or such in which they can give you no assistance: and, indeed, generally it is so, in all the instances of men. We have a friend that is wise; but I need not his counsel, but his meat: or my patron is bountiful in his largesses; but I am troubled with a sad spirit; and money and presents do me no more ease than perfumes do to a broken arm. We seek life of a physician that dies, and go to him for health, who cannot cure his own breath or gout; and so become vain in our imaginations, abused in our hopes, restless in our passions, impatient in our calamity, unsupported in our need, exposed to enemies, wandering and wild, without counsel, and without remedy. At last, after the infatuating and deceiving all our confidences without, we have nothing left us but to return home, and dwell within ourselves: for we have a sufficient stock of self-love, that we may be confident of our own affections, we may trust ourselves surely; for what we want in skill we shall make up in diligence, and our industry shall supply the want of other circumstances: and no man understands my own case so well as I do myself, and no man will judge so faithfully as I shall do for myself; for I am most concerned not to abuse myself; and if I do, I shall be the loser, and therefore may best rely upon myself. Alas! and God help us! we shall find it to be no such matter: for we neither love ourselves well, nor understand our own case; we are partial in our own questions, deceived in our sentences, careless of our interests, and the most false, perfidious creatures to ourselves in the whole world: even the "heart of a man," a man's own heart, "is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?" and who can choose but know it?

And there is no greater argument of the deceitfulness of our hearts than this, that no man can know it all; it cozens us in the very number of its cozenage. But yet we can reduce it all to two heads. We say, concerning a false man, Trust him not, for he will deceive you; and we say concerning a weak and broken staff, Lean not upon it, for that will also deceive you. The man deceives because he is false, and the staff because it is weak; and the heart, because it is both. So that it is "deceitful above all things;" that is, failing and disabled to support us in many things, but in other things, where it can, it is false and "desperately wicked." The first sort of deceitfulness is its calamity, and the second is its iniquity; and that is the worst calamity of the two.

1. The heart is deceitful in its strength; and

when we have the growth of a man, we have the weaknesses of a child: nay, more yet, and it is a sad consideration, the more we are in age, the weaker in our courage. It appears in the heats and forwardnesses of new converts, which are like to the great emissions of lightning, or like huge fires, which flame and burn without measure, even all that they can; till from flames they descend to still fires, from thence to smoke, from smoke to embers, and from thence to ashes; cold and pale, like ghosts, or the fantastic images of death. And the primitive church were zealous in their religion up to the degree of cherubims, and would run as greedily to the sword of the hangman, to die for the cause of God, as we do now to the greatest joy and entertainment of a christian spirit,—even to the receiving of the holy sacrament. A man would think it reasonable, that the first infancy of christianity should, according to the nature of first beginnings, have been remiss, gentle, and inactive; and that, according as the object or evidence of faith grew, which in every age hath a great degree of argument superadded to its confirmation, so should the habit also and the grace; the longer it lasts, and the more objections it runs through, it still should show a brighter and more certain light to discover the divinity of its principle; and that after the more examples, and new accidents and strangenesses of providence, and daily experience, and the multitude of miracles, still the christian should grow more certain in his faith, more refreshed in his hope, and warm in his charity; the very nature of these graces increasing and swelling upon the very nourishment of experience, and the multiplication of their own acts. And yet, because the heart of man is false, it suffers the fires of the altar to go out, and the flames lessen by the multitude of fuel. But, indeed, it is because we put on strange fire, and put out the fire upon our hearths by letting in a glaring sun-beam, the fire of lust, or the heats of an angry spirit, to quench the fire of God, and suppress the sweet cloud of incense. The heart of man hath not strength enough to think one good thought of itself; it cannot command its own attentions to a prayer of ten lines long, but, before its end, it shall wander after something that is to no purpose; and no wonder, then, that it grows weary of a holy religion, which consists of so many parts as make the business of a whole life. And there is no greater argument in the world of our spiritual weakness, and the falseness of our hearts in the matters of religion, than the backwardness which most men have always, and all men have sometimes, to say their prayers; so weary of their length, so glad when they are done, so witty to excuse and frustrate an opportunity: and yet there is no manner of trouble in the duty, no weariness of bones, no violent labours; nothing but begging a blessing, and receiving it; nothing but doing ourselves the greatest honour of speaking to the greatest person, and greatest King of the world: and, that we should be unwilling to do this, so unable to continue in it, so backward to return to it, so without gust and relish in the doing it, can have no visible reason in the nature of the thing, but something within us, a strange sickness in the heart, a spiritual nauseating or loathing of manna, something that hath no name; but we are sure it comes from a weak, a faint, and false heart.

And yet this weak heart is strong in passions, violent in desires, irresistible in its appetites, impatient in its lust, furious in anger: here are strengths enough, one should think. But so have I seen a man in a fever, sick and distempered, unable to walk, less able to speak sense, or to do an act of counsel; and yet, when his fever had boiled up to a delirium, he was strong enough to beat his nursekeeper and his doctor too, and to resist the loving violence of all his friends, who would fain bind him down to reason and his bed: and yet we still say, he is weak, and sick to death. Θέλω γὰρ εἶναι τόνους ἐν σώματι, ἀλλ' ὡς ὑγιαίνοντι, ὡς ἀθλοῦντι. For these strengths of madness are not health, but furiousness and disease. Οὐκ εἰσὶ τόνοι, ἀλλὰ ἀτονία ἕτερον τρόπον, "It is weakness another way."[a] And so are the strengths of a man's heart: they are fetters and manacles; strong, but they are the cordage of imprisonment; so strong, that the heart is not able to stir. And yet it cannot but be a huge sadness, that the heart shall pursue a temporal interest with wit and diligence, and an unwearied industry; and shall not have strength enough, in a matter that concerns its eternal interest, to answer one objection, to resist one assault, to defeat one art of the devil; but shall certainly and infallibly fall, whenever it is tempted to a pleasure.

This, if it be examined, will prove to be a deceit, indeed, a pretence, rather than true upon a just cause: that is, it is not a natural, but a moral and a vicious, weakness: and we may try it in one or two familiar instances. One of the great *strengths*, shall I call it? or weaknesses of the heart, is,—that it is strong, violent and passionate in its lusts, and weak and deceitful to resist any. Tell the tempted person, that if he act his lust, he dishonours his body, makes himself a servant to folly, and one flesh with a harlot; he "defiles the temple of God," and him that defiles a temple "will God destroy:" tell him, that the angels, who love to be present in the nastiness and filth of prisons, that they may comfort and assist chaste souls and holy persons there abiding, yet they are impatient to behold or come near the filthiness of a lustful person: tell him that this sin is so ugly, that the devils, who are spirits, yet they delight to counterfeit the acting of this crime, and descend unto the daughters or sons of men, that they may rather lose their natures, than not to help to set a lust forward: tell them these and ten thousand things more; you move them no more, than if you should read one of Tully's orations to a mule: for the truth is, they have no power to resist it, much less to master it; their heart fails them when they meet their mistress; and they are driven like a fool to the stocks, or a bull to the slaughter-house. And yet their heart deceives them; not because it cannot resist the temptation, but because it will not go about it: for it is certain

[a] Arrian.

the heart can, if it list. For let a boy enter into your chamber of pleasure, and discover your folly, either your lust disbands, or your shame hides it; you will not, you dare not, do it before a stranger-boy: and yet, that you dare do it before the eyes of the all-seeing God, is impudence and folly, and a great conviction of the vanity of your pretence, and the falseness of your heart. If thou beest a man given to thy appetite, and thou lovest a pleasant morsel as thy life, do not declaim against the precepts of temperance as impossible: try this once; abstain from that draught, or that dish. I cannot. No? Give this man a great blow on the face, or tempt him with twenty pounds, and he shall fast from morning till night, and then feast himself with your money, and plain wholesome meat. And if chastity and temperance be so easy, that a man may be brought to either of them with so ready and easy instruments; let us not suffer our heart to deceive us by the weakness of its pretences, and the strength of its desires; for we do more for a boy than for God, and for twenty pounds than heaven itself.

But thus it is in every thing else: take a heretic, a rebel, a person that hath an ill cause to manage; what he wants in the strength of his reason, he shall make it up with diligence: and a person that hath right on his side, is cold, indiligent, lazy, and inactive, trusting that the goodness of his cause will do it alone. But, so wrong prevails, while evil persons are zealous in a bad matter, and others are remiss in a good; and the same person shall be very industrious always, when he hath least reason so to be. That is the first particular, the heart is deceitful in the managing of its natural strengths; it is naturally and physically strong, but morally weak and impotent.

2. The heart of man is deceitful in making judgment concerning its own acts. It does not know when it is pleased or displeased; it is peevish and trifling; it would, and it would not; and it is in many cases impossible to know whether a man's heart desires such a thing or not. St. Ambrose hath an odd saying, "Faciliùs inveneris innocentem, quàm qui pœnitentiam dignè egerit;" "It is easier to find a man that lived innocently, than one that hath truly repented him," with a grief and care great according to the merit of his sins. Now suppose a man that hath spent his younger years in vanity and folly, and is by the grace of God apprehensive of it, and thinks of returning to sober counsels; this man will find his heart so false, so subtle and fugitive, so secret and undiscernible, that it will be very hard to discern whether he repents or no. For if he considers that he hates sin, and therefore repents; alas! he so hates it, that he dares not, if he be wise, tempt himself with an opportunity to act it: for in the midst of that which he calls hatred, he hath so much love left for it, that if the sin comes again and speaks him fair, he is lost again, he kisses the fire, and dies in its embraces. And why else should it be necessary for us to pray, that "we be not led into temptation," but because we hate the sin, and yet love it too well; we curse it, and yet follow it; we are angry at ourselves, and yet cannot be without it; we know it undoes us, but we think it pleasant. And when we are to execute the fierce anger of the Lord upon our sins, yet we are kind-hearted, and spare the Agag, the reigning sin, the splendid temptation; we have some kindnesses left towards it.

These are but ill signs. How then shall I know, by some infallible token, that I am a true penitent? What and if I weep for my sins? will you not then give me leave to conclude my heart right with God, and at enmity with sin? It may be so. But there are some friends that weep at parting; and, is not thy weeping a sorrow of affection? It is a sad thing to part with our long companion. Or, it may be thou weepest, because thou wouldst have a sign to cozen thyself withal: for some men are more desirous to have a sign, than the thing signified; they would do something to show their repentance, that themselves may believe themselves to be penitents, having no reason from within to believe so. And I have seen some persons weep heartily for the loss of sixpence, or for the breaking of a glass, or at some trifling accident; and they that do so, cannot pretend to have their tears valued at a bigger rate than they will confess their passion to be, when they weep; they are vexed for the dirtying of their linen, or some such trifle, for which the least passion is too big an expense. So that a man cannot tell his own heart by his tears, or the truth of his repentance by those short gusts of sorrow. How then? Shall we suppose a man to pray against his sin? So did St. Austin; when, in his youth, he was tempted to lust and uncleanness, he prayed against it, and secretly desired that God would not hear him: for here the heart is cunning to deceive itself. For, no man did ever heartily pray against his sin in the midst of a temptation to it, if he did in any sense or degree listen to the temptation: for to pray against a sin, is to have desires contrary to it, and that cannot consist with any love or any kindness to it. We pray against it, and yet do it; and then pray again, and do it again: and we desire it, and yet pray against the desires; and that is almost a contradiction. Now, because no man can be supposed to will against his own will, or choose against his own desires; it is plain, that we cannot know whether we mean what we say when we pray against sin, but by the event: if we never act it, never entertain it, always resist it, ever fight against it, and finally do prevail; then, at length, we may judge our own heart to have meant honestly in that one particular.

Nay, our heart is so deceitful in this matter of repentance, that the masters of spiritual life are fain to invent suppletory arts and stratagems to secure the duty. And we are advised to mourn, because we do not mourn; to be sorrowful, because we are not sorrowful. Now if we be sorrowful in the first stage, how happens it that we know it not? Is our heart so secret to ourselves? But if we be not sorrowful in the first period, how shall we be so, or know it, in the second period? For we may as well doubt concerning the sincerity of the second, or reflex act of sorrow, as of the first and direct action. And, therefore, we may also as well be sorrowful the

third time, for want of the just measure or hearty meaning of the second sorrow, as be sorrowful the second time, for want of true sorrow at the first; and so on to infinite. And we shall never be secure in this artifice, if we be not certain of our natural and hearty passion in our direct and first apprehensions.

Thus many persons think themselves in a good estate, and make no question of their salvation, being confident only because they are confident; and they are so, because they are bidden to be so; and yet they are not confident at all, but extremely timorous and fearful. How many persons are there in the world, that say they are sure of their salvation, and yet they dare not die? And, if any man pretends that he is now sure he shall be saved, and that he cannot fall away from grace; there is no better way to confute him, than by advising him to send for the surgeon, and bleed to death. For what would hinder him; not the sin; for it cannot take him from God's favour: not the change of his condition; for he says, he is sure to go to a better: why does he not then say, *κέκρικα*, like the Roman gallants when they "decreed" to die. The reason is plainly this, they say they are confident, and yet are extremely timorous; they profess to believe that doctrine, and yet dare not trust it; nay, they think they believe, but they do not: so false is a man's heart, so deceived in its own acts, so great a stranger to its own sentence and opinions.

3. The heart is deceitful in its own resolutions and purposes: for many times men make their resolutions only in their understanding, not in their will; they resolve it fitting to be done, not decree that they will do it; and instead of beginning to be reconciled to God by the renewed and hearty purposes of holy living, they are advanced so far only as to be convinced, and apt to be condemned by their own sentence.

But suppose our resolutions advanced farther, and that our will and choices also are determined; see how our hearts deceive us.

1. We resolve against those sins that please us not, or where temptation is not present, and think, by an over-acted zeal against some sins, to give an indulgence for some others. There are some persons who will be drunk; the company, or the discourse, or the pleasure of madness, or an easy nature and a thirsty soul, something is amiss, that cannot be helped: but they will make amends, and the next day pray twice as much. Or, it may be, they must satisfy a beastly lust; but they will not be drunk for all the world; and hope, by their temperance, to commute for their want of chastity. But they attend not the craft of their secret enemy, their heart: for it is not love of the virtue; if it were, they would love virtue in all its instances;[b] for chastity is as much a virtue as temperance, and God hates lust as much as he hates drunkenness. But this sin is against my health, or, it may be, it is against my lust; it makes me impotent, and yet impatient; full of desire, and empty of strength. Or else I do an act of prayer, lest my conscience become unquiet, while it is not satisfied, or cozened with some intervals of religion: I shall think myself a damned wretch if I do nothing for my soul; but if I do, I shall call the one sin that remains, nothing but my infirmity; and therefore it is my excuse: and my prayer is not my religion, but my peace, and my pretence, and my fallacy.

2. We resolve against our sin, that is, we will not act it in those circumstances as formerly. I will not be drunk in the streets; but I may sleep till I be recovered, and then come forth sober: or, if I be overtaken, it shall be in civil and genteel company. Or it may be not so much; I will leave my intemperance and my lust too, but I will remember it with pleasure; I will revolve the past action in my mind, and entertain my fancy with a morose delectation in it, and, by a fiction of imagination, will represent it present, and so be satisfied with a little effeminacy or fantastic pleasure. Beloved, suffer not your hearts so to cozen you; as if any man can be faithful in much, that is faithless in a little. He certainly is very much in love with sin, and parts with it very unwillingly, that keeps its picture, and wears its favour, and delights in the fancy of it, even with the same desire as a most passionate widow parts with her dearest husband, even when she can no longer enjoy him: but certainly her staring all day upon his picture, and weeping over his robe, and wringing her hands over his children, are no great signs that she hated him. And just so do most men hate, and accordingly part with, their sins.

3. We resolve against it when the opportunity is slipped, and lay it aside as long as the temptation please, even till it come again, and no longer. How many men are there in the world, that against every communion renew their vows of holy living? men that for twenty, for thirty, years together, have been perpetually resolving against what they daily act; and sure enough they did believe themselves. And yet if a man had daily promised us a courtesy, and failed us but ten times, when it was in his power to have done it,—we should think we had reason never to believe him more. And can we then reasonably believe the resolutions of our hearts, which they have falsified so many hundred times? We resolve against a religious time, because then it is the custom of men, and the guise of the religion: or we resolve when we are in a great danger; and then we promise any thing, possible or impossible, likely or unlikely, all is one to us; we only care to remove the present pressure; and when that is over, and our fear is gone, and no love remaining, our condition being returned to our first securities, our resolutions also revert to their first indifferences: or else we cannot look a temptation in the face, and we resolve against it, hoping never to be troubled with its arguments and importunity. Epictetus tells us of a gentleman returning from banishment, who, in his journey towards home, called at his house, told a sad story of an imprudent life, the greatest part of which being now spent, he was resolved for the

[b] Virtutem unam si amiseris, (etsi amitti non potest Virtus,) sed si unam confessus fueris te non habere, nullam te esse habiturum an nescis?—CICERO.

future to live philosophically, and entertain no business, to be candidate for no employment, not to go to the court, nor to salute Cæsar with ambitious attendances, but to study, and worship the gods, and die willingly, when nature or necessity called him. It may be, this man believed himself, but Epictetus did not. And he had reason: for ἀπήντησαν αὐτῷ παρὰ Καίσαρος πινακίδες, "letters from Cæsar met him" at the doors, and invited him to court; and he forgot all his promises, which were warm upon his lips; and grew pompous, secular, and ambitious, and gave the gods thanks for his preferment. Thus many men leave the world, when their fortune hath left them; and they are severe and philosophical, and retired for ever, if for ever it be impossible to return: but let a prosperous sunshine warm and refresh their sadnesses, and make it but possible to break their purposes, and there needs no more temptation; their own false heart is enough; they are like "Ephraim in the day of battle, starting aside like a broken bow."

4. The heart is false, deceiving and deceived, in its intentions and designs. A man hears the precepts of God enjoining us to give alms of all we possess; he readily obeys with much cheerfulness and alacrity, and his charity, like a fair-spreading tree, looks beauteously: but there is a canker at the heart; the man blows a trumpet to call the poor together, and hopes the neighbourhood will take notice of his bounty. Nay, he gives alms privately, and charges no man to speak of it, and yet hopes by some accident or other to be praised both for his charity and humility. And if, by chance, the fame of his alms come abroad, it is but his duty to "let his light so shine before men," that God may be "glorified," and some of our neighbours be relieved, and others edified. But then, to distinguish the intention of our heart in this instance, and to seek God's glory in a particular, which will also conduce much to our reputation, and to have no filthy adherence to stick to the heart, no reflection upon ourselves, or no complacency and delight in popular noises,—is the nicety of abstraction, and requires an angel to do it. Some men are so kind-hearted, so true to their friend, that they will watch his very dying groans, and receive his last breath, and close his eyes. And if this be done with honest intention, it is well: but there are some that do so, and yet are vultures and harpies; they watch for the carcass, and prey upon a legacy. A man with a true story may be malicious to his enemy, and by doing himself right may also do him wrong: and so false is the heart of man, so clancular and contradictory are its actions and intentions, that some men pursue virtue with great earnestness, and yet cannot with patience look upon it in another: it is beauty in themselves, and deformity in the other. Is it not plain, that not the virtue, but its reputation, is the thing that is pursued? And yet, if you tell the man so, he thinks he hath reason to complain of your malice or detraction. Who is able to distinguish his fear of God from fear of punishment, when from fear of punishment we are brought to fear God? And yet the difference must be distinguishable in new converts and old disciples; and our fear of punishment must so often change its circumstances, that it must be at last a fear to offend out of pure love, and must have no formality left to distinguish it from charity. It is easy to distinguish these things in precepts, and to make the separation in the schools; the head can do it easily, and the tongue can do it: but when the heart comes to separate alms from charity, God's glory from human praise, fear from fear, and sincerity from hypocrisy; it does so intricate the questions, and confound the ends, and blind and entangle circumstances, that a man hath reason to doubt that his very best actions are sullied with some unhandsome excrescency, something to make them very often to be criminal, but always to be imperfect.

Here, a man would think, were enough to abate our confidence, and the spirit of pride, and to make a man eternally to stand upon his guard, and to keep a strict watch upon his own heart, as upon his greatest enemy from without. "Custodi, libera me de meipso, Deus;" it was St. Austin's prayer; "Lord, keep me, Lord, deliver me from myself." If God will keep a man that he be not "felo de se," that "he lay no violent hands upon himself;" it is certain nothing else can do him mischief. Οὔτε Ζεὺς, οὔτε μοῖρα, οὔτε Ἐρινὺς, as Agamemnon said; "Neither Jupiter, nor destinies, nor the furies," but it is a man's self, that does him the mischief. The devil can but tempt, and offer a dagger at the heart; unless our hands thrust it home, the devil can do nothing, but what may turn to our advantage. And in this sense we are to understand the two seeming contradictories in Scripture: "Pray that ye enter not into temptation," said our blessed Saviour; and, "Count it all joy when you enter into divers temptations," said one of Christ's disciples. The case is easy. When God suffers us to be tempted, he means it but as a trial of our faith, as the exercise of our virtues, as the opportunity of reward; and in such cases we have reason to count it all joy; since the "trial of our faith worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience causeth hope, and hope maketh not ashamed:" but yet, for all this, "pray against temptations:" for when we get them into our hands, we use them as blind men do their clubs, neither distinguish person nor part; they strike the face of their friends as soon as the back of the enemy; our hearts betray us to the enemy, we fall in love with our mischief, we contrive how to let the lust in, and leave a port open on purpose, and use arts to forget our duty, and give advantages to the devil. He that uses a temptation thus, hath reason to pray against it; and yet our hearts do all this and a thousand times more; so that we may engrave upon our hearts the epitaph, which was digged into Thyestes' grave-stone;

> Nolite, hospites, ad me adire; illico isthic;
> Ne contagio mea bonis umbrave obsit:
> Meo tanta vis sceleris in corpore hæret.—CICERO.

There is so much falseness and iniquity in man's heart, that it defiles all the members: it makes the eyes lustful, and the tongue slanderous; it fills the

head with mischief, and the feet with blood, and the hands with injury, and the present condition of man with folly, and makes his future state apt to inherit eternal misery. But this is but the beginning of those throes and damnable impieties which proceed out of the heart of man, and defile the whole constitution. I have yet told but the *weaknesses* of the heart; I shall the next time tell you the *iniquities*, those inherent devils which pollute and defile it to the ground, and make it "desperately wicked," that is, wicked beyond all expression.

SERMON VIII.

PART II.

Ἀρχὴ φιλοσοφίας συναίσθησις τῆς αὐτοῦ ἀσθενείας καὶ ἀδυναμίας, περὶ τὰ ἀναγκαῖα, "It is the beginning of wisdom to know a man's own weaknesses and failings, in things of greatest necessity:"[a] and we have here so many objects to furnish out this knowledge, that we find it with the longest and latest, before it be obtained. A man does not begin to know himself till he be old, and then he is well stricken in death. A man's heart at first being like a plain table; unspotted, indeed, but then there is nothing legible in it; as soon as ever we ripen towards the imperfect uses of our reason, we write upon this table such crooked characters, such imperfect configurations, so many fooleries, and stain it with so many blots and vicious inspersions, that there is nothing worth the reading in our hearts for a great while; and when education and ripeness, reason and experience, christian philosophy and the grace of God, have made fair impressions, and written the law in our hearts with the finger of God's Holy Spirit, we blot out this hand-writing of God's ordinances, or mingle it with false principles and interlinings of our own; we disorder the method of God, or deface the truth of God; either we make the rule uneven, we bribe or abuse our guide, that we may wander with an excuse; or if nothing else will do it, we turn head and profess to go against the laws of God. Our hearts are blind, or our hearts are hardened; for these are two great arguments of the wickedness of our hearts; they do not see, or they will not see, the ways of God; or, if they do, they make use of their seeing that they may avoid them.

1. Our hearts are blind, wilfully blind. I need not instance in the ignorance and involuntary nescience of men; though if we speak of the necessary parts of religion, no man is ignorant of them without his own fault; such ignorance is always a direct sin, or the direct punishment of a sin; a sin is either in its bosom, or in its retinue. But the ignorance that I now intend, is a voluntary, chosen, delightful ignorance, taken in upon design, even for no other end, but that we may perish quietly and infallibly. God hath opened all the windows of heaven, and sent the Sun of righteousness with glorious apparition, and hath discovered the abysses of his own wisdom, made the second person in the Trinity to be the doctor and preacher of his sentences and secrets, and the third person to be his amanuensis or scribe, and our hearts to be the book in which the doctrine is written, and miracles and prophecies to be its arguments, and all the world to be the verification of it; and those leaves contain within their folds all that excellent morality, which right reason picked up after the shipwreck of nature, and all those wise sayings which singly made so many men famous for preaching some one of them; all them Christ gathered, and added some more out of the immediate book of revelation. So that now the wisdom of God hath made every man's heart to be the true vetonica, in which he hath imprinted his own lineaments so perfectly, that we may dress ourselves like God, and have the air and features of Christ our elder Brother; that we may be pure as God is, perfect as our Father, meek and humble as the Son, and may have the Holy Ghost within us, in gifts and graces, in wisdom and holiness. This hath God done for us; and see what we do for him. We stand in our own light, and quench God's: we love darkness more than light, and entertain ourselves accordingly. For how many of us are there, that understand nothing of the ways of God; that know no more of the laws of Jesus Christ than is remaining upon them since they learned the children's catechism! But, amongst a thousand, how many can explicate and unfold for his own practice the ten commandments, and how many sorts of sins are there forbidden? which therefore pass into action, and never pass under the scrutinies of repentance, because they know not that they are sins. Are there not very many, who know not the particular duties of "meekness," and never consider concerning "long-suffering?" and if you talk to them of growth in grace, or the Spirit of obsignation, or the melancholic lectures of the cross, and imitation of and conformity to Christ's sufferings, or adherences to God, or rejoicing in him, or not quenching the Spirit; you are too deep-learned for them. And yet these are duties set down plainly for our practice, necessary to be acted in order to our salvation. We brag of light, and reformation, and fulness of the Spirit: in the mean time we understand not many parts of our duty. We inquire into something that may make us talk, or be talked of, or that we may trouble a church, or disturb the peace of minds; but in things that concern holy living, and that wisdom of God whereby we are wise unto salvation, never was any age of christendom more ignorant than we. For, if we did not wink hard, we must needs see, that obedience to supreme powers, denying of ourselves, humility, peacefulness, and charity, are written in such capital text letters, that it is impossible to be ignorant of them. And if the heart of man had not rare arts to abuse the understanding, it were not to be imagined that any man should bring the thirteenth chapter to the Romans, to prove the

[a] Epict. Arrian.

lawfulness of taking up arms against our rulers; but so we may abuse ourselves at noon, and go to bed, if we please to call it midnight. And there have been a sort of witty men, that maintained that snow was hot. I wonder not at the problem; but that a man should believe his paradox, and should let eternity go away with the fallacy, and rather lose heaven than leave his foolish argument; is a sign that wilfulness and the deceiving heart is the sophister, and the great ingredient into our deception.

But, that I may be more particular; the heart of man uses devices that it may be ignorant.

1. We are impatient of honest and severe reproof; and order the circumstances of our persons and addresses, that we shall never come to the true knowledge of our condition. Who will endure to hear his curate tell him, that he is covetous, or that he is proud? Λέγει, ὦ δεινῆς ὕβρεως. It is calumny and reviling, if he speak it to his head, and relates to his person: and yet if he speak only in general, every man neglects what is not recommended to his particular. But yet, if our physician tell us, You look well, sir, but a fever lurks in your spirits; Ἀσίτησον, σήμερον ὕδωρ πίε, "Drink juleps, and abstain from flesh;"—no man thinks it shame or calumny to be told so: but when we are told that our liver is inflamed with lust or anger, that our heart is vexed with envy, that our eyes roll with wantonness; and though we think all is well, yet we are sick, sick unto death, and near to a sad and fatal sentence; we shall think that man that tells us so, is impudent or uncharitable; and yet he hath done him no more injury than a deformed man receives daily from his looking-glass, which if he shall dash against the wall, because it shows him his face just as it is, his face is not so ugly as his manners. And our heart is so impatient of seeing its own stains, that, like the elephant, it tramples in the pure streams, and first troubles them, then stoops and drinks, when he can least see his huge deformity.

2. In order to this, we heap up teachers of our own, and they guide us, not whither, but which way, they please: for we are curious to go our own way, and careless of our hospital or inn at night. A fair way, and a merry company, and a pleasant, easy guide, will entice us into the enemy's quarters; and such guides we cannot want: "Improbitati occasio nunquam defuit;" "If we have a mind to be wicked, we shall want no prompters;" and false teachers, at first creeping in unawares, have now so filled the pavement of the church, that you can scarce set your foot on the ground but you tread upon a snake. Cicero (l. 7. ad Atticum) undertakes to bargain with them that kept the Sibyls' books, that for a sum of money they should expound to him what he please; and to be sure, "ut quidvis potiùs quàm regem proferrent;" "They shall declare against the government of kings, and say, that the gods will endure any thing rather than monarchy in their beloved republic." And the same mischief God complains of to be among the Jews: "The prophets prophesy lies, and my people love to have it so: and what will the end of these things be?"—even the same that Cicero complained of, "Ad opinionem imperatorum fictas esse religiones;"[b] men shall have what religion they please, and God shall be entitled to all the quarrels of covetous and ambitious persons; καὶ Πυθίαν φιλιππίζειν, as Demosthenes wittily complained of the oracle; an answer shall be drawn out of Scripture to countenance the design, and God made the rebel against his own ordinances. And then we are zealous for the Lord God of hosts, and will live and die in that quarrel. But is it not a strange cozenage, that our hearts shall be the main wheel in the engine, and shall set all the rest on working? The heart shall first put his own candle out, then put out the eye of reason, then remove the land-mark and dig down the causeways, and then either hire a blind guide, or make him so: and all these arts to get ignorance that they may secure impiety. At first, man lost his innocence only in hope to get a little knowledge: and ever since then, lest knowledge should discover his error, and make him return to innocence, we are content to part with that now, and to know nothing that may discover or discountenance our sins, or discompose our secular designs. And as God made great revelations, and furnished out a wise religion, and sent his Spirit to give the gift of faith to his church, that, upon the foundation of faith he might build a holy life: now our hearts love to retire into blindness, and sneak under covert of false principles, and run to a cheap religion, and an inactive discipline, and make a faith of our own, that we may build upon it ease, and ambition, and a tall fortune, and the pleasures of revenge, and do what we have a mind to; scarce once in seven years denying a strong and an unruly appetite upon the interest of a just conscience and holy religion. This is such a desperate method of impiety, so certain arts and apt instruments for the devil, that it does his work entirely, and produces an infallible damnation.

3. But the heart of man hath yet another stratagem to secure its iniquity by the means of ignorance; and that is, incogitancy or inconsideration. For there is wrought upon the spirits of many men great impression by education, by a modest and temperate nature, by human laws, and the customs and severities of sober persons, and the fears of religion, and the awfulness of a reverend man, and the several arguments and endearments of virtue: and it is not in the nature of some men to do an act in despite of reason, and religion, and arguments, and reverence, and modesty, and fear; but men are forced from their sin by the violence of the grace of God, when they hear it speak. But so a Roman gentleman kept off a whole band of soldiers who were sent to murder him, and his eloquence was stronger than their anger and design: but suddenly, a rude trooper rushed upon him, who neither had nor would hear him speak; and he thrust his spear into that throat, whose music had charmed all his fellows into peace and gentleness. So do we. The grace of God is armour and defence enough, against the most violent incursion of the spirits and the works

[b] De Divinitat. l. 2.

of darkness; but then we must hear its excellent charms, and consider its reasons, and remember its precepts, and dwell with its discourses. But this the heart of man loves not. If I be tempted to uncleanness, or to an act of oppression, instantly the grace of God represents to me, that the pleasure of the sin is transient and vain, unsatisfying and empty; that I shall die, and then I shall wish too late that I had never done it. It tells me, that I displease God who made me, who feeds me, who blesses me, who fain would save me. It represents to me all the joys of heaven, and the horrors and amazements of a sad eternity; and if I will stay and hear them, ten thousand excellent things besides, fit to be twisted about my understanding for ever. But here the heart of man shuffles all these discourses into disorder, and will not be put to the trouble of answering the objections; but, by a mere wildness of purpose, and rudeness of resolution, ventures "super totam materiam," at all, and does the thing, not because it thinks it fit to do so, but because it will not consider whether it be or no; it is enough, that it pleases a pleasant appetite. And if such incogitancy comes to be habitual, as it is in very many men,—first by resisting the motions of the Holy Spirit, then by quenching him,—we shall find the consequence to be, first an indifferency,—then a dulness,—then a lethargy,—then a direct hating the ways of God;—and it commonly ends in a wretchlessness of spirit, to be manifested on our death-bed; when the man shall pass hence, not like the shadow, but like the dog, that departeth without sense, or interest, or apprehension, or real concernment, in the considerations of eternity: and it is but just, when we will not hear our King speak and plead, not to save himself, but us, to speak for our peace, and innocency, and salvation, to prevent our ruin, and our intolerable calamity. Certainly, we are much in love with the wages of death, when we cannot endure to hear God call us back, and "stop our ears against the voice of the charmer, charm he ever so wisely."

Nay, further yet, we suffer the arguments of religion to have so little impression upon our spirits, that they operate but like the discourses of childhood, or the problems of uncertain philosophy. A man talks of religion but as of a dream, and from thence he awakens into the businesses of the world, and acts them deliberately, with perfect action and full resolution, and contrives, and considers, and lives in them: but when he falls asleep again, or is taken from the scene of his own employment and choice, then he dreams again, and religion makes such impressions as is the conversation of a dreamer, and he acts accordingly. Theocritus tells of a fisherman, that dreamed he had taken οὐ σάρκικον ἰχθὺν, ἀλλὰ χρύσεον, "a fish of gold;" upon which being overjoyed, he made a vow, that he would never fish more: but when he waked, he soon declared his vow to be null, because he found his golden fish was escaped away through the holes of his eyes, when he first opened them. Just so we do in the purposes of religion; sometimes, in a good mood, we seem to see heaven opened, and all the streets of the heavenly Jerusalem paved with gold and precious stones, and we are ravished with spiritual apprehensions, and resolve never to return to the low affections of the world, and the impure adherences of sin: but when this flash of lightning is gone, and we converse again with the inclinations and habitual desires of our false hearts, those other desires and fine considerations disband, and the resolutions, taken in that pious fit, melt into indifference and cold customs. He was prettily and fantastically troubled, who, having used to put his trust in dreams, one night dreamed that all dreams were vain: for he considered, if so, then this was vain, and then dreams might be true for all this: but if they might be true, then this dream might be so upon equal reason: and then dreams were vain, because this dream, which told him so, was true; and so round again. In the same circle runs the heart of man: all his cogitations are vain, and yet he makes especial use of this, that that thought which thinks so, that is vain; and if that be vain, then his other thoughts, which are vainly declared so, may be real, and relied upon. And so do we: those religious thoughts which are sent into us to condemn and disrepute the thoughts of sin and vanity, are esteemed the only dreams: and so all those instruments which the grace of God hath invented for the destruction of impiety, are rendered ineffectual, either by our direct opposing them, or (which happens most commonly) by our want of considering them.

The effect of all is this, that we are ignorant of the things of God. We make religion to be the work of a few hours in the whole year; we are without fancy or affection to the severities of holy living; we reduce religion to the believing of a few articles, and doing nothing that is considerable; we pray seldom, and then but very coldly and indifferently; we communicate not so often as the sun salutes both the tropics; we profess Christ, but dare not die for him; we are factious for a religion, and will not live according to its precepts; we call ourselves christians, and love to be ignorant of many of the laws of Christ, lest our knowledge should force us into shame, or into the troubles of a holy life. All the mischiefs that you can suppose to happen to a furious inconsiderate person, running after the wildfires of the night, over rivers, and rocks, and precipices, without sun or star, or angel or man, to guide him; all that, and ten thousand times worse, may you suppose to be the certain lot of him, who gives himself up to the conduct of a passionate, blind heart, whom no fire can warm, and no sun can enlighten; who hates light, and loves to dwell in the regions of darkness. That is the first general mischief of the heart, it is possessed with blindness, wilful and voluntary.

2. But the heart is hard too. Not only folly, but mischief also, is bound up in the heart of man. If God strives to soften it with sorrow and sad accidents, it is like an ox, it grows callous and hard. Such a heart was Pharaoh's. When God makes the clouds to gather round about us, we wrap our heads in the clouds, and, like the malecontents in Galba's time, "tristitiam simulamus, contumaciæ

propiores," "we seem sad and troubled, but it is doggedness and murmur."—Or else, if our fears be pregnant, and the heart yielding, it sinks low into pusillanimity and superstition; and our hearts are so childish, so timorous, or so impatient, in a sadness, that God is weary of striking us, and we are glad of it. And yet, when the sun shines upon us, our hearts are hardened with that too; and God seems to be at a loss, as if he knew not what to do to us. War undoes us, and makes us violent; peace undoes us, and makes us wanton; prosperity makes us proud; adversity renders us impatient; plenty dissolves us, and makes us tyrants; want makes us greedy, liars, and rapacious.

Πῶς οὖν τις ἂν σώσειέ τοιαύτην πόλιν,
Ἢ μήτε χλαῖνα, μήτε σισύρα ξυμφέρει;
ARISTOPH. Βατράχ. Act 5. Sc. 4.

"No fortune can save that city, to whom neither peace nor war can do advantage." And what is there left for God to mollify our hearts, whose temper is like both to wax and dirt; whom fire hardens, and cold hardens: and contradictory accidents produce no change, save that the heart grows worse and more obdurate for every change of Providence? But here also I must descend to particulars.

1. The heart of man is strangely proud. If men commend us, we think we have reason to distinguish ourselves from others, since the voice of discerning men hath already made the separation. If men do not commend us, we think they are stupid, and understand us not; or envious, and hold their tongues in spite. If we are praised by many, then "Vox populi, vox Dei, "Fame is the voice of God." If we be praised but by few, then "Satis unus, satis nullus;" we cry, "These are wise, and one wise man is worth a whole herd of the people." But if we be praised by none at all, we resolve to be even with all the world, and speak well of nobody, and think well only of ourselves. And then we have such beggarly arts, such tricks, to cheat for praise. We inquire after our faults and failings, only to be told we have none, but did excellently; and then we are pleased: we rail upon our actions, only to be chidden for so doing; and then he is our friend who chides us into a good opinion of ourselves, which however all the world cannot make us part with. Nay, humility itself makes us proud; so false, so base, is the heart of man. For humility is so noble a virtue, that even pride itself puts on its upper garment: and we do like those who cannot endure to look upon an ugly or a deformed person, and yet will give a great price for a picture extremely like him. Humility is despised in substance, but courted and admired in effigy. And Æsop's picture was sold for two talents, when himself was made a slave at the price of two philippics. And because humility makes a man to be honoured, therefore we imitate all its garbs and postures, its civilities and silence, its modesties and condescensions. And, to prove that we are extremely proud, in the midst of all this pageantry, we should be extremely angry at any man that should say we are proud; and that is a sure sign we are so. And in the midst of all our arts to seem humble, we use devices to bring ourselves into talk; we thrust ourselves into company, we listen at doors, and, like the greatbeards in Rome that pretended philosophy and strict life, ὀβελίσκον καταπιόντες περιπατοῦμεν, "we walk by the obelisk,"[c] and meditate in piazzas, that they that meet us may talk of us, and they that follow may cry out, Ὦ μεγάλου φιλοσόφου! Behold! there goes an excellent man! He is very prudent, or very learned, or a charitable person, or a good housekeeper, or at least very humble.

2. The heart of man is deeply in love with wickedness, and with nothing else: against not only the laws of God, but against his own reason, its own interest, and its own securities? For is it imaginable, that a man, who knows the laws of God, the rewards of virtue, the cursed and horrid effects of sin; that knows, and considers, and deeply sighs at, the thought of the intolerable pains of hell; that knows the joys of heaven to be unspeakable, and that concerning them there is no temptation, but that they are too big for man to hope for, and yet he certainly believes, that a holy life shall infallibly attain thither: is it, I say, imaginable, that this man should, for a transient action, forfeit all this hope, and certainly and knowingly incur all that calamity? Yea, but the sin is pleasant, and the man is clothed with flesh and blood, and their appetites are material, and importunate, and present; and the discourses of religion are concerning things spiritual, separate and apt for spirits, angels, and souls departed. To take off this also, we will suppose the man to consider, and really to believe, that the pleasure of the sin is sudden, vain, empty, and transient; that it leaves bitterness upon the tongue, before it is descended into the bowels; that there it is poison, and "makes the belly to swell, and the thigh to rot;" that he remembers, and actually considers, that as soon as the moment of sin is past, he shall have an intolerable conscience, and does, at the instant, compare moments with eternity, and with horror remembers, that the very next minute he is as miserable a man as is in the world: yet that this man should sin? Nay, suppose the sin to have no pleasure at all, such as is the sin of swearing; nay, suppose it really to have pain in it, such as is the sin of envy, which never can have pleasure in its actions, but much torment and consumption of the very heart: what should make this man sin so for nothing, so against himself, so against all reason, and religion, and interest, without pleasure, for no reward? Here the heart betrays itself to be "desperately wicked." What man can give a reasonable account of such a man, who, to prosecute his revenge, will do himself an injury, that he may do a less to him that troubles him. Such a man hath given me ill language: Οὔτε τὴν κεφαλὴν ἀλγεῖ, οὔτε τὸν ὀφθαλμον, οὔτε τὸν ἰσχίον, οὔτε τὸν ἀγρὸν ἀπολλύει, "My head aches not for his language, nor hath he broken my thigh, nor carried away my land:" but yet this man must be requited; well, suppose that. But then let it be proportionably; you are not undone, let not him

[c] Arrian.

be so.—Oh, yes; for else my revenge triumphs not;—well, if you do, yet remember, he will defend himself, or the law will right him; at least, do not do wrong to yourself by doing him wrong: this were but prudence and self-interest. And yet we see, that the heart of some men hath betrayed them to such furiousness of appetite, as to make them willing to die, that their enemy may be buried in the same ruins. Jovius Pontanus tells of an Italian slave, I think, who, being enraged against his lord, watched his absence from home, and the employment and inadvertency of his fellow-servants: he locked the doors, and secured himself for awhile, and ravished his lady; then took her three sons up to the battlements of the house, and at the return of his lord, threw one down to him upon the pavement, and then a second, to rend the heart of their sad father, seeing them weltering in their blood and brains. The lord begged for his third, and now his only son, promising pardon and liberty if he would spare his life. The slave seemed to bend a little, and, on condition his lord would cut off his own nose, he would spare his son. The sad father did so, being willing to suffer any thing rather than the loss of that child. But as soon as he saw his lord all bloody with his wound, he threw the third son and himself down together upon the pavement. The story is sad enough, and needs no lustre and advantages of sorrow to represent it: but if a man sets himself down, and considers sadly, he cannot easily tell, upon what sufficient inducement, or what principle, the slave should so certainly, so horridly, so presently, and then so eternally, ruin himself. What could he propound to himself as a recompence to his own so immediate tragedy? There is not in the pleasure of the revenge, nor in the nature of the thing, any thing to tempt him; we must confess our ignorance, and say, that "The heart of man is desperately wicked;" and that is the truth in general, but we cannot fathom it by particular comprehension.

For when the heart of man is bound up by the grace of God, and tied in golden bands, and watched by angels, tended by those nursekeepers of the soul, it is not easy for a man to wander; and the evil of his heart is but like the ferity and wildness of lions' whelps: but when once we have broken the hedge, and got into the strengths of youth, and the licentiousness of an ungoverned age, it is wonderful to observe, what a great inundation of mischief, in a very short time, will overflow all the banks of reason and religion. Vice first is pleasing,—then it grows easy,—then delightful,—then frequent,—then habitual,—then confirmed;—then the man is impenitent,—then he is obstinate,—then he resolves never to repent,—and then he is damned.—And by that time he is come half-way in this progress, he confutes the philosophy of the old moralists: for they, not knowing the vileness of man's heart, nor considering its desperate, amazing impiety, knew no other degree of wickedness but this, that men preferred sense before reason, and their understandings were abused in the choice of a temporal before an intellectual and eternal good: but they always concluded, that the will of man must of necessity follow the last dictate of the understanding, declaring an object to be good, in one sense or other. Happy men they were that were so innocent, that knew no pure and perfect malice, and lived in an age in which it was not easy to confute them. But, besides that now the wells of a deeper iniquity are discovered, we see, by too sad experience, that there are some sins proceeding from the heart of man, which have nothing but simple and unmingled malice: actions of mere spite, doing evil because it is evil, sinning without sensual pleasures, sinning with sensual pain, with hazard of our lives, with actual torment, and sudden deaths, and certain and present damnation; sins against the Holy Ghost, open hostilities, and professed enmities, against God and all virtue. I can go no further, because there is not in the world, or in the nature of things, a greater evil. And that is the nature and folly of the devil; he tempts men to ruin, and hates God, and only hurts himself and those he tempts, and does himself no pleasure, and some say he increases his own accidental torment.

Although I can say nothing greater, yet I had many more things to say, if the time would have permitted me to represent the falseness and baseness of the heart. 1. We are false ourselves, and dare not trust God. 2. We love to be deceived, and are angry if we be told so. 3. We love to seem virtuous, and yet hate to be so. 4. We are melancholic and impatient, and we know not why. 5. We are troubled at little things, and are careless of greater. 6. We are overjoyed at a petty accident, and despise great and eternal pleasures. 7. We believe things, not for their reasons and proper arguments, but as they serve our turns, be they true or false. 8. We long extremely for things that are forbidden us; and what we despise when it is permitted us, we snatch at greedily when it is taken from us. 9. We love ourselves more than we love God; and yet we eat poisons daily, and feed upon toads and vipers, and nourish our deadly enemies in our bosom, and will not be brought to quit them; but brag of our shame, and are ashamed of nothing but virtue, which is most honourable. 10. We fear to die, and yet use all the means we can to make death terrible and dangerous. 11. We are busy in the faults of others, and negligent of our own. 12. We live the life of spies, striving to know others, and to be unknown ourselves. 13. We worship and flatter some men and some things, because we fear them, not because we love them. 14. We are ambitious of greatness, and covetous of wealth, and all that we get by it is, that we are more beautifully tempted; and a troop of clients run to us as to a pool, which first they trouble, and then draw dry. 15. We make ourselves unsafe by committing wickedness, and then we add more wickedness, to make us safe and beyond punishment. 16. We are more servile for one courtesy that we hope for, than for twenty that we have received. 17. We entertain slanderers, and, without choice, spread their calumnies, and we hug flatterers, and know they abuse us. And if I should gather the abuses, and impieties, and deceptions of

the heart, as Chrysippus did the oracular lies of Apollo into a table, I fear they would seem remediless, and beyond the cure of watchfulness and religion. Indeed, they are great and many; but the grace of God is greater; and "if iniquity abounds," then "doth grace superabound:" and that is our comfort and our medicine, which we must thus use.

1. Let us watch our heart at every turn.
2. Deny it all its desires that do not directly, or by consequence, end in godliness: at no hand be indulgent to its fondnesses and peevish appetites.
3. Let us suspect it as an enemy.
4. Trust not to it in any thing.
5. But beg the grace of God with perpetual and importunate prayer, that he would be pleased to bring good out of these evils; and that he would throw the salutary wood of the cross, the merits of Christ's death and passion, into these salt waters, and make them healthful and pleasant.

And in order to the managing these advices, and acting the purposes of this prayer, let us strictly follow a rule, and choose a prudent and faithful guide, who may attend our motions, and watch our counsels, and direct our steps, and "prepare the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight," apt, and imitable. For without great watchfulness, and earnest devotion, and a prudent guide, we shall find that true in a spiritual sense, which Plutarch affirmed of a man's body in the natural: that of dead bulls arise bees; from the carcasses of horses, hornets are produced: but the body of man brings forth serpents. Our hearts, wallowing in their own natural and acquired corruptions, will produce nothing but issues of hell, and images of the old serpent the devil, for whom is provided the everlasting burning.

SERMON IX.

THE FAITH AND PATIENCE OF THE SAINTS; OR, THE RIGHTEOUS CAUSE OPPRESSED

PART I.

For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?—1 Peter iv. 17, 18.

So long as the world lived by sense, and discourses of natural reason, as they were abated with human infirmities, and not at all heightened by the Spirit and divine revelations; so long men took their accounts of good and bad by their being prosperous or unfortunate: and amongst the basest and most ignorant of men, that only was accounted honest which was profitable; and he only wise, that was rich; and those men beloved of God, who received from him all that might satisfy their lust, their ambition, or their revenge.

> ——— Fatis accede, Deisque,
> Et cole felices, miseros fuge: sidera terrâ
> Ut distant, ut flamma mari, sic utile recto. LUCAN.

But because God sent wise men into the world, and they were treated rudely by the world, and exercised with evil accidents, and this seemed so great a discouragement to virtue, that even these wise men were more troubled to reconcile virtue and misery, than to reconcile their affections to the suffering; God was pleased to enlighten their reason with a little beam of faith, or else heightened their reason by wiser principles than those of vulgar understandings, and taught them in the clear glass of faith, or the dim perspective of philosophy, to look beyond the cloud, and there to spy that there stood glories behind their curtain, to which they could not come but by passing through the cloud, and being wet with the dew of heaven and the waters of affliction. And according as the world grew more enlightened by faith, so it grew more dark with mourning and sorrows. God sometimes sent a light of fire, and a pillar of a cloud, and the brightness of an angel, and the lustre of a star, and the sacrament of a rainbow, to guide his people through their portion of sorrows, and to lead them through troubles to rest: but as the Sun of righteousness approached towards the chambers of the east, and sent the harbingers of light peeping through the curtains of the night, and leading on the day of faith and brightest revelation; so God sent degrees of trouble upon wise and good men, that now, in the same degree in the which the world lives by faith, and not by sense, in the same degree they might be able to live in virtue even while she lived in trouble, and not reject so great a beauty, because she goes in mourning, and hath a black cloud of Cyprus drawn before her face. Literally thus: God first entertained their services, and allured and prompted on the infirmities of the infant-world by temporal prosperity; but by degrees changed his method; and as men grew stronger in the knowledge of God, and the expectations of heaven, so they grew weaker in their fortunes, more afflicted in their bodies, more abated in their expectations, more subject to their enemies, and were to endure the contradiction of sinners, and the immission of the sharpnesses of Providence and divine economy.

First, Adam was placed in a garden of health and pleasure, from which when he fell, he was only tied to enter into the covenant of natural sorrows, which he and all his posterity till the flood ran through: but in all that period they had the whole wealth of the earth before them; they needed not fight for empires, or places for their cattle to graze in; they lived long, and felt no want, no slavery, no tyranny, no war; and the evils that happened, were single, personal, and natural; and no violences were then done, but they were like those things which the law calls "rare contingencies;" for which as the law can now take no care and make no provisions,

so then there was no law, but men lived free, and rich, and long, and they exercised no virtues but natural, and knew no felicity but natural: and so long their prosperity was just as was their virtue, because it was a natural instrument towards all that which they knew of happiness. But this public easiness and quiet, the world turned into sin; and unless God did compel men to do themselves good, they would undo themselves: and then God broke in upon them with a flood, and destroyed that generation, that he might begin the government of the world upon a new stock, and bind virtue upon men's spirits by new bands, endeared to them by new hopes and fears.

Then God made new laws, and gave to princes the power of the sword, and men might be punished to death in certain cases, and man's life was shortened, and slavery was brought into the world and the state of servants: and then war began, and evils multiplied upon the face of the earth; in which it is naturally certain that they that were most violent and injurious, prevailed upon the weaker and more innocent; and every tyranny that began from Nimrod to this day, and every usurper, was a peculiar argument to show that God began to teach the world virtue by suffering; and that therefore he suffered tyrannies and usurpations to be in the world, and to be prosperous, and the rights of men to be snatched away from their owners, that the world might be established in potent and settled governments, and the sufferers be taught all the passive virtues of the soul. For so God brings good out of evil, turning tyranny into the benefits of government, and violence into virtue, and sufferings into rewards. And this was the second change of the world: personal miseries were brought in upon Adam and his posterity, as a punishment of sin in the first period; and in the second, public evils were brought in by tyrants and usurpers, and God suffered them as the first elements of virtue, men being just newly put to school to infant sufferings. But all this was not much.

Christ's line was not yet drawn forth; it began not to appear in what family the King of sufferings should descend, till Abraham's time; and therefore, till then there were no greater sufferings than what I have now reckoned. But when Abraham's family was chosen from among the many nations, and began to belong to God by a special right, and he was designed to be the father of the Messias; then God found out a new way to try him, even with a sound affliction, commanding him to offer his beloved Isaac: but this was accepted, and being intended by Abraham, was not intended by God: for this was a type of Christ, and therefore was also but a type of sufferings. And excepting the sufferings of the old periods, and the sufferings of nature and accident, we see no change made for a long time after; but God having established a law in Abraham's family, did build it upon promises of health, and peace, and victory, and plenty, and riches; and so long as they did not prevaricate the law of their God, so long they were prosperous: but God kept a remnant of Canaanites in the land, like a rod held over them, to vex or to chastise them into obedience, in which while they persevered nothing could hurt them; and that saying of David needs no other sense but the letter of its own expression, "I have been young, and now am old; and yet I never saw the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread." The godly generally were prosperous, and a good cause seldom had an ill end, and a good man never died an ill death,—till the law had spent a great part of its time, and it descended towards its declension and period. But, that the great Prince of sufferings might not appear upon his stage of tragedies without some forerunners of sorrow, God was pleased to choose out some good men, and honour them, by making them to become little images of suffering. Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Zechariah, were martyrs of the law; but these were single deaths: Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego, were thrown into a burning furnace, and Daniel into a den of lions, and Susanna was accused for adultery; but these were but little arrests of the prosperity of the godly. As the time drew nearer that Christ should be manifest, so the sufferings grew bigger and more numerous: and Antiochus raised up a sharp persecution in the time of the Maccabees, in which many passed through the Red sea of blood into the bosom of Abraham; and then Christ came. And that was the third period in which the changed method of God's providence was perfected: for Christ was to do his great work by sufferings, and by sufferings was to enter into blessedness; and by his passion he was made Prince of the catholic church; and as our Head was, so must the members be. God made the same covenant with us that he did with his most holy Son, and Christ obtained no better conditions for us than for himself; that was not to be looked for; "The servant must not be above his master; it is well if he be as his master: if the world persecuted him, they will also persecute us:" and "from the days of John the Baptist, the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force;" not "the violent doers," but "the sufferers of violence:" for though the old law was established in the promises of temporal prosperity; yet the gospel is founded in temporal adversity; it is directly a covenant of sufferings and sorrows; for now "the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God." That is the sense and design of the text; and I intend it as a direct antinomy to the common persuasions of tyrannous, carnal, and vicious men, who reckon nothing good but what is prosperous: for though that proposition had many degrees of truth in the beginning of the law, yet the case is now altered, God hath established its contradictory; and now every good man must look for persecution, and every good cause must expect to thrive by the sufferings and patience of holy persons: and, as men do well, and suffer evil, so they are dear to God; and whom he loves most he afflicts most, and does this with a design of the greatest mercy in the world.

1. Then, the state of the gospel is a state of sufferings, not of temporal prosperities. This was foretold by the prophets; "A fountain shall go out

of the house of the Lord, 'et irrigabit torrentem spinarum,' (so it is in the Vulgar Latin,) and it shall water the torrent of thorns;"[y] that is, the state or time of the gospel, which, like a torrent, shall carry all the world before it, and, like a torrent, shall be fullest in ill weather; and by its banks shall grow nothing but thorns and briers, sharp afflictions, temporal infelicities, and persecution. This sense of the words is more fully explained in the book of the prophet Isaiah. "Upon the ground of my people shall thorns and briers come up; how much more in all the houses of the city of rejoicing!"[z] Which prophecy is the same in the style of the prophets, that my text is in the style of the apostles. The house of God shall be watered with the dew of heaven, and there shall spring up briers in it: "Judgment must begin there;" but how much more "in the house of the city of rejoicing!" how much more amongst "them that are at ease in Sion," that serve their desires, that satisfy their appetites, that are given over to their own hearts' lust, that so serve themselves, that they never serve God, that "dwell in the city of rejoicing!" They are like Dives, whose portion was in this life, "who went in fine linen, and fared deliciously every day:" they, indeed, trample upon their briers and thorns, and suffer them not to grow in their houses; but the roots are in the ground, and they are reserved for fuel of wrath in the day of everlasting burning. Thus, you see, it was prophesied, now see how it was performed; Christ was the Captain of our sufferings, and he began.

He entered into the world with all the circumstances of poverty. He had a star to illustrate his birth; but a stable for his bedchamber, and a manger for his cradle. The angels sang hymns when he was born: but he was cold and cried, uneasy and unprovided. He lived long in the trade of a carpenter; he, by whom God made the world, had, in his first years, the business of a mean and ignoble trade. He did good wherever he went; and almost wherever he went was abused. He deserved heaven for his obedience, but found a cross in his way thither: and if ever any man had reason to expect fair usages from God, and to be dandled in the lap of ease, softness, and a prosperous fortune, he it was only that could deserve that, or any thing that can be good. But, after he had chosen to live a life of virtue, of poverty, and labour, he entered into a state of death; whose shame and trouble were great enough to pay for the sins of the whole world. And I shall choose to express this mystery in the words of Scripture. He died not by a single or a sudden death, but he was the "Lamb slain from the beginning of the world:" for he was massacred in Abel, saith St. Paulinus; he was tossed upon the waves of the sea in the person of Noah; it was he that went out of his country, when Abraham was called from Charran, and wandered from his native soil; he was offered up in Isaac, persecuted in Jacob, betrayed in Joseph, blinded in Samson, affronted in Moses, sawed in Isaiah, cast into the dungeon with Jeremiah: for all these were types of Christ suffering. And then his passion continued even after his resurrection. For it is he that suffers in all his members; it is he that "endures the contradiction of all sinners;" it is he that is "the Lord of life, and is crucified again, and put to open shame," in all the sufferings of his servants, and sins of rebels, and defiances of apostates and renegadoes, and violence of tyrants, and injustice of usurpers, and the persecutions of his church. It is he that is stoned in St. Stephen, flayed in the person of St. Bartholomew: he was roasted upon St. Laurence's gridiron, exposed to lions in St. Ignatius, burnt in St. Polycarp, frozen in the lake where stood forty martyrs of Cappadocia. "Unigenitus enim Dei ad peragendum mortis suæ sacramentum consummavit omne genus humanarum passionum," said St. Hilary; "the sacrament of Christ's death is not to be accomplished but by suffering all the sorrows of humanity."

All that Christ came for, was, or was mingled with, sufferings: for all those little joys which God sent, either to recreate his person, or to illustrate his office, were abated, or attended with afflictions; God being more careful to establish in him the covenant of sufferings, than to refresh his sorrows. Presently after the angels had finished their hallelujahs, he was forced to fly to save his life; and the air became full of shrieks of the desolate mothers of Bethlehem for their dying babes. God had no sooner made him illustrious with a voice from heaven, and the descent of the Holy Ghost upon him in the waters of baptism, but he was delivered over to be tempted and assaulted by the devil in the wilderness. His transfiguration was a bright ray of glory; but then also he entered into a cloud, and was told a sad story what he was to suffer at Jerusalem. And upon Palm Sunday, when he rode triumphantly into Jerusalem, and was adorned with the acclamations of a King and a God, he wet the palms with his tears, sweeter than the drops of manna, or the little pearls of heaven, that descended upon mount Hermon; weeping, in the midst of his triumph, over obstinate, perishing, and malicious Jerusalem. For this Jesus was like the rainbow, which God set in the clouds as a sacrament to confirm a promise, and establish a grace; he was half made of the glories of the light, and half of the moisture of a cloud; in his best days he was but half triumph and half sorrow: he was sent to tell of his Father's mercies, and that God intended to spare us; but appeared not but in the company or in the retinue of a shower, and of foul weather. But I need not tell that Jesus, beloved of God, was a suffering person; that which concerns this question most, is, that he made for us a covenant of sufferings: his doctrines were such as expressly and by consequent enjoin and support sufferings, and a state of affliction; his very promises were sufferings; his beatitudes were sufferings; his rewards, and his arguments to invite men to follow him, were only taken from sufferings in this life, and the reward of sufferings hereafter.

For if we sum up the commandments of Christ, we shall find humility,—mortification,—self-denial,

[y] Joel iii. 10. [z] Isa. xxxii. 13.

—repentance,—renouncing the world,—mourning,—taking up the cross,—dying for him,—patience and poverty,—to stand in the chiefest rank of christian precepts, and in the direct order to heaven: "He that will be my disciple, must deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." We must follow him that was crowned with thorns and sorrows, him that was drenched in Cedron, nailed upon the cross, that deserved all good, and suffered all evil: that is the sum of christian religion, as it distinguishes from all the religions of the world. To which we may add the express precept recorded by St. James: "Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy into weeping."[a] You see the commandments; will you also see the promises? These they are. "In the world ye shall have tribulation; in me ye shall have peace:—Through many tribulations ye shall enter into heaven:—He that loseth father and mother, wives and children, houses and lands, for my name's sake and the gospel, shall receive a hundred-fold in this life, with persecution;" that is part of his reward: and, "He chastiseth every son that he receiveth;—if ye be exempt from sufferings, ye are bastards, and not sons." These are some of Christ's promises: will you see some of Christ's blessings that he gives his church? "Blessed are the poor: blessed are the hungry and thirsty: blessed are they that mourn: blessed are the humble: blessed are the persecuted."[b] Of the eight beatitudes, five of them have temporal misery and meanness, or an afflicted condition, for their subject. Will you at last see some of the rewards which Christ hath propounded to his servants, to invite them to follow him? "When I am lifted up, I will draw all men after me:" when Christ is "lifted up, as Moses lift up the serpent in the wilderness," that is, lifted upon the cross, then "he will draw us after him."—"To you it is given for Christ," saith St. Paul, when he went to sweeten and to flatter the Philippians:[c] well, what is given to them? some great favours surely: true; "It is not only given that you believe in Christ,"—though that be a great matter,—"but also that you suffer for him," that is the highest of your honour. And therefore St. James, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye enter into divers temptations:"[d] and St. Peter; "Communicating with the sufferings of Christ, rejoice."[e] And St. James again; "We count them blessed that have suffered:"[f] and St. Paul, when he gives his blessing to the Thessalonians, useth this form of prayer; "Our Lord direct your hearts in the charity of God, and in the patience and sufferings of Christ."[g] So that if we will serve the King of sufferings, whose crown was of thorns, whose sceptre was a reed of scorn, whose imperial robe was a scarlet of mockery, whose throne was the cross; we must serve him in sufferings, in poverty of spirit, in humility and mortification; and for our reward we shall have persecution, and all its blessed consequences. "Atque hoc est esse christianum."

[a] James iv. 9. [b] Matt. v. [c] Phil. i. 29.
[d] James i. 2. [e] 1 Pet. iv. 13. [f] James v. 11.

Since this was done in the green tree, what might we expect should be done in the dry? Let us, in the next place, consider how God hath treated his saints and servants in the descending ages of the gospel: that if the best of God's servants were followers of Jesus in this covenant of sufferings, we may not think it strange concerning the fiery trial, as if some new thing had happened to us.[h] For as the gospel was founded in sufferings, we shall also see it grow in persecutions; and as Christ's blood did cement the corner-stones, and the first foundations; so the blood and sweat, the groans and sighings, the afflictions and mortifications, of saints and martyrs, did make the superstructures, and must at last finish the building.

If we begin with the apostles, who were to persuade the world to become christian, and to use proper arguments of invitations, we shall find that they never offered an argument of temporal prosperity; they never promised empires and thrones on earth, nor riches, nor temporal power; and it would have been soon confuted, if they who were whipt and imprisoned, bound and scattered, persecuted and tormented, should have promised sunshine days to others, which they could not to themselves. Of all the apostles there was not one that died a natural death but only St. John;[i] and did he escape? Yes: but he was put into a cauldron of scalding lead and oil before the Port Latin in Rome, and escaped death by a miracle, though no miracle was wrought to make him escape the torture. And, besides this, he lived long in banishment, and that was worse than St. Peter's chains. "Sanctus Petrus in vinculis, et Johannes ante Portam," were both days of martyrdom, and church-festival. And after a long and laborious life, and the affliction of being detained from his crown, and his sorrows for the death of his fellow-disciples, he died full of days and sufferings. And when St. Paul was taken into the apostolate, his commissions were signed in these words; "I will show unto him how great things he must suffer for my name:"[k] And his whole life was a continual suffering. "Quotidie morior" was his motto, "I die daily;" and his lesson that he daily learned was, to "know Christ Jesus, and him crucified;" and all his joy was "to rejoice in the cross of Christ;" and the changes of his life were nothing but the changes of his sufferings, and the variety of his labours. For though Christ hath finished his own sufferings for expiation of the world; yet there are ὑστερήματα θλίψεων, "portions that are behind of the sufferings" of Christ, which must be filled up by his body, the church; and happy are they that put in the greatest symbol; for "in the same measure you are partakers of the sufferings of Christ, in the same shall ye be also of the consolation." And therefore, concerning St. Paul, as it was also concerning Christ, there is nothing, or but very little, in Scripture, relating to his person and chances of his private life, but his labours and persecutions; as if the Holy Ghost

[g] 2 Thess. iii. 5. Heb. ii. 10. [h] 1 Pet. iv. 12.
[i] Tertul. S. Hieron. [k] Acts ix. 16.

did think nothing fit to stand upon record for Christ but sufferings.

And now began to work the greatest glory of the Divine providence: here was the case of christianity at stake. The world was rich and prosperous, learned and full of wise men; the gospel was preached with poverty and persecution, in simplicity of discourse, and in demonstration of the Spirit; God was on one side, and the devil on the other; they each of them dressed up their city; Babylon upon earth, Jerusalem from above. The devil's city was full of pleasure, triumphs, victories, and cruelty; good news, and great wealth; conquest over kings, and making nations tributary: they "bound kings in chains, and the nobles with links of iron;" and the inheritance of the earth was theirs: the Romans were lords over the greatest part of the world; and God permitted to the devil the firmament and increase, the wars and the success of that people, giving to him an entire power of disposing the great changes of the world, so as might best increase their greatness and power: and he therefore did it, because all the power of the Roman greatness was a professed enemy to christianity. And on the other side, God was to build up Jerusalem, and the kingdom of the gospel; and he chose to build it of hewn stone, cut and broken: the apostles he chose for preachers, and they had no learning; women and mean people were the first disciples, and they had no power; the devil was to lose his kingdom, he wanted no malice: and therefore he stirred up, and, as well as he could, he made active all the power of Rome, and all the learning of the Greeks, and all the malice of barbarous people, and all the prejudice and the obstinacy of the Jews, against this doctrine and institution, which preached, and promised, and brought, persecution along with it. On the one side, there was "scandalum crucis;" on the other, "patientia sanctorum:" and what was the event? They that had overcome the world, could not strangle christianity. But so have I seen the sun with a little ray of distant light challenge all the power of darkness, and, without violence and noise, climbing up the hill, hath made night so to retire, that its memory was lost in the joys and spritefulness of the morning: and christianity without violence or armies, without resistance and self-preservation, without strength, or human eloquence, without challenging of privileges or fighting against tyranny, without alteration of government and scandal of princes, with its humility and meekness, with toleration and patience, with obedience and charity, with praying and dying, did insensibly turn the world into christian, and persecution into victory.

For Christ, who began, and lived, and died in sorrows, perceiving his own sufferings to succeed so well, and that "for suffering death, he was crowned with immortality," resolved to take all his disciples and servants to the fellowship of the same suffering, that they might have a participation of his glory; knowing, God had opened no gate of heaven but "the narrow gate," to which the cross was the key. And since Christ now being our high priest in heaven, intercedes for us by representing his passion, and the dolours of the cross, that even in glory he might still preserve the mercies of his past sufferings, for which the Father did so delight in him; he also designs to present us to God dressed in the same robe, and treated in the same manner, and honoured with "the marks of the Lord Jesus;" "He hath predestinated us to be conformable to the image of his Son." And if under a head crowned with thorns, we bring to God members circled with roses, and softness, and delicacy, triumphant members in the militant church, God will reject us, he will not know us who are so unlike our elder Brother: for we are members of the Lamb, not of the lion; and of Christ's suffering part, not of the triumphant part: and for three hundred years together the church lived upon blood, and was nourished with blood; the blood of her own children. Thirty-three bishops of Rome in immediate succession were put to violent and unnatural deaths; and so were all the churches of the east and west built; the cause of Christ and of religion was advanced by the sword, but it was the sword of the persecutors, not of resisters or warriors: they were "all baptized into the death of Christ;" their very profession and institution is to live like him, and, when he requires it, to die for him; that is the very formality, the life and essence, of christianity. This, I say, lasted for three hundred years, that the prayers, and the backs, and the necks of christians fought against the rods and axes of the persecutors, and prevailed, till the country, and the cities, and the court itself, was filled with christians. And by this time the army of martyrs was vast and numerous, and the number of sufferers blunted the hangman's sword. For Christ first triumphed over the princes and powers of the world, before he would admit them to serve them; he first felt their malice, before he would make use of their defence; to show, that it was not his necessity that required it, but his grace that admitted kings and queens to be nurses of the church.

And now the church was at ease, and she that sucked the blood of the martyrs so long, began now to suck the milk of queens. Indeed it was a great mercy in appearance, and was so intended, but it proved not so. But then the Holy Ghost, in pursuance of the design of Christ, who meant by suffering to perfect his church, as himself was by the same instrument,—was pleased, now that persecution did cease, to inspire the church with the Spirit of mortification and austerity; and then they made colleges of sufferers, persons who, to secure their inheritance in the world to come, did cut off all their portion in this, excepting so much of it as was necessary to their present being; and by instruments of humility, by patience under, and a voluntary undertaking of, the cross, the burden of the Lord,—by self-denial, by fastings and sackcloth, and pernoctations in prayer, they chose then to exercise the active part of the religion, mingling it as much as they could with the suffering.

And indeed it is so glorious a thing to be like Christ, to be dressed like the prince of the catholic

church, who was "a man of sufferings," and to whom a prosperous and unafflicted person is very unlike, that in all ages the servants of God have "put on the armour of righteousness, on the right hand and on the left:" that is, in the sufferings of persecution, or the labours of mortification; in patience under the rod of God, or by election of our own; by toleration, or self-denial; by actual martyrdom, or by aptness or disposition towards it; by dying for Christ, or suffering for him; by being willing to part with all when he calls for it, and by parting with what we can for the relief of his poor members. For, know this, there is no state in the church so serene, no days so prosperous, in which God does not give to his servants the powers and opportunities of suffering for him; not only they that die for Christ, but they that live according to his laws, shall find some lives to part with, and many ways to suffer for Christ. To kill and crucify the old man and all his lusts, to mortify a beloved sin, to fight against temptations, to do violence to our bodies, to live chastely, to suffer affronts patiently, to forgive injuries and debts, to renounce all prejudice and interest in religion, and to choose our side for truth's sake, (not because it is prosperous, but because it pleases God,) to be charitable beyond our power, to reprove our betters with modesty and openness, to displease men rather than God, to be at enmity with the world, that you may preserve friendship with God, to deny the importunity and troublesome kindness of a drinking friend, to own truth in despite of danger or scorn, to despise shame, to refuse worldly pleasures when they tempt your soul beyond duty or safety, to take pains in the cause of religion, the "labour of love," and the crossing of your anger, peevishness, and morosity: these are the daily sufferings of a christian; and, if we perform them well, will have the same reward, and an equal smart, and greater labour, than the plain suffering the hangman's sword. This I have discoursed, to represent unto you, that you cannot be exempted from the similitude of Christ's sufferings: that God will shut no age nor no man from his portion of the cross; that we cannot fail of the result of this predestination, nor without our own fault be excluded from the covenant of sufferings. "Judgment must begin at God's house, and enters first upon the sons and heirs of the kingdom; and if it be not by the direct persecution of tyrants, it will be by the direct persecution of the devil, or infirmities of our own flesh. But because this was but the secondary meaning of the text, I return to make use of all the former discourse.

Let no christian man make any judgment concerning his condition or his cause, by the external event of things. For although in the law of Moses, God made with his people a covenant of temporal prosperity, and "his saints did bind the kings of the Amorites, and the Philistines, in chains, and their nobles with links of iron, and then, that was the honour which all his saints had:" yet, in Christ Jesus, he made a covenant of sufferings. Most of the graces of christianity are suffering graces, and God hath predestinated us to sufferings, and we are baptized into suffering, and our very communions are symbols of our duty, by being the sacrament of Christ's death and passion; and Christ foretold to us tribulation, and promised only that he would be with us in tribulation, that he would give us his Spirit to assist us at tribunals, and his grace to despise the world, and to contemn riches, and boldness to confess every article of the christian faith, in the face of armies and armed tyrants. And he also promised that "all things should work together for the best to his servants," that is, he would "out of the eater bring meat, and out of the strong issue sweetness," and crowns and sceptres should spring from crosses, and that the cross itself should stand upon the globes and sceptres of princes; but he never promised to his servants, that they should pursue kings and destroy armies, that they should reign over nations, and promote the cause of Jesus Christ, by breaking his commandment. "The shield of faith, and the sword of the Spirit, the armour of righteousness, and the weapons of spiritual warfare;" these are they by which christianity swelled from a small company, and a less reputation, to possess the chairs of doctors, and the thrones of princes, and the hearts of all men. But men, in all ages, will be tampering with shadows and toys. The apostles at no hand could endure to hear that Christ's "kingdom was not of this world," and that their Master should die a sad and shameful death; though that way he was to receive his crown, and "enter into glory." And after Christ's time, when his disciples had taken up the cross, and were marching the King's highway of sorrows, there were a very great many, even the generality of christians, for two or three ages together, who fell a dreaming, that Christ should come and reign upon earth again for a thousand years, and then the saints should reign in all abundance of temporal power and fortunes: but these men were content to stay for it till after the resurrection; in the mean time, took up their cross, and followed after their Lord, the King of sufferings. But now-a-days, we find a generation of men who have changed the covenant of sufferings into victories and triumphs, riches and prosperous chances, and reckon their christianity by their good fortunes; as if Christ had promised to his servants no heaven hereafter, no Spirit in the mean time to refresh their sorrows; as if he had enjoined them no passive graces; but as if to be a christian and to be a Turk were the same thing. Mahomet entered and possessed by the sword: Christ came by the cross, entered by humility; and his saints "possess their souls by patience."

God was fain to multiply miracles to make Christ capable of being a "man of sorrows:" and shall we think he will work miracles to make us delicate? He promised us a glorious portion hereafter, to which if all the sufferings of the world were put together, they are not worthy to be compared; and shall we, with Dives, choose our portion of "good things in this life?" If Christ suffered so many things only that he might give us glory, shall it be strange that we shall suffer who are to receive his glory? It is in vain to think we shall obtain glo-

ries at an easier rate, than to drink of the brook in the way in which Christ was drenched. When the devil appeared to St. Martin, in a bright splendid shape, and said he was Christ; he answered, "Christus non nisi in cruce apparet suis, in hac vitâ." And when St. Ignatius was newly tied in a chain to be led to his martyrdom, he cried out, "Nunc incipio esse Christianus." And it was observed by Minutius Felix, and was indeed a great and excellent truth, "Omnes viri fortes, quos gentiles prædicabant in exemplum, ærumnis suis inclyti floruerunt;" "The gentiles in their whole religion never propounded any man imitable, unless the man were poor or persecuted." Brutus stood for his country's liberty, but lost his army and his life; Socrates was put to death for speaking a religious truth; Cato chose to be on the right side, but happened to fall upon the oppressed and the injured; he died together with his party.

Victrix causa Deis placuit, sed victa Catoni.—LUCAN.

And if God thus dealt with the best of heathens, to whom he had made no clear revelation of immortal recompences; how little is the faith, and how much less is the patience of christians, if they shall think much to suffer sorrow, since they so clearly see with the eye of faith the great things which are laid up for them that are "faithful unto the death?" Faith is useless, if now in the midst of so great pretended lights we shall not dare to trust God, unless we have all in hand that we desire; and suffer nothing, for all we can hope for. They that live by sense have no use of faith: yet our Lord Jesus, concerning whose passions the gospel speaks much, but little of his glorifications; whose shame was public, whose pains were notorious, but his joys and transfigurations were secret, and kept private; he who would not suffer his holy mother, whom in great degrees he exempted from sin,—to be exempted from many and great sorrows, certainly intends to admit none to his resurrection but by the doors of his grave, none to glory but by the way of the cross. "If we be planted into the likeness of his death, we shall be also of his resurrection;" else on no terms. Christ took away sin from us, but he left us our share of sufferings; and the cross, which was first printed upon us in the waters of baptism, must for ever be borne by us in penance, in mortification, in self-denial, and in martyrdom, and toleration, according as God shall require of us by the changes of the world and the condition of the church.

For Christ considers nothing but souls, he values not their estates or bodies, supplying our want by his providence; and we are secured that our bodies may be killed, but cannot perish, so long as we preserve our duty and our consciences. Christ, our Captain, hangs naked upon the cross: our fellow-soldiers are cast into prison, torn with lions, rent in sunder with trees returning from their violent bendings, broken upon wheels, roasted upon gridirons, and have had the honour not only to have a good cause, but also to suffer for it; and by faith, not by armies,—by patience, not by fighting, have overcome the world. "Et sit anima mea cum christianis;" "I pray God my soul may be among the christians." And yet the Turks have prevailed upon a great part of the christian world, and have them slaves and tributaries, and do them all spite, and are hugely prosperous; but when the christians are so, then they are tempted and put in danger, and never have their duty and their interest so well secured, as when they lose all for Christ, and are adorned with wounds or poverty, change or scorn, affronts or revilings, which are the obelisks and triumphs of a holy cause. Evil men and evil causes had need have good fortune and great success to support their persons and their pretences; for nothing but innocence and christianity can flourish in a persecution. I sum up this first discourse in a word: in all the Scripture, and in all the authentic stories of the church, we find it often that the devil appeared in the shape of an "angel of light," but was never suffered so much as to counterfeit a persecuted sufferer. Say no more, therefore, as the murmuring Israelites said, "If the Lord be with us, why have these evils apprehended us?" for if to be afflicted be a sign that God hath forsaken a man, and refuses to own his religion or his question, then he that oppresses the widow, and murders the innocent, and puts the fatherless to death, and follows providence by doing all the evils that he can, that is, all that God suffers him,—he, I say, is the only saint and servant of God; and upon the same ground the wolf and the fox may boast, when they scatter and devour a flock of lambs and harmless sheep.

SERMON X.

PART II.

2. IT follows now that we inquire concerning the reasons of the Divine Providence in this administration of affairs, so far as he hath been pleased to draw aside the curtain, and to unfold the leaves of his counsels and predestination. And for such an inquiry we have the precedent of the prophet Jeremy: "Righteous art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee; yet let us talk to thee of thy judgments. Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously? thou hast planted them, yea they have taken root: they grow, yea they bring forth fruit."[m] Concerning which in general the prophet Malachi gives this account after the same complaint made: "And now we call the proud happy; and they that work wickedness are set up: yea they that tempt God are even delivered. They that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord and thought upon his name. And they shall be mine (saith the Lord of hosts) in that

[m] Jer. xii. 1, 2.

day when I bind up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked; between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not."[n] In this interval, which is a valley of tears, it is no wonder if they rejoice who shall weep for ever; and "they that sow in tears" shall have no cause to complain, when God gathers all the mourners into his kingdom, "they shall reap with joy."

For innocence and joy were appointed to dwell together for ever. And joy went not first; but when innocence went away, sorrow and sickness dispossessed joy of its habitation; and now this world must be always a scene of sorrows, and no joy can grow here but that which is imaginary and fantastic. There is no worldly joy, no joy proper for this world, but that which wicked persons fancy to themselves in the hopes and designs of iniquity. He that covets his neighbour's wife or land, dreams of fine things, and thinks it a fair condition to be rich and cursed, to be a beast and die, or to lie wallowing in his filthiness: but those holy souls who are not in love with the leprosy and the itch for the pleasure of scratching, they know no pleasure can grow from the thorns which Adam planted in the hedges of paradise; and that sorrow, which was brought in by sin, must not go away till it hath returned us into the first condition of innocence: the same instant that quits us from sin and the failings of mortality, the same instant wipes all tears from our eyes; but that is not in this world. In the mean time,

God afflicts the godly, that he might manifest many of his attributes, and his servants exercise many of their virtues.

> Nec fortuna probat causas, sequiturque merentes,
> Sed vaga per cunctos nullo discrimine fertur:
> Scilicet est aliud, quod nos cogatque regatque,
> Majus, et in proprias ducat mortalia leges.

For, without the sufferings of saints, God should lose the glories, 1. Of bringing good out of evil: 2. Of being with us in tribulation: 3. Of sustaining our infirmities: 4. Of triumphing over the malice of his enemies. 5. Without the suffering of the saints, where were the exaltation of the cross, the conformity of the members to Christ their head, the coronets of martyrs? 6. Where were the trial of our faith? 7. Or the exercise of long-suffering? 8. Where were the opportunities to give God the greatest love? which cannot be but by dying and suffering for him. 9. How should that which the world calls folly, prove the greatest wisdom? 10. And God be glorified by events contrary to the probability and expectation of their causes? 11. By the suffering of saints, christian religion is proved to be most excellent; whilst the iniquity and cruelty of the adversaries proves the "Illecebra sectæ," as Tertullian's phrase is; it invites men to consider the secret excellencies of that religion, for which and in which men are so willing to die: for that religion must needs be worth looking into, which so many wise and excellent men do so much value above their lives and fortunes. 12. That a man's nature is passible, is its best advantage; for by it we are all redeemed: by the passiveness and sufferings of our Lord and Brother we were all rescued from the portion of devils; and by our sufferings we have a capacity of serving God beyond that of angels; who indeed can sing God's praise with a sweeter note, and obey him with a more unabated will, and execute his commands with a swifter wing and a greater power; but they cannot die for God, they can lose no lands for him; and he that did so for all us, and commanded us to do so for him, is ascended far above all angels, and is heir of a greater glory. 13. "*Do* this, and live," was the covenant of the law; but in the gospel it is, "*Suffer* this, and live:"—"He that forsaketh house and land, friends and life, for my sake, is my disciple." 14. By the sufferings of saints God chastises their follies and levities, and suffers not their errors to climb up into heresies, nor their infirmities into crimes.

> ———παθὼν δέ τι νήπιος ἔγνω.

"Affliction makes a fool leave his folly."—If David numbers the people of Judea, God punishes him sharply and loudly: but if Augustus Cæsar numbers all the world, he is let alone and prospers.

> Ille crucem pretium sceleris tulit, hic diadema. JUV.

And in giving physic, we always call that just and fitting that is useful and profitable: no man complains of his physician's iniquity, if he burns one part to cure all the body; if the belly be punished to chastise the floods of humour, and the evils of a surfeit. Punishments can no other way turn into a mercy, but when they are designed for a medicine; and God is then very careful of thy soul, when he will suppress every of its evils, when it first discomposes the order of things and spirits. And what hurt is it to thee, if a persecution draws thee from the vanities of a former prosperity, and forces thee into the sobrieties of a holy life? What loss is it? what misery? Is not the least sin a greater evil than the greatest of sufferings? God smites some at the beginning of their sin; others, not till a long while after it is done. The first cannot say that God is slack in punishing, and have no need to complain that the wicked are prosperous; for they find that God is apt enough to strike: and therefore, that he strikes them, and strikes not the other, is not defect of justice, but because there is not mercy in store for them that sin, and suffer not. 15. For if God strikes the godly that they may repent, it is no wonder that God is so good to his servants; but then we must not call that a misery, which God intends to make an instrument of saving them. And if God forbears to strike the wicked out of anger, and because he hath decreed death and hell against them, we have no reason to envy that they ride in a gilded chariot to the gallows: but if God forbear the wicked, that by his long sufferance they may be invited to repentance, then we may cease to wonder at the dispensation, and argue comforts to the afflicted saints, thus: for if God be so gracious to the wicked, how much more is he to the godly? And if sparing the

[n] Mal. iii. 14, &c.

wicked be a mercy; then, smiting the godly, being the expression of his greater kindness, affliction is of itself the more eligible condition. If God hath some degrees of kindness for the persecutors, so much as to invite them by kindness; how much greater is his love to them that are persecuted! And therefore, his intercourse with them is also a greater favour; and, indeed, it is the surer way of securing the duty: fair means may do it, but severity will fix and secure it. Fair means are more apt to be abused than harsh physic; that may be turned into wantonness, but none but the impudent and grown sinners despise all God's judgments; and therefore, God chooses this way to deal with his erring servants, that they may obtain an infallible and a great salvation. And yet if God spares not his children, how much less the reprobates! and therefore, as sparing the latter commonly is a sad curse, so the smiting the former is a very great mercy. 16. For by this economy God gives us a great argument to prove the resurrection, since to his saints and servants he assigns sorrow for their present portion. Sorrow cannot be the reward of virtue; it may be its instrument and handmaid, but not its reward; and therefore, it may be intermedial to some great purposes, but they must look for their portion in the other life: "For if in this life only we had hope, then we were of all men the most miserable:" it is St. Paul's argument to prove a beatifical resurrection. And we therefore may learn to estimate the state of the afflicted godly to be a mercy, great in proportion to the greatness of that reward, which these afflictions come to secure and to prove.

Nunc et damna juvant; sunt ipsa pericula tanti:
Stantia non poterant tecta probare deos. MARTIAL.

It is a great matter, and infinite blessing, to escape the pains of hell; and therefore, that condition is also very blessed which God sends us, to create and to confirm our hopes of that excellent mercy. 17. The sufferings of the saints are the sum of christian philosophy: they are sent to wean us from the vanities and affections of this world, and to create in us strong desires of heaven; whiles God causes us to be here treated rudely, that we may long to be in our country, where God shall be our portion, and angels our companions, and Christ our perpetual feast, and never-ceasing joy shall be our conditions and entertainment. "O death, how bitter art thou to a man that is at ease and rest in his possessions!"[o] But he that is uneasy in his body, and unquiet in his possessions, vexed in his person, discomposed in his designs, who finds no pleasure, no rest here, will be glad to fix his heart where only he shall have what he can desire, and what can make him happy. As long as the waters of persecutions are upon the earth, so long we dwell in the ark: but where the land is dry, the dove itself will be tempted to a wandering course of life, and never to return to the house of her safety. What shall I say more? 18. Christ nourisheth his church by sufferings. 19. He hath given a single blessing to all other graces; but to them that are "persecuted," he hath promised a double one:[p] it being a double favour, first to be innocent like Christ, and then to be afflicted like him. 20. Without this, the miracles of patience, which God hath given to fortify the spirits of the saints, would signify nothing. "Nemo enim tolerare tanta velit sine causa, nec potuit sine Deo: "As no man would bear evils without a cause, so no man could bear so much without the supporting hand of God;" and we need not the Holy Ghost to so great purposes, if our lot were not sorrow and persecution. And therefore, without this condition of suffering, the Spirit of God shall lose that glorious attribute of the Holy Ghost, "the Comforter." 21. Is there any thing more yet? Yes. They that have suffered or forsaken any lands for Christ, "shall sit upon the thrones, and judge the twelve tribes of Israel;" so said Christ to his disciples. Nay, "the saints shall judge angels," saith St. Paul: well therefore might St. Paul say, "I rejoice exceedingly in tribulation." It must be some great thing that must make an afflicted man to rejoice exceedingly; and so it was. For since patience is necessary that we receive the promise, and tribulation does work this; "for a short time it worketh the consummation of our hope; even an exceeding weight of glory;" we have no reason to "think it strange concerning the fiery trial, as if it were a strange thing." It can be no hurt. The church is like Moses's bush, when it is all on fire, it is not at all consumed, but made full of miracle, full of splendour, full of God: and unless we can find something that God cannot turn into joy, we have reason not only to be patient, but rejoice, when we are persecuted in a righteous cause: for love is the soul of christianity, and suffering is the soul of love. To be innocent, and to be persecuted, are the body and soul of christianity. "I, John, your brother, and partaker in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus," said St. John:[q] those were the titles and ornaments of his profession: that is, "I John, your fellow-christian:" that is the plain song of the former descant. He, therefore, that is troubled when he is afflicted in his outward man, that his inward man may grow strong, like the birds upon the ruins of the shell, and wonders that a good man should be a beggar, and a sinner be rich with oppression; that Lazarus should die at the gate of Dives, hungry and sick, unpitied and unrelieved; may as well wonder that carrion-crows should feed themselves fat upon a fair horse, far better than themselves; or that his own excellent body should be devoured by worms and the most contemptible creatures, though it lies there to be converted into glory. That man knows nothing of nature, or Providence, or christianity, or the rewards of virtue, or the nature of its constitution, or the infirmities of man, or the mercies of God, or the arts and prudence of his loving-kindness, or the rewards of heaven, or the glorification of Christ's exalted humanity, or the precepts of the gospel, who is offended at the sufferings of God's dearest servants, or declines the honour and the mercy of sufferings

[o] Ecclus. iv. 11. [p] Matt. v. 12. [q] Rev. i. 9.

in the cause of righteousness, for the securing of a virtue, for the imitation of Christ, and for the love of God, or the glories of immortality. It cannot, it ought not, it never will be otherwise; the world may as well cease to be measured by time, as good men to suffer affliction. I end this point with the words of St. Paul; "Let as many as are perfect be thus minded: and if any man be otherwise minded, God also will reveal this unto you;"[r] *this*, of the covenant of sufferings, concerning which the old prophets and holy men of the temple had many thoughts of heart: but in the full sufferings of the gospel there hath been a full revelation of the excellency of the sufferings. I have now given you an account of some of those reasons, why God hath so disposed that at this time, that is, under the period of the gospel, "Judgment must begin at the house of God:" and they are either τιμωρίαι, or δοκιμασίαι, or μαρτύριον, or imitation of Christ's λύτρον, "chastisements," or "trials," or "martyrdom," or "a conformity to the sufferings of the holy Jesus."

But now besides all the premises, we have another account to make concerning the prosperity of the wicked: "For if judgment first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" that is the question of the apostle, and is the great instrument of comfort to persons ill-treated in the actions of the world. The first ages of the church lived upon promises and prophecies; and because some of them are already fulfilled for ever, and the others are of a continual and a successive nature, and are verified by the actions of every day, therefore we and all the following ages live upon promises and experience. And although the servants of God have suffered many calamities from the tyranny and prevalency of evil men their enemies, yet still it is preserved as one of the fundamental truths of christianity, that all the fair fortunes of the wicked are not enough to make them happy, nor the persecutions of the godly able to make a good man miserable, nor yet their sadnesses arguments of God's displeasure against them. For when a godly man is afflicted and dies, it is his work and his business; and if the wicked prevail, that is, if they persecute the godly, it is but that which was to be expected from them: for who are fit to be hangmen and executioners of public wrath, but evil and ungodly persons? And can it be a wonder, that they whose cause wants reason, should betake themselves to the sword? that what he cannot persuade, he may wrest? Only we must not judge of the things of God by the measures of men. Τὰ ἀνθρώπινα, "the things of men" have this world for their stage and their reward; but the "things of God" relate to the world to come: and for our own particulars we are to be guided by rule, and by the end of all; not by events intermedial, which are varied by a thousand irregular causes. For if all the evil men in the world were unprosperous,—as most certain they are,—and if all good persons were temporally blessed,—as most certainly they are not; yet this would not move us to become virtuous. "If an angel should come from heaven, or one rise from the dead" and preach repentance, or justice, and temperance, all this would be ineffectual to those, to whom the plain doctrines of God delivered in the law and the prophets will not suffice.

[r] Phil. iii. 15.

For why should God work a sign to make us to believe that we ought to do justice, if we already believe he hath commanded it? No man can need a miracle for the confirmation of that which he already believes to be the command of God: and when God hath expressly bidden us to "obey every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, the king as supreme, and his deputies as sent by him;" it is a strange infidelity to think, that a rebellion against the ordinance of God can be sanctified by the success and prevalency of them that destroy the authority, and the person, and the law, and the religion. The sin cannot grow to its height, if it be crushed at the beginning; unless it prosper in its progress, a man cannot easily fill up the measure of his iniquity: but then that sin swells to its fulness by prosperity, and grows too big to be suppressed without a miracle; it is so far from excusing or lessening the sin, that nothing doth so nurse the sin as it. It is not virtue, because it is prosperous; but if it had not been prosperous, the sin could never be so great.

Facere omnia sævè
Non impune licet, nisi dum facis——— LUCAN.

A little crime is sure to smart; but when the sinner is grown rich, and prosperous, and powerful, he gets impunity,

Jusque datum sceleri——— LUCAN.

But that is not innocence: and if prosperity were the voice of God to approve an action, then no man were vicious but he that is punished; and nothing were rebellion but that which can be easily suppressed; and no man were a pirate but he that robs with a little vessel; and no man could be a tyrant but he that is no prince; and no man an unjust invader of his neighbour's rights but he that is beaten and overthrown. Then the crime grows big and loud, then it calls to Heaven for vengeance, when it hath been long a growing, when it hath thrived under the devil's managing; when God hath long suffered it, and with patience, in vain expecting the repentance of a sinner. "He that treasures up wrath against the day of wrath," that man hath been a prosperous, that is, an unpunished, and a thriving sinner: but then it is the sin that thrives, not the man: and that is the mistake upon this whole question; for the sin cannot thrive, unless the man goes on without apparent punishment and restraint. And all that the man gets by it is, that by a continual course of sin he is prepared for an intolerable ruin. The Spirit of God bids us look upon the end of these men; not the way they walk, or the instruments of that pompous death. When Epaminondas was asked which of the three was happiest, himself, Chabrias, or Iphicrates, he bid the man stay till they were all dead; for till then that question could not be answered. He that had seen the Vandals besiege the city of Hippo, and had

had known the barbarousness of that unchristened people, and had observed that St. Austin with all his prayers and vows could not obtain peace in his own days, not so much as a reprieve for the persecution, and then had observed St. Austin die with grief that very night, would have perceived his calamity more visible than the reward of his piety and holy religion. When Lewis, surnamed Pius, went his voyage to Palestine upon a holy end, and for the glory of God, to fight against the Saracens and Turks and Mamelukes, the world did promise to themselves that a good cause should thrive in the hands of so holy a man; but the event was far otherwise: his brother Robert was killed, and his army destroyed, and himself taken prisoner, and the money which by his mother was sent for his redemption, was cast away in a storm, and he was exchanged for the last town the christians had in Egypt, and brought home the cross of Christ upon his shoulder in a real pressure and participation of his Master's sufferings. When Charles the Fifth went to Algiers to suppress pirates and unchristened villains, the cause was more confident than the event was prosperous: and when he was almost ruined in a prodigious storm, he told the minutes of the clock, expecting that at midnight, when religious persons rose to matins, he should be eased by the benefit of their prayers; but the providence of God trod upon those waters, and left no footsteps for discovery; his navy was beat in pieces, and his design ended in dishonour, and his life almost lost by the bargain. Was ever cause more baffled than the christian cause by the Turks in all Asia and Africa, and some parts of Europe, if to be persecuted and afflicted be reckoned a calamity? What prince was ever more unfortunate than Henry the Sixth of England? and yet that age saw none more pious and devout. And the title of the house of Lancaster was advanced against the right of York for three descents. But then what was the end of these things? The persecuted men were made saints, and their memories are preserved in honour, and their souls shall reign for ever. And some good men were engaged in a wrong cause, and the good cause was sometimes managed by evil men; till that the suppressed cause was lifted up by God in the hands of a young and prosperous prince, and at last both interests were satisfied in the conjunction of two roses, which was brought to issue by a wonderful chain of causes managed by the Divine Providence. And there is no age, no history, no state, no great change in the world, but hath ministered an example of an afflicted truth, and a prevailing sin; for I will never more call that sinner prosperous, who, after he hath been permitted to finish his business, shall die and perish miserably; for at the same rate we may envy the happiness of a poor fisherman, who, while his nets were drying, slept upon the rock, and dreamt that he was made a king; on a sudden starts up, and leaping for joy, falls down from the rock, and in the place of his imaginary felicities, loses his little portion of pleasure and innocent solaces he had from the sound sleep and little cares of his humble cottage.

And what is the prosperity of the wicked? To dwell in fine houses, or to command armies, or to be able to oppress their brethren, or to have much wealth to look on, or many servants to feed, or much business to despatch, and great cares to master; these things are of themselves neither good nor bad. But consider, would any man amongst us, looking and considering beforehand, kill his lawful king, to be heir of all that which I have named? Would any of you choose to have God angry with you upon these terms? Would any of you be a perjured man for it all? A wise man or a good would not choose it. Would any of you die an atheist, that you might live in plenty and power? I believe you tremble to think of it. It cannot therefore be a happiness to thrive upon the stock of a great sin. For if any man should contract with an impure spirit, to give his soul up at a certain day, it may be twenty years hence, upon the condition he might, for twenty years, have his vain desires; should we not think that person infinitely miserable? Every prosperous, thriving sinner is in the same condition: within these twenty years he shall be thrown into the portion of devils, but shall never come out thence in twenty millions of years. His wealth must needs sit uneasy upon him, that remembers that within a short space he shall be extremely miserable; and if he does not remember it, he does but secure it the more. And that God defers the punishment, and suffers evil men to thrive in the opportunities of their sin, it may and does serve many ends of providence and mercy, but serves no end that any evil men can reasonably wish or propound to themselves eligible.

Bias said well to a vicious person, "Non metuo ne non sis daturus pœnas, sed metuo ne id non sim visurus;" "He was sure the man should be punished, he was not sure he should live to see it." And though the Messenians that were betrayed and slain by Aristocrates in the battle of Cyprus, were not made alive again; yet the justice of God was admired, and treason infinitely disgraced, when, twenty years after, the treason was discovered, and the traitor punished with a horrid death. Lyciscus gave up the Orchomenians to their enemies, having first wished his feet, which he then dipped in water, might rot off, if he were not true to them; and yet his feet did not rot till those men were destroyed, and of a long time after; and yet at last they did. "Slay them not, O Lord, lest my people forget it," saith David. If punishment were instantly and totally inflicted, it would be but a sudden and single document; but a slow and lingering judgment, and a wrath breaking out in the next age, is like an universal proposition, teaching our posterity that God was angry all the while, that he had a long indignation in his breast, that he would not forget to take vengeance. And it is a demonstration, that even the prosperous sins of the present age will find the same period in the Divine revenge, when men see a judgment upon the nephews for the sins of their grandfathers, though in other instances, and for sins acted in the days of their ancestors.

We know that when, in Henry the Eighth or

Edward the Sixth's days, some great men pulled down churches and built palaces, and robbed religion of its just encouragements and advantages; the men that did it were sacrilegious; and we find also, that God hath been punishing that great sin ever since; and hath displayed to so many generations of men, to three or four descents of children, that those men could not be esteemed happy in their great fortunes, against whom God was so angry, that he would show his displeasure for a hundred years together. When Herod had killed the babes of Bethlehem, it was seven years before God called him to an account; but he that looks upon the end of that man, would rather choose the fate of the oppressed babes, than of the prevailing and triumphing tyrant. It was forty years before God punished the Jews, for their execrable murder committed upon the person of their King, the holy Jesus; and it was so long, that when it did happen, many men attributed it to their killing of St. James their bishop, and seemed to forget the greater crime. But "Non eventu rerum, sed fide verborum stamus;" "We are to stand to the truth of God's word, not to the event of things:"—because God hath given us a rule, but hath left the judgment to himself; and we die so quickly, (and God measures all things by his standard of eternity, and "one thousand years to God is as but one day,") that we are not competent persons to measure the times of God's account, and the returns of judgment. We are dead before the arrow comes; but the man escapes not, unless his soul can die, or that God cannot punish him. "Ducunt in bonis dies suos, et in momento descendunt ad infernum," that is their fate: "They spend their days in plenty, and in a moment descend into hell."[s] In the mean time they drink, and forget their sorrow; but they are condemned: they have drunk their hemlock; but the poison does not work yet: the bait is in their mouths, and they are sportive; but the hook hath struck their nostrils, and they shall never escape the ruin. And let no man call the man fortunate, because his execution is deferred for a few days, when the very deferring shall increase and ascertain the condemnation.

But if we should look under the skirt of the prosperous and prevailing tyrant, we should find, even in the days of his joys, such allays and abatements of his pleasure, as may serve to represent him presently miserable, besides his final infelicities. For I have seen a young and healthful person warm and ruddy under a poor and a thin garment, when at the same time an old rich person hath been cold and paralytic under a load of sables and the skins of foxes. It is the body that makes the clothes warm, not the clothes the body: and the spirit of a man makes felicity and content, not any spoils of a rich fortune wrapt about a sickly and an uneasy soul. Apollodorus was a traitor and a tyrant, and the world wondered so see a bad man have so good a fortune; but knew not that he nourished scorpions in his breast, and that his liver and his heart were eaten up with spectres and images of death; his thoughts were full of interruptions, his dreams of illusions; his fancy was abused with real troubles and fantastic images, imagining that he saw the Scythians flaying him alive, his daughters like pillars of fire dancing round about a cauldron, in which himself was boiling, and that his heart accused itself to be the cause of all these evils. And although all tyrants have not imaginative and fantastic consciences, yet all tyrants shall die and come to judgment; and such a man is not to be feared, not at all to be envied. And, in the mean time, can he be said to escape who hath an unquiet conscience, who is already designed for hell, he whom God hates, and the people curse, and who hath an evil name, and against whom all good men pray, and many desire to fight, and all wish him destroyed, and some contrive to do it? Is this man a blessed man? Is that man prosperous who hath stolen a rich robe, and is in fear to have his throat cut for it, and is fain to defend it with the greatest difficulty and the greatest danger? Does not he drink more sweetly that takes his beverage in an earthen vessel, than he that looks and searches into his golden chalices for fear of poison, and looks pale at every sudden noise, and sleeps in armour, and trusts nobody, and does not trust God for his safety, but does greater wickedness only to escape awhile unpunished for his former crimes? "Auro bibitur venenum." No man goes about to poison a poor man's pitcher, nor lays plots to forage his little garden made for the hospital of two bee-hives, and the feasting of a few Pythagorean herb-eaters.

——οὐκ' ἴσασιν ὅσῳ πλέον ἥμισυ παντὸς,
Οὐδ' ὅσον ἐν μαλάχῃ τε καὶ ἀσφοδέλῳ μέγ' ὄνειαρ.
HESIOD. Ἐργ.

They that admire the happiness of a prosperous, prevailing tyrant, know not the felicities that dwell in innocent hearts, and poor cottagers, and small fortunes.

A christian, so long as he preserves his integrity to God and to religion, is bold in all accidents, he dares die, and he dares be poor; but if the persecutor dies, he is undone. Riches are beholden to our fancies for their value; and yet the more we value the riches, the less good they are, and by an overvaluing affection they become our danger and our sin: but, on the other side, death and persecution lose all the ill that they can have, if we do not set an edge upon them by our fears and by our vices. From ourselves riches take their wealth, and death sharpens his arrows at our forges, and we may set their prices as we please; and if we judge by the Spirit of God, we must account them happy that suffer; and, therefore, that the prevailing oppressor, tyrant, or persecutor, is infinitely miserable. Only let God choose by what instruments he will govern the world, by what instances himself would be served, by what ways he will chastise the failings, and exercise the duties, and reward the virtues, of his servants. God sometimes punishes one sin with another; pride with adultery, drunkenness with murder, carelessness with irreligion, idleness with vanity, penury with oppression, irreligion with blasphemy, and that with atheism: and therefore it

[s] Job xxi. 13.

is no wonder, if he punishes a sinner by a sinner. And if David made use of villains and profligate persons to frame an army; and Timoleon destroyed the Carthaginians by the help of soldiers, who themselves were sacrilegious; and physicians use poison to expel poisons; and all commonwealths take the basest of men to be their instruments of justice and executions: we shall have no further cause to wonder, if God raises up the Assyrian to punish the Israelites, and the Egyptians to destroy the Assyrians, and the Æthiopians to scourge the Egyptians; and at last his own hand shall separate the good from the bad in the day of separation, in the day when he makes up his jewels.

Ποῦ ποτε κεραυνοὶ Διὸς, ἢ
Ποῦ φαέθων ἅλιος,
Εἰ ταῦτ' ἐφορῶντες
Κρύπτουσιν ἔκηλοι; SOPH. Elect.

God hath many ends of providence to serve by the hands of violent and vicious men. By them he not only checks the beginning errors and approaching sins of his predestinate; but by them he changes governments, and alters kingdoms, and is terrible among the sons of men. For since it is one of his glories to convert evil into good, and that good into his own glory, and by little and little to open and to turn the leaves and various folds of providence: it becomes us only to dwell in duty, and to be silent in our thoughts, and wary in our discourses of God; and let him choose the time when he will prune his vine, and when he will burn his thorns: how long he will smite his servants, and when he will destroy his enemies. In the days of the primitive persecutions, what prayers, how many sighings, how deep groans, how many bottles of tears, did God gather into his repository, all praying for ease and deliverances, for halcyon days and fine sunshine, "for nursing fathers and nursing mothers," for public assemblies and open and solemn sacraments: and it was three hundred years before God would hear their prayers: and all that while the persecuted people were in a cloud, but they were safe, and knew it not; and God "kept for them the best wine until the last:" they ventured for a crown, and fought valiantly; they were "faithful to the death, and they received a crown of life;" and they are honoured by God, by angels, and by men. Whereas in all the prosperous ages of the church, we hear no stories of such multitudes of saints, no record of them, no honour to their memorial, no accident extraordinary; scarce any made illustrious with a miracle, which in the days of suffering were frequent and popular. And after all our fears of sequestration and poverty, of death or banishment, our prayers against the persecution and troubles under it, we may please to remember, that twenty years hence (it may be sooner, it will not be much longer) all our cares and our troubles shall be dead; and then it shall be inquired how we did bear our sorrows, and who inflicted them, and in what cause: and then he shall be happy that keeps company with the persecuted; and the "persecutors shall be shut out amongst dogs and unbelievers."

He that shrinks from the yoke of Christ, from the burden of the Lord, upon his death-bed will have cause to remember, that by that time all his persecutions would have been past, and that then there would remain nothing for him but rest, and crowns, and sceptres. When Lysimachus, impatient and overcome with thirst, gave up his kingdom to the Getæ, being a captive, and having drank a lusty draught of wine, and his thirst now gone, he fetched a deep sigh, and said, "Miserable man that I am, who for so little pleasure, the pleasure of one draught, lost so great a kingdom!" Such will be their case, who, being impatient of suffering, change their persecution into wealth and an easy fortune: they shall find themselves miserable in the separations of eternity, losing the glories of heaven for so little a pleasure, "illiberalis et ingratæ voluptatis causa," as Plutarch calls it, "for illiberal and ungrateful pleasure;" in which when a man hath entered, he loses the rights and privileges and honours of a good man, and gets nothing that is profitable and useful to holy purposes, or necessary to any; but is already in a state so hateful and miserable, that he needs neither God nor man to be a revenger, having already under his splendid robe miseries enough to punish and betray this hypocrisy of his condition; being troubled with the memory of what is past, distrustful of the present, suspicious of the future, vicious in their lives, and full of pageantry and outsides, but in their death, miserable with calamities real, eternal, and insupportable. And if it could be otherwise, virtue itself would be reproached with the calamity.

Εἰ γὰρ ὁ μὲν θανὼν
Γᾶ τε καὶ οὐδὲν ὢν
Κείσεται τάλας·
Οἱ δὲ μὴ πάλιν
Δώσουσ' ἀντιφόνους δίκας,
Ἔρροτ' ἂν αἰδὼς, ἁπάντων
τ' εὐσέβεια θνητῶν.—SOPH. Elect.

I end with the advice of St. Paul; "In nothing be terrified of your adversaries; which to them is an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God."[t]

SERMON XI.

PART III.

BUT now, that the persecuted may at least be pitied, and assisted in that of which they are capable, I shall propound some rules by which they may learn to gather grapes from their thorns, and figs from their thistles; crowns from the cross, glory from dishonour. As long as they belong to God, it is necessary that they suffer persecution or sorrow; no rules can teach them to avoid that: but the evil of the suffering and the danger must be declined, and we must use some such spiritual arts as are apt to turn them into health and medicine. For it were a hard thing, first to be scourged, and then to be

[t] Phil. i. 28.

crucified; to suffer here, and to perish hereafter; through the fiery trial and purging fire of afflictions to pass into hell, that is intolerable, and to be prevented with the following cautions; lest a man suffer like a fool and a malefactor, or inherit damnation for the reward of his imprudent suffering.

1. They that suffer any thing for Christ, and are ready to die for him, let them do nothing against him. For certainly they think too highly of martyrdom, who believe it able to excuse all the evils of a wicked life. A man may "give his body to be burned, and yet have no charity:" and he that dies without charity, dies without God; "for God is love." And when those who fought in the days of the Maccabees for the defence of true religion, and were killed in those holy wars, yet, being dead, were found having about their necks ἱερώματα, or "pendants consecrated" to idols of the Jamnenses; it much allayed the hope, which, by their dying in so good a cause, was entertained concerning their beatifical resurrection. He that overcomes his fear of death, does well; but if he hath not also overcome his lust, or his anger, his baptism of blood will not wash him clean. Many things make a man willing to die in a good cause; public reputation, hope of reward, gallantry of spirit, a confident resolution, and a masculine courage; or a man may be vexed into a stubborn and unrelenting suffering: but nothing can make a man live well but the grace and the love of God. But those persons are infinitely condemned by their last act, who profess their religion to be worth dying for, and yet are so unworthy as not to live according to its institution. It were a rare felicity, if every good cause could be managed by good men only; but we have found that evil men have spoiled a good cause, but never that a good cause made those evil men good and holy. If the governor of Samaria had crucified Simon Magus for receiving christian baptism, he had no more died a martyr than he lived a saint. For dying is not enough, and dying in a good cause is not enough; but then only we receive the crown of martyrdom, when our death is the seal of our life, and our life is a continual testimony of our duty, and both give testimony to the excellencies of the religion, and glorify the grace of God. If a man be gold, the fire purges him; but it burns him if he be, like stubble, cheap, light, and useless: for martyrdom is the consummation of love. But then it must be supposed, that this grace must have had its beginning, and its several stages and periods, and must have passed through labour to zeal, through all the regions of duty to the perfections of sufferings. And therefore, it is a sad thing to observe, how some empty souls will please themselves with being of such a religion, or such a cause; and though they dishonour their religion, or weigh down the cause with the prejudice of sin, believe all is swallowed up by one honourable name, or the appellative of one virtue. If God had forbid nothing but heresy and treason, then to have been a loyal man, or of a good belief, had been enough: but he that forbade rebellion, forbids also swearing and covetousness, rapine and oppression, lying and cruelty. And it is a sad thing to see a man not only to spend his time, and his wealth, and his money, and his friends, upon his lust, but to spend his sufferings too, to let the canker-worm of a deadly sin devour his martyrdom. He therefore that suffers in a good cause, let him be sure to walk worthy of that honour to which God hath called him; let him first deny his sins, and then "deny himself," and then he may "take up his cross and follow Christ;" ever remembering, that no man pleases God in his death who hath walked perversely in his life.

2. He that suffers in a cause of God, must be indifferent what the instance be, so that he may serve God. I say, he must be indifferent in the cause, so it be a cause of God; and indifferent in the suffering, so it be of God's appointment. For some men have a natural aversation to some vices or virtues, and a natural affection to others. One man will die for his friend, and another will die for his money: some men hate to be a rebel, and will die for their prince; but tempt them to suffer for the cause of the church, in which they were baptized, and in whose communion they look for heaven, and then they are tempted, and fall away. Or if God hath chosen the cause for them, and they have accepted it, yet themselves will choose the suffering. Right or wrong, some men will not endure a prison; and some that can, yet choose the heaviest part of the burden, the pollution and stain of a sin, rather than lose their money; and some had rather die twice than lose their estate once. In this our rule is easy. Let us choose God, and let God choose all the rest for us; it being indifferent to us, whether by poverty or shame, by a lingering or a sudden death, by the hands of a tyrant-prince, or the despised hands of a base usurper or a rebel, we receive the crown, and do honour to God and to religion.

3. Whoever suffer in a cause of God, from the hands of cruel and unreasonable men, let them not be too forward to prognosticate evil and death to their enemies; but let them solace themselves in the assurance of the Divine justice, by general consideration, and, in particular, pray for them that are our persecutors. Nebuchadnezzar was the rod in the hand of God against the Tyrians, and because he destroyed that city, God rewarded him with the spoil of Egypt: and it is not always certain that God will be angry with every man by whose hand affliction comes upon us. And sometimes two armies have met, and fought, and the wisest man amongst them could not say, that either of the princes had prevaricated either the laws of God or of nations; and yet, it may be, some superstitious, easy, and half-witted people of either side wonder that their enemies live so long. And there are very many cases of war, concerning which God hath declared nothing: and although in such cases, he that yields and quits his title, rather than his charity, and the care of so many lives, is the wisest and the best man; yet, if neither of them will do so, let us not decree judgments from heaven, in cases where we have no word from heaven, and thunder from our tribunals, where no voice of God hath declared

the sentence. But in such cases, where there is an evident tyranny or injustice, let us do like the good Samaritan, who dressed the wounded man, but never pursued the thief; let us do charity to the afflicted, and bear the cross with nobleness, and "look up to Jesus, who endured the cross, and despised the shame:" but let us not take upon us the office of God, who will judge the nations righteously, and when he hath delivered up our bodies, will rescue our souls from the hands of unrighteous judges. I remember in the story that Plutarch tells, concerning the soul of Thespesius, that it met with a prophetic genius, who told him many things that should happen afterwards in the world; and the strangest of all was this; That there should be a king, "qui bonus cum sit, tyrannide vitam finiet;" "an excellent prince and a good man, should be put to death by a rebel and usurping power:"—and yet, that prophetic soul could not tell, that those rebels should, within three years, die miserable and accursed deaths. And in that great prophecy, recorded by St. Paul, "That in the last days perilous times should come, and men should be traitors and selfish, having forms of godliness, and creeping into houses;"[u] yet he could not tell us when these men should come to final shame and ruin: only by a general signification, he gave this sign of comfort to God's persecuted servants; "but they shall proceed no farther, for their folly shall be manifest unto all men;"[x] that is, at long running, they shall shame themselves, and, "for the elect's sake, those days of evil shall be shortened." But you and I may be dead first: and therefore, only remember, that they that, with a credulous heart and a loose tongue, are too decretory and enunciative of speedy judgments to their enemies, turn their religion into revenge, and therefore do believe it will be so, because they vehemently desire it should be so; which all wise and good men ought to suspect, as less agreeing with that charity, which overcomes all the sins and all the evils of the world, and sits down and rests in glory.

4. Do not trouble yourself by thinking how much you are afflicted, but consider how much you make of it: for reflex acts upon the suffering itself can lead to nothing but to pride, or to impatience, to temptation, or to apostasy. He that measures the grains and scruples of his persecution, will soon sit down and call for ease, or for a reward; will think the time long, or his burden great; will be apt to complain of his condition, or set a greater value upon his person. Look not back upon him that strikes thee, but upward to God that supports thee, and forward to the crown that is set before thee: and then consider, if the loss of thy estate hath taught thee to despise the world, whether thy poor fortune hath made thee poor in spirit; and if thy uneasy prison sets thy soul at liberty, and knocks off the fetters of a worse captivity. For then the rod of sufferings turns into crowns and sceptres, when every suffering is a precept, and every change of condition produces a holy resolution, and the state of sorrows makes the resolution actual and habitual, permanent and persevering. For as the silkworm eateth itself out of a seed to become a little worm; and there feeding on the leaves of mulberries, it grows till its coat be off, and then works itself into a house of silk; then casting its pearly seeds for the young to breed, it leaveth its silk for man, and dieth all white and winged in the shape of a flying creature: so is the progress of souls. When they are regenerate by baptism, and have cast off their first stains and the skin of worldly vanities, by feeding on the leaves of Scriptures, and the fruits of the vine, and the joys of the sacrament, they encircle themselves in the rich garments of holy and virtuous habits; then, by leaving their blood, which is the church's seed, to raise up a new generation to God, they leave a blessed memory, and fair example, and are themselves turned into angels, whose felicity is to do the will of God, as their employment was in this world to suffer. "Fiat voluntas tua" is our daily prayer, and that is of a passive signification; "Thy will be done" upon us: and if from thence also we translate it into an active sense, and by suffering evils increase in our aptnesses to do well, we have done the work of christians, and shall receive the reward of martyrs.

5. Let our suffering be entertained by a direct election, not by collateral aids and fantastic assistances. It is a good refreshment to a weak spirit to suffer in good company: and so Phocion encouraged a timorous Greek, condemned to die; and he bid him be confident, because that he was to die with Phocion: and when forty martyrs in Cappadocia suffered, and that a soldier, standing by, came and supplied the place of the one apostate, who fell from his crown, being overcome with pain, it added warmth to the frozen confessors, and turned them into consummate martyrs. But if martyrdom were but a fantastic thing, or relied upon vain accidents and irregular chances, it were then very necessary to be assisted by images of things, and any thing less than the proper instruments of religion: but since it is the greatest action of the religion, and relies upon the most excellent promises, and its formality is to be an action of love, and nothing is more firmly chosen (by an after-election at least) than an act of love; to support martyrdom, or the duty of sufferings, by false arches and exterior circumstances, is to build a tower upon the beams of the sun, or to set up a wooden ladder to climb up to heaven; the soul cannot attain so huge and unimaginable felicities by chance and instruments of fancy. And let no man hope to glorify God and go to heaven by a life of sufferings, unless he first begin in the love of God, and from thence derive his choice, his patience, and confidence, in the causes of virtue and religion, like beams, and warmth, and influence, from the body of the sun. Some there are that fall under the burden, when they are pressed hard, because they use not the proper instruments in fortifying the will in patience and resignation, but endeavour to lighten the burden in imagination; and when these temporary supporters fail, the building that relies upon them, rushes into coldness, recidivation, and lukewarm-

[u] 2 Tim. iii. 1, &c.

[x] 2 Tim. iii. 9.

ness: and, among all instances, that of the main question of the text is of greatest power to abuse imprudent and less severe persons.

Nullos esse Deos, inane cœlum,
Affirmat Cœlius; probatque,
Quòd se videt, dum negat hæc, beatum. MARTIAL.

When men choose a good cause upon confidence that an ill one cannot thrive, that is, not for the love of virtue or duty to God, but for profit and secular interests, they are easily lost, when they see the wickedness of the enemy to swell up by impunity and success to a greater evil: for they have not learned to distinguish a great growing sin from a thriving and prosperous fortune.

Ulla si juris tibi pejerati
Pœna, Barine, nocuisset unquam;
Dente si nigro fieres, vel uno
Turpior ungui;
Crederem—— HOR.

They that believe and choose because of idle fears and unreasonable fancies, or by mistaking the accounts of a man for the measures of God, or dare not commit treason for fear of being blasted; may come to be tempted when they see a sinner thrive, and are scandalized all the way if they die before him; or they may come to receive some accidental hardnesses; and every thing in the world may spoil such persons, and blast their resolutions. Take in all the aids you can, and, if the fancy of the standers-by, or the hearing of a cock crow, can add any collateral aids to thy weakness, refuse it not: but let thy state of sufferings begin with choice, and be confirmed with knowledge, and rely upon love, and the aids of God, and the expectations of heaven, and the present sense of duty; and then the action will be as glorious in the event, as it is prudent in the enterprise, and religious in the prosecution.

6. Lastly, when God hath brought thee into Christ's school, and entered thee into a state of sufferings, remember the advantages of that state: consider, how unsavoury the things of the world appear to thee, when thou art under the arrest of death; remember, with what comforts the Spirit of God assists thy spirit: set down in thy heart all those intercourses, which happen between God and thy own soul, the sweetnesses of religion, the vanity of sin's appearances, thy newly-entertained resolutions, thy longings after heaven, and all the things of God. And if God finishes thy persecutions with death, proceed in them: if he restores thee to the light of the world, and a temporal refreshment, change but the scene of sufferings in an active life, and converse with God upon the same principles, on which, in thy state of sufferings, thou didst build all the parts of duty. If God restores thee to thy estate, be not less in love with heaven, nor more in love with the world; let thy spirit be now as humble as before it was broken: and, to whatsoever degree of sobriety or austerity thy suffering condition did enforce thee, if it may be turned into virtue, when God restores thee, (because then it was necessary thou shouldst entertain it by an after-choice,) do it now also by a pre-election; that thou mayest say with David, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, for thereby I have learned thy commandments." And Paphnutius did not do his soul more advantage, when he lost his right eye, and suffered his left knee to be cut off for christianity and the cause of God, than that, in the days of Constantine and the church's peace, he lived not in the toleration, but in the active piety of a martyr's condition; not now a confessor of the faith only, but of the charity of a christian. We may every one live to have need of these rules; and I do not at all think it safe to pray against it, but to be armed for it: and to whatsoever degree of sufferings God shall call us, we see what advantages God intends for us, and what advantages we ourselves may make of it. I now proceed to make use of all the former discourse, by removing it a little farther even into its utmost spiritual sense: which the apostle does in the last words of the text; "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the wicked and the sinner appear?"

These words are taken out of the Proverbs,[y] according to the translation of the LXX. "If the righteous scarcely be safe." Where the word μόλις implies that he is safe; but by "intermedial difficulties:" and σώζεται, he is safe in the midst of his persecutions; they may disturb his rest, and discompose his fancy, but they are like the fiery chariot to Elias; he is encircled with fire, and rare circumstances and strange usages, but is carried up to heaven in a robe of flames. And so was Noah safe when the flood came; and was the great type and instance too of the verification of this proposition; he was ὁ δίκαιος and δικαιοσύνης κήρυξ, he was put into a strange condition, perpetually wandering, shut up in a prison of wood, living upon faith, having never had the experience of being safe in floods. And so have I often seen young and unskilful persons sitting in a little boat, when every little wave sporting about the sides of the vessel, and every motion and dancing of the barge, seemed a danger, and made them cling fast upon their fellows; and yet all the while they were as safe as if they sat under a tree, while a gentle wind shook the leaves into a refreshment and a cooling shade: and the unskilful, inexperienced christian shrieks out, whenever his vessel shakes, thinking it always a danger, that the watery pavement is not stable and resident, like a rock; and yet all his danger is in himself, none at all from without: for he is indeed moving upon the waters, but fastened to a rock; faith is his foundation, and hope is his anchor, and death is his harbour, and Christ is his pilot, and heaven is his country; and all the evils of poverty or affronts, of tribunals and evil judges, of fears and sadder apprehensions, are but like the loud wind blowing from the right point, they make a noise, and drive faster to the harbour; and if we do not leave the ship, and leap into the sea; quit the interests of religion, and run to the securities of the world; cut our cables, and dissolve our hopes; grow impatient, and hug a wave, and die in its embraces; we are as safe at sea, safer in the storm which God sends us, than in a calm when we are befriended with the world.

2. But μόλις may also signify "rarò;" "If the

[y] Chap. xi. 31.

righteous is *seldom* safe :" which implies that sometimes he is, even in a temporal sense. God sometimes sends halcyon days to his church, and when he promised " kings and queens to be their nurses," he intended it for a blessing ; and yet this blessing does oftentimes so ill succeed, that it is the greater blessing of the two, not to give us that blessing too freely. But μόλις, this is " *scarcely* " done ; and yet sometimes it is, and God sometimes refreshes languishing piety with such arguments as comply with our infirmities : and though it be a shame to us to need such allectives and infant-gauds, such which the heathen world and the first rudiments of the Israelites did need ; God, who pities us, and will be wanting in nothing to us, as he corroborates our willing spirits with proper entertainments, so also he supports our weak flesh, and not only cheers an afflicted soul with beams of light, and antepasts and earnests of glory, but is kind also to our man of flesh and weakness ; and to this purpose he sends thunderbolts from heaven upon evil men, dividing their tongues, infatuating their counsels, cursing their posterity, and ruining their families.

———ἄλλοτε δ' αὖτε
Ἢ τῶν γε στρατὸν εὐρὺν ἀπώλεσεν, ἢ ὅγε τεῖχος,
Ἢ νέας ἐν πόντῳ Κρονίδης ἀποτίνυνται αὐτῶν.
HESIOD. Εργ.

" Sometimes God destroys their armies, or their strong holds, sometimes breaks their ships." But this happens either for the weakness of some of his servants, and their too great aptness to be offended at a prosperous iniquity, or when he will not suffer the evil to grow too great, or for some end of his providence ; and yet, if this should be very often, or last long, God knows the danger, and we should feel the inconvenience. Of all the types of Christ, only Joshua and Solomon were noted to be generally prosperous : and yet the fortune of the first was to be in perpetual war and danger ; but the other was as himself could wish it, rich, and peaceful, and powerful, and healthful, and learned, and beloved, and strong, and amorous, and voluptuous, and so he fell ; and though his fall was, yet his recovery was not, upon record.

And yet the worst of evils that happen to the godly, is better, temporally better, than the greatest external felicity of the wicked : that in all senses the question may be considerable and argumentative, " If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly appear ?" If it be hard with good men, with the evil it shall be far worse. But see the difference. The godly man is timorous, and yet safe ; tossed by the seas, and yet safe at anchor ; impaired by evil accidents, and righted by divine comforts ; made sad with a black cloud, and refreshed with a more gentle influence ; abused by the world, and yet an heir of heaven ; hated by men, and beloved by God ; loses one house, and gets a hundred ; he quits a convenient lodging-room, and purchases a glorious country ; is forsaken by his friends, but never by a good conscience ; he fares hardly, and sleeps sweetly ; he flies from his enemies, but hath no distracting fears ; he is full of thought, but of no amazement ; it is his business to be troubled, and his portion to be comforted ; he hath nothing to afflict him, but the loss of that which might be his danger, but can never be his good ; and in the recompence of this he hath God for his Father, Christ for his Captain, the Holy Ghost for his supporter ; so that he shall have all the good which God can give him, and of all that good he hath the holy Trinity for an earnest and a gage for his maintenance at the present, and his portion to all eternity. But, though Paul and Silas sang psalms in prison, and under the hangman's whips, and in an earthquake ; yet neither the jailer nor the persecuting magistrates could do so. For the prosperity of the wicked is like a winter's sun, or the joy of a condemned drunkard ; it is a forgetfulness of his present danger and his future sorrows, nothing but imaginary arts of inadvertency : he sits in the gates of the city, and judges others, and is condemned himself ; he is honoured by the passers-by, and is thought happy, but he sighs deeply ; " he heapeth up riches, and cannot tell who shall gather them :" he commands an army, and is himself a slave to his passions ; he sleeps because he needs it, and starts from his uneasy pillows which his thoughtful head hath discomposed ; when he is waking, he dreams of greatness ; when he sleeps, he dreams of spectres and illusions : he spoils a poor man of his lamb, and himself of his innocence and peace : and in every unjust purchase, himself is the greatest loser.

Ὃς δέ κεν αὐτὸς ἕλῃται, ἀναιδείῃφι πιθήσας,
Καὶ τε σμικρὸν ἐὸν, τό τ' ἐταχνωσεν φίλον ἦτορ.
HESIOD. Εργ.

For, just upon his oppression or injustice, he is turned a devil, and God's enemy, a wolf to his brother, a greedy admirer of the baits of fishes, and the bread of dogs ; he is unsafe by reason of his sin : for he hath against him the displeasure of God, the justice of the laws, the shame of the sin, the revenge of the injured person ; and God and men, the laws of nations and private societies, stand upon their defence against this man : he is unsafe in his rest, amazed in his danger, troubled in his labours, weary in his change, esteemed a base man, disgraced and scorned, feared and hated, flattered and derided, watched and suspected, and, it may be, dies in the middle of his purchase, and at the end is a fool, and leaves a curse to his posterity.

Τοῦ δέ τ' ἀμαυροτέρη γενεὴ μετόπισθε λέλειπται.
HESIOD. Εργ.

" He leaves a generation of blacker children behind him ;" so the poet describes the cursedness of their posterity : and their memory sits down to eternal ages in dishonour. And by this time let them cast up their accounts, and see if, of all their violent purchases, they carry any thing with them to the grave but sin, and a guilty conscience, and a polluted soul ; the anger of God, and the shame of men. And what help shall all those persons give to thee in thy flames, who divided and scattered that estate, for which thou diedst for ever ?

Audire est operæ pretium, procedere rectè
Qui mœchis non vultis, ut omni parte laborent ;
Utque illis multo corrupta dolore voluptas,
Atque hæc rara cadat dura inter sæpe pericla. HOR.

And let but a sober answerer tell me, if any thing in the world be more distant either from goodness or happiness, than to scatter the plague of an accursed soul upon our dearest children; to make a universal curse; to be the fountain of a mischief; to be such a person whom our children and nephews shall hate, and despise, and curse, when they groan under the burden of that plague, which their fathers' sins brought upon the family. If there were no other account to be given, it were highly enough to verify the intent of my text; "If the righteous scarcely be saved," or escape God's angry stroke, the wicked must needs be infinitely more miserable.

Νῦν δ' ἐγὼ μήτ' αὐτὸς ἐν ἀνθρώποισι δίκαιος
Εἴην, μήτ' ἐμὸς υἱὸς, ἐπεὶ κακὸν ἄνδρα δίκαιον
Ἔμμεναι ——— HES. Εργ.

"Neither I nor my son" (said the oldest of the Greek poets) "would be virtuous, if to be a just person were all one as to be miserable." No, not only in the end of affairs, and at sunset, but all the day long, the godly man is happy, and the ungodly and the sinner are very miserable.

Pellitur a populo victus Cato; tristior ille est
Qui vicit, faciesque pudet rapuisse Catoni:
Namque hoc dedecus est populi, morumque ruina.
Non homo pulsus erat; sed in uno victa potestas
Romanumque decus———

And there needs no other argument to be added but this one great testimony; that though the godly are afflicted and persecuted, yet even they are blessed, and the persecutors are the most unsafe. They are essentially happy whom affliction cannot make miserable, but turns unto their advantages:

(Quis curam negat esse te Deorum,
Propter quem fuit innocens ruina?) MART.

And that is the state of the godly. And they are most intolerably accursed, who have no portions in the blessings of eternity, and yet cannot have comfort in the present purchases of their sin, to whom even their sun-shine brings a drought, and their fairest is their foulest weather: and that is the portion of the sinner and the ungodly. The godly are not made unhappy by their sorrows; and the wicked are such, whom prosperity itself cannot make fortunate.

3. And yet after all this, it is but μόλις σώζεται, not μόλις σωθήσεται, he "*escapes but hardly*" here: it will be well enough with him hereafter. Isaac digged three wells. The first was called "Contention;" for he drank the waters of strife, and digged the well with his sword. The second well was not altogether so hard a purchase, he got it with some trouble; but that being over, he had some room, and his fortune swelled, and he called his well "Enlargement." But his third he called "Abundance;" and then he dipped his foot in oil, and drank freely as out of a river. Every good man first "sows in tears;" he first drinks of the bottle of his own tears, sorrow and trouble, labour and disquiet, strivings and temptations: but if they pass through a torrent, and virtue becomes easy and habitual, they find their hearts enlarged and made sprightly by the visitations of God, and refreshment of his Spirit; and then their hearts are enlarged, they know how to gather the down and softnesses from the sharpest thistles.

Τῆς δ' ἀρετῆς ἱδρῶτα θεοὶ προπάροιθεν ἔθηκαν
——— μακρὸς δὲ καὶ ὄρθιος οἶμος ἐπ' αὐτὴν,
Καὶ τραχὺς τὸ πρῶτον· ———

At first we cannot serve God but by passions and doing violence to all our wilder inclinations, and suffering the violence of tyrants and unjust persons.

———ἐπὴν δ' εἰς ἄκρον ἵκηαι,
Ῥηϊδίη δ' ἤπειτα πέλει, χαλεπὴ περ ἐοῦσα. HES. Εργ.

The second days of virtue are pleasant and easy in the midst of all the appendant labours. But when the christian's last pit is digged, when he is descended to his grave, and hath finished his state of sorrows and suffering; then God opens the river of abundance, the rivers of life and never-ceasing felicities. And this is that which God promised to his people: "I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy redeemer." [z] So much as moments are exceeded by eternity, and the sighing of a man by the joys of an angel, and a salutary frown by the light of God's countenance, a few groans by the infinite and eternal hallelujahs; so much are the sorrows of the godly to be undervalued in respect of what is deposited for them in the treasures of eternity. Their sorrows can die, but so cannot their joys. And if the blessed martyrs and confessors were asked concerning their past sufferings and their present rest, and the joys of their certain expectation, you should hear them glory in nothing but in the mercies of God, and "in the cross of the Lord Jesus." Every chain is a ray of light, and every prison is a palace, and every loss is the purchase of a kingdom, and every affront in the cause of God is an eternal honour, and every day of sorrow is a thousand years of comfort, multiplied with a never-ceasing numeration; days without night, joys without sorrow, sanctity without sin, charity without stain, possession without fear, society without envying, communication of joys without lessening: and they shall dwell in a blessed country, where an enemy never entered, and from whence a friend never went away. Well might David say, "Funes ceciderunt mihi in præclaris," "The cords" of my tent, my ropes, and the sorrow of my pilgrimage, "fell to me in a good ground, and I have a goodly heritage."—And when persecution hews a man down from a high fortune to an even one, or from thence to the face of the earth, or from thence to the grave; a good man is but preparing for a crown, and the tyrant does but first knock off the fetters of the soul, the manacles of passion and desire, sensual loves and lower appetites: and if God suffers him to finish the persecution, then he can but dismantle the soul's prison, and let the soul forth to fly to the mountains of rest: and all the intermedial evils are but like the Persian punishments; the executioner tore off their hairs, and rent their silken mantles, and discomposed their curious dressings, and lightly touched their skin; yet the offender cried out with most bitter exclamations, while his fault

[z] Isa. liv. 8.

was expiated with a ceremony and without blood. So does God to his servants, he rends their upper garments, and strips them of their unnecessary wealth, and ties them to physic and salutary discipline; and they cry out under usages, which have nothing but the outward sense and opinion of evil, not the real substance. But if we would take the measures of images, we must not take the height of the base, but the proportion of the members; nor yet measure the estates of men by their big-looking supporter, or the circumstance of an exterior advantage, but by its proper commensuration in itself, as it stands in its order to eternity: and then the godly man that suffers sorrow and persecution, ought to be relieved by us, but needs not be pitied in the sum of affairs. But since the two estates of the world are measured by time and by eternity, and divided by joy and sorrow, and no man shall have his portion of joys in both durations; and the state of those men is insupportably miserable, who are fatted for slaughter, and are crowned like beasts for sacrifice; who are feared and fear, who cannot enjoy their purchases but by communications with others, and themselves have the least share, but themselves are alone in the misery and the saddest dangers, and they possess the whole portion of sorrows; to whom their prosperity gives but occasions to evil counsels, and strength to do mischief, or to nourish a serpent, or oppress a neighbour, or to nurse a lust, to increase folly, and treasure up calamity. And did ever any man see, or story tell, that any tyrant-prince kissed his rods and axes, his sword of justice, and his imperial ensigns of power? they shine like a taper, to all things but itself. But we read of many martyrs who kissed their chains, and hugged their stakes, and saluted their hangman with great endearments; and yet, abating the incursions of their seldom sins, these are their greatest evils; and such they are, with which a wise and a good man may be in love. And till the sinners and ungodly men can be so with their deep groans and broken sleeps, with the wrath of God and their portions of eternity; till they can rejoice in death and long for a resurrection, and with delight and a greedy hope can think of the day of judgment; we must conclude that their glass gems and finest pageantry, their splendid outsides and great powers of evil, cannot make amends for that estate of misery, which is their portion with a certainty as great as is the truth of God, and all the articles of the christian creed. Miserable men are they, who cannot be blessed unless there be no day of judgment; who must perish, unless the word of God should fail. If that be all their hopes, then we may with a sad spirit and a soul of pity inquire into the question of the text, "Where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" Even there where God's face shall never shine, where there shall be fire and no light, where there shall be no angels, but what are many thousand years turned into devils, where no good man shall ever dwell, and from whence the evil and the accursed shall never be dismissed. "O my God, let my soul never come into their counsels, nor lie down in their sorrows."

SERMON XII.

THE MERCY OF THE DIVINE JUDGMENTS; OR, GOD'S METHOD IN CURING SINNERS.

PART I.

Despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? —Rom. ii. 4.

FROM the beginning of time till now, all effluxes which have come from God, have been nothing but emanations of his goodness, clothed in variety of circumstances. He made man with no other design than that man should be happy, and by receiving derivations from his fountain of mercy, might reflect glory to him. And therefore, God making man for his own glory, made also a paradise for man's use; and did him good, to invite him to do himself a greater; for God gave forth demonstrations of his power by instances of mercy, and he who might have made ten thousand worlds of wonder and prodigy, and created man with faculties able only to stare upon, and admire, those miracles of mightiness, did choose to instance his power in the effusions of mercy, that, at the same instant, he might represent himself desirable and adorable, in all the capacities of amiability: viz. as excellent in himself, and profitable to us. For as the sun sends forth a benign and gentle influence on the seed of plants, that it may invite forth the active and plastic power from its recess and secrecy, that by rising into the tallness and dimensions of a tree, it may still receive a greater and more refreshing influence from its foster-father, the prince of all the bodies of light; and in all these emanations, the sun itself receives no advantage, but the honour of doing benefits; so doth the Almighty Father of all the creatures; he at first sends forth his blessings upon us, that we, by using them aright, should make ourselves capable of greater; while the giving glory to God, and doing homage to him, are nothing for his advantage, but only for ours; our duties towards him being like vapours ascending from the earth, not at all to refresh the region of the clouds, but to return back in a fruitful and refreshing shower; and God created us, not that we can increase his felicity, but that he might have a subject receptive of felicity from him. Thus he causes us to be born, that we may be capable of his blessings; he causes us to be baptized, that we may have a title to the glorious promises evangelical; he gives us his Son, that we may be rescued from hell. And when we constrain him to use harsh courses towards us, it is also in mercy; he smites us to cure a disease; he sends us sickness, to procure our health. And as if God were all mercy, he is merciful in his first design, in all his instruments, in the way, and in the end of the journey; and does not only show the riches of his goodness to them that do well, but to

all men that they may do well; he is good, to make us good; he does us benefits, to make us happy. And if we, by despising such gracious rays of light and heat, stop their progress, and interrupt their design, the loss is not God's, but ours; we shall be the miserable and accursed people. This is the sense and paraphrase of my text: "Despisest thou the riches of his goodness," &c.? "Thou dost not know," that is, thou considerest not, that it is for further benefit that God does thee this: the "goodness of God" is not a design to serve his own ends upon thee, but thine upon him: "the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance."

Here then is God's method of curing mankind, *χρηστότης, ἀνοχὴ, μακροθυμία*. First, "goodness," or inviting us to him by sugared words, by the placid arguments of temporal favour, and the propositions of excellent promises. Secondly, *ἀνοχὴ*, at the same time. Although God is provoked every day, yet he does *ἀνέχειν*, he "tolerates" our stubbornness, he forbears to punish; and when he does begin to strike, takes his hand off, and gives us truce and respite. For so *ἀνοχὴ* signifies "laxamentum," and "inducias" too. Thirdly, *μακροθυμία*, still "a long putting off" and deferring his final destroying anger, by using all means to force us to repentance; and this especially by the way of judgments; these being the last reserves of the Divine mercy, and however we esteem it, is the greatest instance of the Divine long-suffering that is in the world. After these instruments, we may consider the end, the strand upon which these land us, the purpose of this variety, of these labours and admirable arts, with which God so studies and contrives the happiness and salvation of man: it is only that man may be brought by these means unto repentance, and by repentance may be brought to eternal life. This is "the treasure of the Divine goodness," the great and admirable efflux of the eternal beneficence, the *πλοῦτος χρηστότητος*, "the riches of his goodness," which whosoever despises, despises himself and the great interest of his own felicity; he shall die in his impenitence, and perish in his folly.

1. The first great instrument that God chooses to bring us to him, is *χρηστότης*, "profit," or benefit; and this must needs be first, for those instruments whereby we have a being, are so great mercies, that besides that they are such which give us the capacities of all other mercies, they are the advances of us in the greatest instances of promotion in the world. For from nothing to something is an infinite space; and a man must have a measure of infinite passed upon him, before he can perceive himself to be either happy or miserable: he is not able to give God thanks for one blessing, until he hath received many. But then God intends we should enter upon his service at the beginning of our days, because even then he is beforehand with us, and hath already given us great instances of his goodness. What a prodigy of favour is it to us, that he hath passed by so many forms of his creatures, and hath not set us down in the rank of any of them, till we came to be "paulo minores angelis," "a little lower than the angels!" and yet from the meanest of them God can perfect his own praise. The deeps and the snows, the hail and the rain, the birds of the air and the fishes of the sea, they can and do glorify God, and give him praise in their capacity; and yet he gave them no reason, no immortal spirit, or capacity of eternal blessedness; but he hath distinguished us from them by the absolute issues of his predestination, and hath given us a lasting and eternal spirit, excellent organs of perception, and wonderful instruments of expression, that we may join in concert with the morning-star, and bear a part in the chorus with the angels of light, to sing hallelujah to the great Father of men and angels.

But was it not a huge chain of mercies, that we were not strangled in the regions of our own natural impurities, but were sustained by the breath of God from perishing in the womb, where God formed us "in secreto terræ," told our bones, and kept the order of nature, and the miracles of creation; and we lived upon that which, in the next minute after we were born, would strangle us if it were not removed? but then God took care of us, and his hand of providence clothed us and fed us. But why do I reckon the mercies of production, which in every minute of our being are alike continued, and are miracles in all senses, but that they are common and usual? I only desire you to remember, that God made all the works of his hands to serve him. And, indeed, this mercy of creating us such as we are, was not "to lead us to repentance," but was a design of innocence: intended we should serve him as the sun and the moon do, as fire and water do; never to prevaricate the laws he fixed to us, that we might have needed no repentance. But since we did degenerate, and being by God made better and more noble creatures than all the inhabitants of the air, the water, and the earth besides,—we made ourselves baser and more ignoble than any: for no dog, crocodile, or swine, was ever God's enemy, as we made ourselves. Yet then from thenceforward God began his work of "leading us to repentance" by the "riches of his goodness." He caused us to be born of christian parents, under whom we were taught the mysteriousness of its goodness and designs for the redemption of man; and by the design of which religion, repentance was taught to mankind, and an excellent law given for distinction of good and evil. And this is a blessing, which though possibly we do not often put into our eucharistical litanies to give God thanks for; yet if we sadly consider what had become of us, if we had been born under the dominion of a Turkish lord, or in America, where no christians do inhabit, where they worship the devil, where witches are their priests, their prophets, their physicians, and their oracles; can we choose but apprehend a visible notorious necessity of perishing in those sins, which we then should not have understood by the glass of a divine law to have declined, nor by a revelation have been taught to repent of? But since the best of men does, in the midst of all the great advantages of laws, and examples, and promises, and threatenings, do many things he ought to be ashamed of, and needs to repent of; we can under-

stand the riches of the Divine goodness best, by considering, that the very design of our birth and education in the christian religion is, that we may recover of and cure our follies by the antidote of repentance, which is preached to us as a doctrine, and propounded as a favour; which was put into a law, and purchased for us by a great expense; which God does not more command to us as a duty, than he gives us as a blessing. For now that we shall not perish for our first follies, but be admitted to new conditions, to be repaired by second thoughts, to have our infirmities excused, and our sins forgiven, our habits lessened, and our malice cured, after we were wounded, and sick, and dead, and buried, and in the possession of the devil; this was such a blessing, so great riches of the Divine goodness, that as it was taught to no religion but the christian, revealed by no lawgiver but Christ, so it was a favour greater than ever God gave to the angels and devils: for although God was rich in the effusion of his goodness towards them, yet they were not admitted to the condition of second thoughts; Christ never shed one drop of blood for them, "his goodness did not lead them to repentance:" but to us it was, that he made this largess of his goodness; to us, to whom he made himself a brother, and sucked the paps of our mother; he paid the scores of our sin, and shame, and death, only that we might be admitted to repent, and that this repentance might be effectual to the great purposes of felicity and salvation. And if we would consider this sadly, it might make us better to understand our madness and folly in refusing to repent; that is, to be sorrowful,—and to leave all our sins,—and to make amends by a holy life.—For that we might be admitted and suffered to do so, God was fain to pour forth all the riches of his goodness: it cost our dearest Lord the price of his dearest blood, many a thousand groans, millions of prayers and sighs, and at this instant he is praying for our repentance; nay, he hath prayed for our repentance these sixteen hundred years incessantly, night and day, and shall do so till doomsday; "He sits at the right hand of God making intercession for us." And that we may know what he prays for, he hath sent us ambassadors to declare the purpose of all his design; for St. Paul saith, "We are ambassadors for Christ, as though he did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God." The purpose of our embassy and ministry is a prosecution of the mercies of God, and the work of redemption, and the intercession and mediation of Christ: it is the work of atonement and reconciliation that God designed, and Christ died for, and still prays for, and we preach for, and you all must labour for.

And therefore here consider, if it be not infinite impiety to "despise the riches of such a goodness," which at so great a charge, with such infinite labour and deep mysterious arts, invites us to repentance; that is, to such a thing as could not be granted to us unless Christ should die to purchase it; such a glorious favour, that is the issue of Christ's prayers in heaven, and of all his labours, his sorrows, and his sufferings on earth. If we refuse to repent now, we do not so much refuse to do our own duty, as to accept of a reward. It is the greatest and the dearest blessing that ever God gave to men, that they may repent: and therefore, to deny it or delay it, is to refuse health, brought us by the skill and industry of the physician; it is to refuse liberty indulged to us by our gracious Lord. And certainly we had reason to take it very ill, if, at a great expense, we should purchase a pardon for a servant, and he, out of a peevish pride or negligence shall refuse it; the scorn pays itself, the folly is its own scourge, and sits down in an inglorious ruin.

After the enumeration of these glories, these prodigies of mercies and loving-kindnesses, of Christ's dying for us, and interceding for us, and merely that we may repent and be saved; I shall less need to instance those other particularities whereby God continues, as by so many arguments of kindness, to sweeten our natures, and make them malleable to the precepts of love and obedience, the twin-daughters of holy repentance: but the poorest person amongst us, besides the blessing and graces already reckoned, hath enough about him, and the accidents of every day, to shame him into repentance. Does not God send his "angels to keep thee in all thy ways?" are not they ministering spirits sent forth to wait upon thee as thy guard; art not thou kept from drowning, from fracture of bones, from madness, from deformities, by the riches of the Divine goodness? Tell the joints of thy body; dost thou want a finger? and if thou dost not understand how great a blessing that is, do but remember, how ill thou canst spare the use of it when thou hast but a thorn in it. The very privative blessings, the blessings of immunity, safeguard, and integrity, which we all enjoy, deserve a thanksgiving of a whole life. If God should send a cancer upon thy face, or a wolf into thy breast, if he should spread a crust of leprosy upon thy skin, what wouldst thou give to be but as now thou art? Wouldst not thou repent of thy sins upon that condition? Which is the greater blessing, to be kept from them, or to be cured of them? And why therefore shall not this greater blessing lead thee to repentance? Why do we, not so aptly, promise repentance when we are sick, upon the condition to be made well, and yet perpetually forget it when we are well? As if health never were a blessing, but when we have it not. Rather I fear the reason is, when we are sick we promise to repent, because then we cannot sin the sins of our former life; but in health our appetites return to their capacity, and in all the way "we despise the riches of the Divine goodness," which preserves us from such evils, which would be full of horror and amazement, if they should happen to us.

Hath God made any of you all chapfallen? Are you affrighted with spectres and illusions of the spirits of darkness? How many earthquakes have you been in? How many days have any of you wanted bread? How many nights have you been without sleep? Are any of you distracted of your

senses? And if God gives you meat and drink, health and sleep, proper seasons of the year, entire senses and a useful understanding; what a great unworthiness is it to be unthankful to so good a God, so benign a Father, so gracious a Lord? All the evils and baseness of the world can show nothing baser and more unworthy than ingratitude: and therefore it was not unreasonably said of Aristotle, Εὐτυχία φιλόθεος, "Prosperity makes a man love God," supposing men to have so much humanity left in them, as to love him from whom they have received so many favours. And Hippocrates said, that although poor men use to murmur against God, yet rich men will be offering sacrifice to their Deity, whose beneficiaries they are. Now, since the riches of the Divine goodness are so poured out upon the meanest of us all, if we shall refuse to repent (which is a condition so reasonable, that God requires it only for our sake, and that it may end in our felicity) we do ourselves despite, to be unthankful to God; that is, we become miserable by making ourselves basely criminal. And if any man, whom God hath used to no other method but of his sweetness and the effusion of mercies, brings no other fruits but the apples of Sodom in return of all his culture and labours, God will cut off that unprofitable branch, that with Sodom it may suffer the flames of everlasting burning.

Οἶει σὺ τοὺς ϑανόντας, ὦ Νικήρατε
Τρυφῆς ἁπάσης μεταλαβόντας ἐν βίῳ,
Πεφυγέναι τὸ ϑεῖον. PHILEMON.

If here we have good things, and a continual shower of blessings to soften our stony hearts, and we shall remain obdurate against those sermons of mercy which God makes us every day, there will come a time when this shall be upbraided to us, that we had not νοῦν ἀντίτυπον, a thankful mind, but made God to sow his seed upon the sand, or upon the stones, without increase or restitution. It was a sad alarm which God sent to David by Nathan, to upbraid his ingratitude: "I anointed thee king over Israel, I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul, I gave thee thy master's house and wives into thy bosom, and the house of Israel and Judah; and if this had been too little, I would have given thee such and such things; wherefore hast thou despised the name of the Lord?" But how infinitely more can God say to all of us than all this came to; he hath anointed us kings and priests in the royal priesthood of christianity; he hath given us his Holy Spirit to be our guide, his angels to be our protectors, his creatures for our food and raiment; he hath delivered us from the hands of Satan, hath conquered death for us, hath taken the sting out, and made it harmless and medicinal, and proclaimed us heirs of heaven, coheirs with the eternal Jesus; and if after all this we despise the commandment of the Lord, and defer and neglect our repentance, what shame is great enough, what miseries are sharp enough, what hell painful enough, for such horrid ingratitude? St. Lewis the king having sent Ivo, bishop of Chartres, on an embassy, the bishop met a woman on the way, grave, sad, fantastic, and melancholic, with fire in one hand, and water in the other. He asked what those symbols meant. She answered, My purpose is with fire to burn paradise, and with my water to quench the flames of hell, that men may serve God without the incentives of hope and fear, and purely for the love of God. But this woman began at the wrong end: the love of God is not produced in us after we have contracted evil habits, till God, with "his fan in his hand, hath thoroughly purged his floor," till he hath cast out all the devils, and swept the house with the instrument of hope and fear, and with the achievements and efficacy of mercies and judgments. But then, since God may truly say to us, as of old to his rebellious people, "Am I a dry tree to the house of Israel?" that is, Do I bring them no fruit? Do they "serve me for nought?" and he expects not our duty till first we feel his goodness; we are now infinitely inexcusable to throw away so great riches, to "despise such a goodness."

However, that we may see the greatness of this treasure of goodness, God seldom leaves us thus: for he sees, (be it spoken to the shame of our natures, and the dishonour of our manners,) he sees that his mercies do not allure us, do not make us thankful, but, (as the Roman said,) "Felicitate corrumpimur," "We become worse for God's mercy," and think it will be always holiday; and are like the crystal of Arabia, hardened not by cold, but made crusty and stubborn by the warmth of the Divine fire, by its refreshments and mercies; therefore, to demonstrate that God is good indeed, he continues his mercies still to us, but in another instance; he is merciful to us in punishing us, that we may be led to repentance by such instruments which will scare us from sin; he delivers us up to the pædagogy of the Divine judgments: and there begins the second part of God's method, intimated in the word ἀνοχὴ, or "forbearance." God begins his cure by caustics, by incisions and instruments of vexation, to try if the disease that will not yield to the allectives of cordials and perfumes, frictions and baths, may be forced out by deleteries, scarifications, and more salutary, but less pleasing, physic.

2. Ἀνοχὴ, "Forbearance," it is called in the text; which signifies "laxamentum" or "inducias:" that is, when the decrees of the Divine judgments temporal are gone out, either wholly to suspend the execution of them, which is "induciæ," or "a reprieve;" or else, when God hath struck once or twice, he takes off his hand, that is "laxamentum," an "ease or remission" of his judgment. In both these, although "in judgment God remembers mercy," yet we are under discipline, we are brought into the penitential chamber; at least we are showed the rod of God; and if, like Moses's rod, it turns us into serpents, and that we repent not, but grow more devils; yet then it turns into a rod again, and finishes up the smiting, or the first-designed affliction.

But I consider it first in general. The riches of the Divine goodness are manifest in beginning this new method of curing us, by severity and by a rod. And that you may not wonder that I expound this "forbearance" to be an act of mercy punishing, I

observe, that besides that the word supposes the method changed, and it is a mercy about judgments, and their manner of execution; it is also, in the nature of the thing, in the conjunction of circumstances, and the designs of God, a mercy when he threatens us or strikes us into repentance.

We think that the way of blessings and prosperous accidents, is the finer way of securing our duty; and that when our heads are anointed, our cups crowned, and our tables full, the very caresses of our spirits will best of all dance before the ark, and sing perpetual anthems to the honour of our benefactor and patron, God; and we are apt to dream that God will make his saints reign here as kings in a millenary kingdom, and give them the riches and fortunes of this world, that they may rule over men, and sing psalms to God for ever. But I remember what Xenophanes says of God,

Οὔτε δέμας θνητοῖσιν ὁμοῖίος, οὔτε νόημα.

"God is like to men neither in shape nor in counsel;" he knows that his mercies confirm some, and encourage more, but they convert but few: alone they lead men to dissolution of manners, and forgetfulness of God, rather than repentance: not but that mercies are competent and apt instruments of grace, if we would; but because we are more dispersed in our spirits, and by a prosperous accident are melted into joy and garishness, and drawn off from the sobriety of recollection. "Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked." Many are not able to suffer and endure prosperity; it is like the light of the sun to a weak eye; glorious indeed in itself, but not proportioned to such an instrument. Adam himself (as the rabbins say) did not dwell one night in Paradise, but was poisoned with prosperity, with the beauty of his fair wife, and a beauteous tree: and Noah and Lot were both righteous and exemplary, the one to Sodom, the other to the old world, so long as they lived in a place in which they were obnoxious to the common suffering; but as soon as the one of them had escaped from drowning, and the other from burning, and were put into security, they fell into crimes which have dishonoured their memories for above thirty generations together, the crimes of drunkenness and incest. Wealth and a full fortune make men licentiously vicious, tempting a man with power to act all that he can desire or design viciously.

Inde iræ faciles ————
Namque ut opes nimias mundo fortuna subacto
Intulit, et rebus mores cessere secundis,
———— Cultus, gestare decoros
Vix nuribus, rapuere mares;—totoque accersitur orbe
Quo gens quæque perit———— LUCAN. lib. 1.

And let me observe to you, that though there are in the New Testament many promises and provisions made for the poor in that very capacity, they having a title to some certain circumstances and additionals of grace and blessing; yet to rich men our blessed Saviour was pleased to make none at all, but to leave them involved in general comprehensions, and to have a title to the special promises only, by becoming poor in spirit, and in preparation of mind, though not in fortune and possession. However, it is hard for God to persuade us to this, till we are taught it by a sad experience, that those prosperities which we think will make us serve God cheerfully, make us to serve the world and secular ends diligently, and God not at all.

Repentance is a duty that best complies with affliction; it is a symbolical estate, of the same complexion and constitution; half the work of repentance is done by a sad accident, our spirits are made sad, our gaieties mortified, our wildness corrected, the water-springs are ready to run over: but if God should grant our desires, and give to most men prosperity, with a design to lead them to repentance, all his pomp, and all his employment, and all his affections and passions, and all his circumstances, are so many degrees of distance from the conditions and nature of repentance. It was reported by Dio concerning Nero's mother, that she often wished that her son might be emperor, and wished it with so great passion, that, upon that condition, she cared not though her son might kill her. Her first wish and her second fear were both granted: but when she began to fear that her son did really design to murder her, she used all the art and instruments of diversion that a witty and a powerful, a timorous person and a woman, could invent or apply. Just so it is with us: so we might have our wishes of prosperity, we promise to undergo all the severities of repentance; but when we are landed upon our desire, then every degree of satisfaction of those sensualities is a temptation against repentance: for a man must have his affections weaned from those possessions, before he can be reconciled to the possibilities of repentance.

And because God knows this well, and loves us better than we do ourselves, therefore he sends upon us the scrolls of vengeance, "the hand-writing upon the wall," to denounce judgment against us: for God is so highly resolved to bring us to repentance some way or other, that if, by his goodness, he cannot shame us into it, he will try if, by his judgments, he can scare us into it: not that he strikes always as soon as he hath sent his warrants out; οὐδὲ τοῖς ἁμαρτάνουσιν εὐθὺς ἐπέξεισιν ὁ Θεός· ἀλλὰ δίδωσι χρόνον εἰς μετάνοιαν, καὶ τὴν τοῦ ὀφειλήματος ἴασιν, said Philo. Thus God sent Jonas, and denounced judgments against Nineveh; but with the ἀνοχὴ, with the "forbearance" of forty days for the time of their escape, if they would repent. When Noah, the great preacher of righteousness, denounced the flood to all the world, it was with the ἀνοχὴ, with the "forbearance" of a hundred and twenty years. And when the great extermination of the Jewish nation, and their total deletion from being God's people, was foretold by Christ, and decreed by God; yet they had the ἀνοχὴ of forty years, in which they were perpetually called to repentance. These were reprieves and deferrings of the stroke.

But sometimes God strikes once, and then forbears. And such are all those sadnesses, which are less than death: every sickness, every loss, every disgrace, the death of friends and nearest relatives, sudden discontents; these are all of them the louder

calls of God to repentance; but still, instances of forbearance.

Indeed, many times this forbearance makes men impudent. It was so in the case of Pharaoh; when God smote him, and then forbore, Pharaoh's heart grew callous and insensible, till God struck again: and this was the meaning of these words of God, "I will harden the heart of Pharaoh," that is, I will forbear him; smite him, and then take the blow off: "Sic enim Deus induravit Pharaonis cor," said St. Basil. For as water taken off from fire will sooner congeal and become icy, than if it had not been attenuated by the heat; so is the heart of some men; when smitten by God, it seems soft and pliable, but taken off from the fire of affliction, it presently becomes horrid, then stiff, and then hard as a rock of adamant, or as the gates of death and hell. But this is beside the purpose and intention of the Divine mercy; this is an ἀντιπερίστασις, a plain "contradiction" to the riches of God's goodness; this is to be evil because God is good; to burn with flames because we are cooled with water; this is to put out the lamps of heaven, or (if we cannot do it) to put our own eyes out, lest we should behold the fair beauty of the Lord, and be enamoured of his goodness, and repent, and live. O take heed of despising this goodness; for this is one of God's latest arts to save us; he hath no way left beyond this, but to punish us with a lasting judgment and a poignant affliction. In the tomb of Terentia, certain lamps burned under ground many ages together; but as soon as ever they were brought into the air, and saw a bigger light, they went out, never to be re-enkindled. So long as we are in the retirements of sorrow, of want, of fear, of sickness, or of any sad accident, we are burning and shining lamps; but when God comes with his ἀνοχὴ, with his "forbearance," and lifts us up from the gates of death, and carries us abroad into the open air, that we converse with prosperity and temptation, we go out in darkness; and we cannot be preserved in heat and light, but by still dwelling in the regions of sorrow. And if such be our weaknesses or our folly, it concerns us to pray against such deliverances, to be afraid of health, to beg of God to continue a persecution, and not to deny us the mercy of an affliction.

And do not we find all this to be a great truth in ourselves? Are we so great strangers to our own weakness and unworthiness, as not to remember when God scared us with judgments in the neighbourhood, where we lived in a great plague, or if we were ever in a storm, or God had sent a sickness upon us? Then we may please to remember, that repentance was our business, that we designed mountains of piety, renewed our holy purposes, made vows and solemn sacraments to God to become penitent and obedient persons: and we may also remember, without much considering, that as soon as God began to forbear us, we would no longer forbear to sin, but add flame to flame, a heap of sins to a treasure of wrath, already too big; being like Pharaoh or Herod, or like the ox and mule, more hard and callous for our stripes; and melted in the fire, and frozen harder in the cold; worse for all our afflictions, and the worse for all God's judgments; not bettered by his goodness, nor mollified by his threatenings: and what is there more left for God to do unto us? He that is not won by the sense of God's mercy, can never find any thing in God that shall convert him; and he whom fear and sense of pain cannot mend, can never find any argument from himself that shall make him wise. This is sad, that nothing from without, and nothing from within, shall move us: nothing in heaven, and nothing in hell; neither love, nor fear; gratitude to God, nor preservation of ourselves, shall make us to repent. Θεοῦ δὲ πληγὴν οὐχ ὑπερπηδᾷ βροτὸς· That shall be his final sentence: he shall never escape that ruin from which the greatest art of God could not entice, nor his terror scare him: "he loved cursing, therefore shall it happen to him: he loved not blessing, therefore shall it be far from him."

Let, therefore, every one of us take the account of our lives, and read over the sermons that God hath made us: besides that sweet language of his mercy, and his "still voice" from heaven, consider what voices of thunder you heard, and presently that noise ceased, and God was heard in the "still voice" again. What dangers have any of you escaped? Were you ever assaulted by the rudeness of an ill-natured man? Have you never had a dangerous fall, and escaped it? Did none of you ever escape drowning, and in a great danger saw the forbearance of God? Have you never been sick (as you feared) unto death? Or, suppose none of these things have happened, hath not God threatened you all, and forborne to smite you? or smitten you, and forborne to kill you? That is evident. But if you had been a privado, and of the cabinet-council with your angel-guardian, that from him you might have known how many dangers you have escaped, how often you have been near a ruin, so near, that if you had seen your danger with a sober spirit, the fear of it would have half killed you; if he had but told you how often God had sent out his warrants to the exterminating angel, and our blessed Saviour by his intercession hath obtained a reprieve, that he might have the content of rejoicing at thy conversion and repentance; if you had known from him the secrets of that providence which governs us in secret, and how many thousand times the devil would have done thee hurt, and how often himself, as a ministering spirit of God's "goodness and forbearance," did interpose and abate or divert a mischief which was falling on thy head: it must needs cover thy head with a cloud of shame and blushing at that ingratitude and that folly, that neither will give God thanks nor secure thy own well-being.

Hadst thou never any dangerous fall in thy intemperance? Then God showed thee thy danger, and that he was angry at thy sin; but yet did so pity thy person, that he would forbear thee a little longer, else that fall had been into thy grave. When thy gluttony gave thee a surfeit, and God gave thee a remedy, his meaning then was, that

thy gluttony rather should be cured than thy surfeit; that repentance should have been thy remedy, and abstinence and fasting should be thy cure. Did ever thy proud and revengeful spirit engage thee upon a duel, or vexatious lawsuit, and God brought thee off with life or peace? His purpose then was, that his mercy should teach thee charity. And he that cannot read the purposes of God written with the finger of judgment, (for as yet his whole hand is not laid on,) either is consigned to eternal ruin, because God will no more endeavour his cure; or, if his mercy still continues and goes on in long-suffering, it shall be by such vexatious instruments, such caustics and corrosives, such tormenting and desperate medicaments, such which, in the very cure, will soundly punish thy folly and ingratitude. For, deceive not yourselves, God's mercy cannot be made a patron for any man's impiety; the purpose of it is to bring us to repentance: and God will do it by the mercies of his mercies, or by mercies of his judgments; he will either break our hearts into a thousand fragments of contrition, or break our bones in the ruins of the grave and hell. And since God rejoices in his mercy above all his works, he will be most impatient that we shall despise that in which he most delights, and in which we have the greatest reason to delight; the riches of that goodness which is essential, and part of his glory, and is communicated to us, to bring us to repentance, that we may partake of that goodness, and behold that glory.

SERMON XIII.

PART II.

3. Μακροθυμία, "Long-suffering."—In this one word are contained all the treasures of the Divine goodness: here is the length and extension of his mercy: "Pertrahit spiritum super nos Dominus," so the Syrian interpreter reads, Luke xviii. 7. "God holds his breath: he retains his anger within him, lest it should come forth and blast us." And here is also much of the Divine justice: for although God suffers long, yet he does not let us alone; he forbears to destroy us, but not to punish us: and in both he, by many accidents, gives probation of his power; according to the prayer of the wise man, Ἐλεεῖς δὲ πάντας, ὅτι πάντα δύνασαι· καὶ παροράς ἁμαρτήματα ἀνθρώπων εἰς μετάνοιαν· "Thou art merciful towards us all, because thou canst do all things: and thou passest by the sins of men, that they may repent."[a] And, that God should support our spirit, and preserve our patience, and nourish our hope, and correct our stubbornness, and mortify our pride, and bring us to him, whether we will or no, by such gracious violences and merciful judgments, which he uses towards us as his last remedies, is not only the demonstration of a mighty mercy, but of an almighty power. So hard a thing it is to make us leave our follies, and become wise, that, were not the mercies of God an effective pity, and clothed in all the way of its progress with mightiness and power, every sinner should perish irrecoverably. But this is the fiery trial, the last purgatory-fire which God uses, to burn the thistles, and purify the dross. When the gentle influence of a sun-beam will not wither them, nor the weeding-hook of a short affliction cut them out; then God comes with fire to burn us, with the axe laid to the root of the tree. But then observe, that when we are under this state of cure, we are so near destruction, that the same instrument that God uses for remedy to us, is also prepared to destroy us; the fire is as apt to burn us to ashes as to cleanse us when we are so overgrown; and the axe as instrumental to cut us down for fuel, as to square us for building in God's temple: and therefore when it comes thus far, it will be hard discerning what the purpose of the axe is; and, whether the fire means to burn, we shall know it by the change wrought upon ourselves. For what Plato said concerning his dream of purgatory, is true here: "Quicunque non purgatus migrat ad inferos, jacebit in luto; quicunque vero mitratus illuc accesserit, habitabit cum Deis:" "He that dies in his impurity, shall lie in it for ever; but he that descends to his grave purged and mitred,—that is,—having quitted his vices, 'et superinduens justitiam,' 'being clothed with righteousness,' shall dwell in light and immortality." It is sad that we put God to such extremities: and as it happens in long diseases, those which physicians use for the last remedies seldom prevail; and when consumptive persons come to have their heads shaven, they do not often escape; so it is when we put God to his last remedies: God indeed hath the glory of his patience and his long-suffering, but we seldom have the benefit and the use of it. For if, when our sin was young, and our strength more active, and our habits less, and virtue not so much a stranger to us,—we suffered sin to prevail upon us, to grow stronger than the ruins of our spirit, and to lessen us into the state of sickness and disability, in the midst of all those remedies which God used to our beginning-diseases: much more desperate is our recovery, when our disease is stronger, and our faculties weaker; when our sins reign in us, and our thoughts of virtue are not alive.

However, although I say this, and it is highly considerable to the purpose that we never suffer things to come to this extremity, yet, if it be upon us, we must do as well as we can: but then we are to look upon it as a design of God's last mercy, beyond which, if we protract our repentance, our condition is desperately miserable. The whole state of which mercy we understand by the parable of the king reckoning with his servants that were in arrears to him: "One was brought to him which owed him ten thousand talents: but forasmuch as he had not to pay, his Lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made." The man, you see, was under the arrest; the sentence was passed upon him, he was a condemned man: but, before the execution of it, he fell

[a] Wisd. xi. 24.

down, and worshipped, and said, Κύριε, μακροθύμησον; "Lord, 'suffer me longer awhile;' have patience with me, and I will pay thee all." This tells its meaning: this is "a long sufferance," by being "a forbearance" only of execution of the last sentence, a putting off damnation upon a longer trial of our emendation; but in the mean time it implies no other case, but that, together with his long sufferance, God may use all other severities and scourges to break our untamed spirits, and to soften them with hammers; so death be put off, no matter else what hardship and loads of sufferance we have. "Hic ure, hic seca, ut in æternum parcas;" so St. Austin prayed: "Here, O Lord, cut me, here burn me; spare me not now, that thou mayest spare me for ever." And it is just like the mercy used to a madman, when he is kept in a dark room, and tamed with whips; it is a cruel mercy, but such as his condition requires; he can receive no other mercy, all things else were cruelly unmerciful.

I remember what Bion observed wittily of the punishment inflicted upon the daughters of Danaus, whom the old poets feigned to be condemned in hell to fill a bottomless tub with water, and, to increase the pain, (as they fancied,) this water they were to carry in sieves, and never to leave work till the tub were full; it is well, (says he,) since their labour must be eternal, that it is so gentle; for it were more pains to carry their water in whole vessels, and a sad burden to go loaden to a leaking tub with unfruitful labours.—Just so is the condition of those persons, upon whom a wrath is gone out; it is a sad sentence, but acted with a gentle instrument; and since they are condemned to pay the scores of their sins with the sufferance of a load of judgments, it is well they are such as will run quite through them, and not stick upon them to eternity. "Omnes enim pœnæ non exterminantes, sunt medicinales;" "All punishments whatsoever, which do not destroy us, are intended to save us, they are lancets which make a wound, but to let forth the venom of our ulcers. When God slew twenty-three thousand of the Assyrians for their fornication, that was a final justice upon their persons, and consigned them to a sad eternity; for beyond such an infliction there was no remedy. But when God sent lions to the Assyrian inhabitants of Samaria, and the judgment drove them to inquire after the manner of the God of the land, and they sent for priests from Jerusalem to teach them how to worship the God of Israel; that was a mercy and a judgment too: "the long forbearance of God," who destroyed not all the inhabitants, "led" the rest "unto repentance."

1. And I must make this observation to you; that when things come to this pass, that God is forced to the last remedies of judgments, this long-sufferance will little or nothing concern particular persons, but nations and communities of men; for those who are smitten with judgment, if God takes his hand off again, and so opens a way for their repentance by prolonging their time; that comes under the second part of God's method, the ἀνοχή, or "forbearance:" but if he smites a single person with a final judgment, that is "a long-suffering," not of him, but towards others; and God hath destroyed my neighbour, to make me repent, my neighbour's time being expired, and the date of his possibility determined. For a man's death-bed is but an ill station for a penitent; and a final judgment is no good monitor to him, to whom it is a severe executioner. They that perished in the gainsaying of Korah, were out of the conditions of repentance. But the people that were affrighted with the neighbourhood of the judgment, and the expresses of God's anger manifested in such visible remonstrances, they were the men called unto repentance. But concerning the whole nations or communities of men, this long-sufferance is a sermon of repentance; loud, clamorous, and highly argumentative. When God suffered the mutinies, the affronts, the baseness and ingratitude, the follies and relapses, of the children of Israel, who murmured against God ten times in the wilderness; God sent evil angels among them, and fiery serpents, and pestilence, and fire from heaven, and prodigies from the earth, and a prevailing sword of the enemies; and in all these accidents, although some innocent persons felt the contingencies and variety of mortality, yet those wicked persons who fell by the design of God's anger, were made examples unto others, and instances of God's forbearance to the nation; and yet this forbearance was such, that although God preserved the nation in being, and in title to the first promises, yet all the particular persons that came from Egypt, died in the wilderness, two only excepted.

2. And I desire you to observe this, that you may truly estimate the arts of the Divine justice and mercy. For all the world being one continual and entire argument of the Divine mercy, we are apt to abuse that mercy to vain confidences and presumption; first mistaking the end, as if God's mercy would be indulgent to our sin, to which it is the greatest enemy in the world; for it is a certain truth, that the mercy of God is as great an enemy to sin as his justice is; and as God's justice is made the handmaid of his mercy to cure sin, so it is the servant also and the instrument to avenge our despite and contempt of mercy; and in all the way where a difference can be, there justice is the less principal. And it were a great sign of folly, and a huge mistake, to think our Lord and our friends do us offices of kindness, to make themselves more capable of affronts; and that our fathers' care over us, and provision for us, can tempt us to disobey them: the very purpose of all those emanations is, that their love may return in duty, and their providence be the parent of our prudence, and their care be crowned with our piety; and then we shall all be crowned, and shall return like the year, that ends into its own circle; and the fathers and the children, the benefactors and the beneficiary, shall knit the wreath, and bind each other in the eternal enclosures and circlings of immortality. But besides, as the men who presume to sin because of God's mercy, do mistake the very end and design of God's mercy, so they also mistake the economy of it, and the manner of its ministration.

3. For if God suffers men to go on in sins, and punishes them not, it is not a mercy, it is not a forbearance; it is a hardening them, a consigning them to ruin and reprobation; and themselves give the best argument to prove it; for they continue in their sin, they multiply their iniquity, and every day grow more enemy to God; and that is no mercy that increases their hostility and enmity with God. A prosperous iniquity is the most unprosperous condition in the whole world. "When he slew them, they sought him, and turned them early, and inquired after God;" but as long as they prevailed upon their enemies, "they forgot that God was their strength, and the high God was their Redeemer." It was well observed by the Persian ambassador of old; when he was telling the king a sad story of the overthrow of all his army by the Athenians, he adds this of his own; that the day before the fight, the young Persian gallants, being confident they should destroy their enemies, were drinking drunk, and railing at the timorousness and fears of religion, and against all their gods, saying, there were no such things, and that all things came by chance and industry, nothing by the providence of the Supreme Power. But the next day when they had fought unprosperously, and flying from their enemies who were eager in their pursuit, they came to the river Strymon, which was so frozen that their boats could not launch, and yet it began to thaw, so that they feared the ice would not bear them; then you should see the bold gallants, that the day before said there was no God, most timorously and superstitiously fall upon their faces, and beg of God, that the river Strymon might bear them over from their enemies. What wisdom, and philosophy, and perpetual experience, and revelation, and promises, and blessings, cannot do, a mighty fear can; it can allay the confidences of bold lust and imperious sin, and soften our spirit into the lowness of a child, our revenge into the charity of prayers, our impudence into the blushings of a chidden girl; and therefore God hath taken a course proportionable: for he is not so unmercifully merciful, as to give milk to an infirm lust, and hatch the egg to the bigness of a cockatrice. And, therefore, observe how it is that God's mercy prevails over all his works; it is even then when nothing can be discerned but his judgments: for as when a famine had been in Israel in the days of Ahab for three years and a half, when the angry prophet Elijah met the king, and presently a great wind arose, and the dust blew into the eyes of them that walked abroad, and the face of the heavens was black and all tempest, yet then the prophet was most gentle, and God began to forgive, and the heavens were more beautiful than when the sun puts on the brightest ornaments of a bridegroom, going from his chambers of the east: so it is in the economy of the Divine mercy; when God makes our faces black, and the winds blow so loud till the cordage cracks, and our gay fortunes split, and our houses are dressed with cypress and yew, "and the mourners go about the streets," this is nothing but the "pompa misericordiæ," this is the funeral of our sins, dressed indeed with emblems of mourning, and proclaimed with sad accents of death; but the sight is refreshing, as the beauties of the field which God had blessed, and the sounds are healthful as the noise of a physician.

This is that riddle spoken of in the Psalm, "Calix in manu Domini vini meri plenus misto;" "The pure impure, the mingled unmingled cup:"[b] for it is a cup in which God hath poured much of his severity and anger, and yet it is pure and unmingled; for it is all mercy. And so the riddle is resolved, and our cup is full and made more wholesome; "Lymphatum crescit, dulcescit, lædere nescit:" it is some justice, and yet it is all mercy; the very justice of God being an act of mercy; a forbearance of the man or the nation, and the punishing the sin. Thus it was in the case of the children of Israel; when they ran after the bleating of the idolatrous calves, Moses prayed passionately, and God heard his prayer, and forgave their sin unto them. And this was David's observation of the manner of God's mercy to them; "Thou wast a God and forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions."[c] For God's mercy is given to us by parts, and to certain purposes. Sometimes God only so forgives us, that he does not cut us off in the sin, but yet lays on a heavy load of judgments: so he did to his people, when he sent them to school under the discipline of seventy years' captivity. Sometimes he makes a judgment less, and forgives in respect of the degree of the infliction, he strikes more gently; and whereas God had designed, it may be, the death of thyself, or thy nearest relative, he is content to take the life of a child. And so he did to David, when he forbore him; "The Lord hath taken away thy sin, thou shalt not die; nevertheless, the child that is born unto thee, *that* shall die."[d] Sometimes he puts the evil off to a farther day; as he did in the case of Ahab and Hezekiah: to the first he brought the evil upon his house, and to the second he brought the evil upon his kingdom in his son's days, God forgiving only so as to respite the evil, that they should have peace in their own days. And thus when we have committed a sin against God, which hath highly provoked him to anger, even upon our repentance we are not sure to be forgiven, so as we understand forgiveness, that is, to hear no more of it, never to be called to an account: but we are happy if God so forgive us, as not to throw us into the insufferable flames of hell, though he smite us till we groan for our misery, till we "chatter like a swallow," as David's expression is. And though David was an excellent penitent; yet after he had lost the child begotten of Bathsheba, and God had told him he had forgiven him, yet he raised up his darling son against him, and forced him to an inglorious flight, and his son lay with his father's concubines in the face of all Israel. So that when we are forgiven, yet it is ten to one but God will make us to smart and roar for our sins, for the very disquietness of our souls.

[b] Psal. lxxv. 8. [c] Psal. xcix. 8. [d] 2 Sam. xii. 13, 14.

For if we sin and ask God forgiveness, and then are quiet, we feel so little inconvenience in the trade, that we may more easily be tempted to make a trade of it indeed. I wish to God that for every sin we have committed, we could heartily cry "God mercy" and leave it, and judge ourselves for it, to prevent God's anger: but when we have done all that we commonly call repentance, and when possibly God hath forgiven us to some purposes, yet, it may be, he punishes our sin when we least think of it; that sin which we have long since forgotten. It may be, for the lust of thy youth thou hast a healthless old age. An old religious person long ago complained it was his case.

Quos nimis effrænes habui, nunc vapulo renes:
Sic luitur juvenis culpa, dolore senis.

It may be, thy sore eyes are the punishment of intemperance seven years ago; or God cuts thy days shorter, and thou shalt die in a florid age; or he raises up afflictions to thee in thine own house, in thine own bowels; or hath sent a gangrene into thy estate; or with any arrow out of his quiver he can wound thee, and the arrow shall stick fast in thy flesh, although God hath forgiven thy sin to many purposes. Our blessed Saviour "was heard in all that he prayed" (said the apostle): and he prayed for the Jews that crucified him, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do:" and God did forgive that great sin; but how far? Whereas it was just in God to deprive them of all possibility of receiving benefit from the death of Christ, yet God admitted them to it; he gave them time, and possibilities, and helps, and great advantages to bring them to repentance; he did not presently shut them up in his final and eternal anger; and yet he had finally resolved to destroy their city and nation, and did so, but forbore them forty years, and gave them all the helps of miracles and sermons apostolical to shame them, and force them into sorrow for their fault. And before any man can repent, God hath forgiven the man in one degree of forgiveness; for he hath given him grace of repentance, and taken from him that final anger of the spirit of reprobation: and when a man hath repented, no man can say that God hath forgiven him to all purposes, but hath reserves of anger to punish the sin, to make the man afraid to sin any more; and to represent, that when any man hath sinned, whatever he does afterwards, he shall be miserable as long as he lives, vexed with its adherences, and its neighbourhood and evil consequence. For as no man that hath sinned, can, during his life, ever return to an integral and perfect innocence; so neither shall he be restored to a perfect peace, but must always watch and strive against his sin, and always mourn and pray for its pardon, and always find cause to hate it, by knowing himself to be for ever in danger of enduring some grievous calamity, even for those sins for which he hath truly repented him, for which God hath, in many gracious degrees, passed his pardon: this is the manner of dispensation of the Divine mercy, in respect of particular persons and nations too.

But sometimes we find a severer judgment happening upon a people; and yet in that sad story God's mercy sings the triumph, which although it be much to God's glory, yet it is a sad story to sinning people. Six hundred thousand fighting men, besides women and children and decrepit persons, came out of Egypt; and God destroyed them all in the wilderness, except Caleb and Joshua: and there it was that God's mercy prevailed over his justice, that he did not destroy the nation, but still preserved a succession to Jacob, to possess the promise. God drowned all the world except eight persons; his mercy there also prevailed over his justice, that he preserved a remnant to mankind; his justice bevoured all the world, and his mercy, which preserved but eight, had the honour of the prevailing attribute. God destroyed Sodom and the five cities of the plain, and rescued but four from the flames of that sad burning, and of the four lost one in the flight; and yet his mercy prevailed over his justice, because he did not destroy all.

And in these senses we are to understand the excellency of the Divine mercy: even when he smites, when "he rebukes us for sin," when he makes "our beauty to fail, and our flesh to consume away like a moth fretting a garment," yet then his mercy is the prevailing ingredient. If his judgments be but fines set upon our heads, according to the mercy of our old laws, "salvo contenemento," "so as to preserve our estates," to continue our hopes and possibilities of heaven; all the other judgments can be nothing but mercies, excellent instruments of grace, arts to make us sober and wise, to take us off from our vanity, to restrain our wildnesses, which, if they were left unbridled, would set all the world on fire. God's judgments are like the censures of the church, in which a sinner is "delivered over to Satan to be buffeted; that the spirit may be saved." The result of all this is, that God's mercies are not, ought not, cannot be instruments of confidence to sin, because the very purpose of his mercy is to the contrary; and the very manner of his economy and dispensation is such, that God's mercy goes along in complexion and conjunction with his judgments: the riches of his forbearance is this, that he forbears to throw us into hell, and sends the mercies of his rod to chide us unto repentance, and the mercies of his rod to punish us for having sinned, and that when we have sinned we may never think ourselves secured, nor ever be reconciled to such dangers and deadly poisons. This, this is the manner of the Divine mercy. Go now, fond man, and, because God is merciful, presume to sin, as having grounds to hope that thou mayest sin, and be safe all the way! If this—hope, shall I call it, or sordid flattery, could be reasonable, then the mercies of God would not lead us to repentance; so unworthy are we in the sense and largeness of a wide fortune and pleasant accident. For impunity was never a good argument to make men to obey laws. "Quotusquisque reperitur, qui impunitate propositâ abstinere possit injuriis? Impunitas est maxima peccandi illecebra," said Cicero.[c] And therefore, the wisdom of God

[c] Offic. 5.

hath so ordered the actions of the world, that the most fruitful showers shall be wrapped up in a cover of black clouds, that health shall be conveyed by bitter and ill-tasted drugs; that the temples of our bodies shall be purged by whips, and that the cords of the whip shall be the cords of love, to draw us from the entanglings of vanity and folly. This is the long-suffering of God, the last remedy to our diseased souls: and *ἀναίσθητος, ὅστις πολλὰ παθὼν οὐ σωφρονίζεται*, said Phalaris; unless we be senseless, we shall be brought to sober courses by all those sad accidents, and wholesome, but ill-tasted mercies, which we feel in all the course and succession of the Divine long-sufferance.

The use of all the premises is that which St. Paul expresses in the text, that "we do not despise all this:" and he only despises not, who serves the ends of God in all these designs of mercy, that is, he that repents him of his sins. But there are a great many despisers; all they that live in their sins, they that have more blessings than they can reckon hours in their lives, that are courted by the Divine favour and wooed to salvation, as if mankind were to give, not to receive, so great a blessing, all they that answer not to so friendly summons,—they are despisers of God's mercies: and although God overflows with mercies, and does not often leave us to the only hopes of being cured by unctions and gentle cataplasms, but proceeds further, and gives us "stibium," or prepared steel, sharp arrows of his anger, and the sword, and the hand of sickness; yet we are not sure of so much favour as to be entertained longer in God's hospital, but may be thrust forth among the "incurabiles." Plutarch reports concerning swine, that their optic nerves are so disposed to turn their eyes downward, that they cannot look upwards, nor behold the face of heaven, unless they be thrown upon their backs. Such swine are we: we seldom can look up to heaven, till God by his judgments throws us upon our backs; till he humbles us and softens us with showers of our own blood, and tears of sorrow: and yet God hath not promised that he will do so much for us; but for aught we know, as soon as ever the devil enters into our swinish and brutish hearts, we shall run down the hill, and perish in the floods and seas of intolerable misery. And therefore, besides that it is a huge folly in us, that we will not be cured with pleasant medicines, but must be longing for coloquintida and for vomits, for knives and poniards instead of the gentle showers of the Divine refreshments, besides that this is an imprudence and sottishness; we do infinitely put it to the venture, whether we shall be in a saveable condition or no, after the rejection of the first state of mercies. But, however, then begins the first step of the judgment and pungent misery, we are perishing people; or, if not, yet at the least not to be cured without the abscission of a member, without the cutting off a hand or a leg, or the putting out of an eye: we must be cut, to take the stone out of our hearts, and that is the state of a very great infelicity; and if we escape the stone, we cannot escape the surgeon's knife; if we escape death, yet we have a sickness; and though that be a great mercy in respect of death, yet it is as great misery in respect of health. And that is the first punishment for the despite done to the first and most sensible mercies; we are fallen into a sickness, that cannot be cured but by disease and hardship.

But if this despite runs further, and when the mercies look on us with an angry countenance, and that God gives us only the mercy of a punishment, if we despise this too, we increase but our misery, as we increase our sin. The sum of which is this: that if Pharaoh will not be cured by one plague, he shall have ten; and if ten will not do it, the great and tenth wave, which is far bigger than all the rest, the severest and the last arrow of the quiver, then we shall perish in the Red sea, the sea of flames and blood, in which the ungodly shall roll eternally.

But some of these despisers are such as are unmoved when God smites others; like Gallio, when the Jews took Sosthenes, and beat him in the pleading-place, he "cared for none of these things;" he was not concerned in that interest: and many Gallios there are among us, that understand it not to be a part of the divine method of God's "long-sufferance," to strike others to make us afraid. But however we sleep in the midst of such alarms, yet know, that there is not one death in all the neighbourhood but is intended to thee; every crowing of the cock is to awake thee to repentance: and if thou sleepest still, the next turn may be thine; God will send his angel, as he did to Peter, and smite thee on thy side, and wake thee from thy dead sleep of sin and sottishness. But beyond this some are despisers still, and hope to drown the noises of mount Sinai, the sound of cannons, of thunders and lightnings, with a counter-noise of revelling and clamorous roarings, with merry meetings; like the sacrifices to Moloch, they sound drums and trumpets, that they might not hear the sad shriekings of their children, as they were dying in the cavity of the brazen idol: and when their conscience shrieks out or murmurs in a sad melancholy, or something that is dear to them is smitten, they attempt to drown it in a sea of drink, in the heathenish noises of idle and drunken company; and that which God sends to lead them to repentance, leads them to a tavern, not to refresh their needs of nature, or for ends of a tolerable civility, or innocent purposes; but, like the condemned persons among the Levantines, they tasted wine freely, that they might die and be insensible. I could easily reprove such persons with an old Greek proverb mentioned by Plutarch, *Περὶ τῆς Εὐθυμίας, οὔτε ποδάγρας ἀπαλλάττει κάλκιος*, "You shall ill be cured of the knotted gout, if you have nothing else but a wide shoe." But this reproof is too gentle for so great madness: it is not only an incompetent cure, to apply the plaister of a sin or vanity to cure the smart of a divine judgment; but it is a great increaser of the misery, by swelling the cause to bigger and monstrous proportions. It is just as if an impatient fool, feeling the smart of his medicine, shall tear his wounds open, and throw away the instruments of his cure, because they bring him health at the

charge of a little pain, Ἐγγὺς Κυρίου πλήρης μαστίγων, "He that is full of stripes" and troubles, and decked round about with thorns, he "is near to God:" but he that, because he sits uneasily when he sits near the King that was crowned with thorns, shall remove thence, or strew flowers, roses and jessamine, the down of thistles and the softest gossamer, that he may die without pain, die quietly and like a lamb, sink to the bottom of hell without noise; this man is a fool, because he accepts death if it arrest him in civil language, is content to die by the sentence of an eloquent judge, and prefers a quiet passage to hell before going to heaven in a storm.

That Italian gentleman was certainly a great lover of his sleep, who was angry with the lizard that waked him, when a viper was creeping into his mouth: when the devil is entering into us to poison our spirits, and steal our souls away while we are sleeping in the lethargy of sin, God sends his sharp messages to awaken us; and we call that the enemy, and use arts to cure the remedy, not to cure the disease. There are some persons that will never be cured, not because the sickness is incurable, but because they have ill stomachs, and cannot keep the medicine. Just so is his case that so despises God's method of curing him by these instances of long-sufferance, that he uses all the arts he can to be quit of his physician, and to spill his physic, and to take cordials as soon as his vomit begins to work. There is no more to be said in this affair, but to read the poor wretch's sentence, and to declare his condition. As at first, when he despised the first great mercies, God sent him sharpness and sad accidents to ensober his spirits: so now that he despises his mercy also, the mercy of the rod, God will take it away from him, and then I hope all is well. Miserable man that thou art! this is thy undoing; if God ceases to strike thee, because thou wilt not mend, thou art sealed up to ruin and reprobation for ever; the physician hath given thee over, he hath no kindness for thee. This was the desperate estate of Judah, "Ah, sinful nation! a people laden with iniquity: they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel. Why should ye be stricken any more?"[e] This is the ἀνάθεμα μαρὰν ἀθὰ, the most bitter curse, the greatest excommunication, when the delinquent is become a heathen and a publican, without the covenant, out of the pale of the church: the church hath nothing to do with them: "for what have I to do with them that are without?" said St. Paul. It was not lawful for the church any more to punish them. And this court christian is an imitation and parallel of the justice of the court of heaven: when a sinner is not mended by judgments at long-running, God cuts him off from his inheritance, and the lot of sons; he will chastise him no more, but let him take his course, and spend his portion of prosperity, such as shall be allowed him in the great economy of the world. Thus God did to his vineyard which he took such pains to fence, to plant, to manure, to dig, to cut, and to prune: and when, after all, it brought forth wild grapes, the last and worst of God's anger was this; "Auferam sepem ejus:"[f] God had fenced it with a hedge of thorns, and "God would take away all that hedge," he would not leave a thorn standing, not one judgment to reprove or admonish them, but all the wild beasts, and wilder and more beastly lusts, may come and devour it, and trample it down in scorn.

And now what shall I say, but those words quoted by St. Paul in his sermon, "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish;"[g] perish in your own folly by stubbornness and ingratitude. For it is a huge contradiction to the nature and designs of God: God calls us, we refuse to hear; he invites us with fair promises, we hear and consider not; he gives us blessings, we take them and understand not his meaning; we take out the token, but read not the letter: then he threatens us, and we regard not; he strikes our neighbours, and we are not concerned: then he strikes us gently, but we feel it not: then he does like the physician in the Greek epigram, who being to cure a man of a lethargy, locked him into the same room with a madman, that he by dry-beating him might make him at least sensible of blows; but this makes us, instead of running to God, to trust in unskilful physicians, or, like Saul, to run to a Pythonisse; we run for cure to a crime, we take sanctuary in a pleasant sin; just as if a man, to cure his melancholy, should desire to be stung with a tarantula, that at least he may die merrily. What is there more to be done that God hath not yet done? He is forced at last to break off with a "Curavimus Babylonem, et non est sanata," "We dressed and tended Babylon," but she was incurable: there is no help but such persons must die in their sins, and lie down in eternal sorrow.

[e] Isaiah i. 4, 5. [f] Isaiah v. 5. [g] Acts xiii. 41.

SERMON XIV.

OF GROWTH IN GRACE.

PART I.

But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ: to whom be glory both now and for ever. Amen.—2 Pet. iii. 18.

WHEN christianity, like the day-spring from the east, with a new light, did not only enlighten the world, but amazed the minds of men, and entertained their curiosities, and seized upon their warmer and more pregnant affections, it was no wonder, that whole nations were converted at a sermon, multitudes were instantly professed, and their understandings followed their affections, and their wills followed their understandings, and they were convinced by miracle, and overcome by grace, and passionate with zeal, and wisely governed by their guides, and ravished with the sanctity of the doctrine, and the holiness of their examples. And this

was not only their duty, but a great instance of providence, that by the great religion and piety of the first professors, christianity might be firmly planted, and unshaken by scandal, and hardened by persecution; and that these first lights might be actual precedents for ever, and copies for us to transcribe in all descending ages of christianity, that thither we might run to fetch oil to enkindle our extinguished lamps. But then piety was so universal, that it might well be enjoined by St. Paul, that "if a brother walked disorderly," the christians should avoid his company: he forbade them not to accompany with the heathens that walked disorderly; "for then a man must have gone out of the world;" but they were not to endure so much as "to eat with," or, "to salute, a disorderly brother," and ill-living christian. But now, if we should observe this canon of St. Paul, and refuse to eat or to converse with a fornicator, or a drunkard, or a perjured person, or covetous, we must also "go out of the world:" for a pious or a holy person is now as rare as a disorderly christian was at first; and as christianity is multiplied every where in name and title, so it is destroyed in life, essence, and proper operation; and we have very great reason to fear, that Christ's name will serve us to no end but to upbraid our baseness, and his person only to be our judge, and his laws are so many bills of accusation, and his graces and helps offered us but as aggravations of our unworthiness, and our baptism but an occasion of vow-breach, and the holy communion but an act of hypocrisy, formality, or sacrilege, and all the promises of the gospel but as pleasant dreams, and the threatenings but as arts of affrightment. For christianity lasted pure and zealous, it kept its rules, and observed its own laws for three hundred years, or thereabouts; so long the church remained a virgin; for so long they were warmed with their first fires, and kept under discipline by the rod of persecution: but it hath declined almost fourteen hundred years together; prosperity and pride, wantonness and great fortunes, ambition and interest, false doctrine upon mistake and upon design, the malice of the devil and the arts of all his instruments, the want of zeal, and a weariness of spirit, filthy examples, and a disreputation of piety and a strict life, seldom precedents and infinite discouragements, have caused so infinite a declension of piety and holy living, that what Papirius Massonius, one of their own, said of the popes of Rome, "In pontificibus nemo hodie sanctitatem requirit; optimi putantur, si vel leviter mali sint, vel minus boni quam cæteri mortales esse solent:" "No man looks for holiness in the bishops of Rome; those are the best popes who are not extremely wicked:" the same is too true of the greatest part of christians; men are excellent persons, if they be not traitors or adulterous, oppressors or injurious, drunkards or scandalous, if they be not "as this publican," as the vilest person with whom they converse.

> Nunc, si depositum non inficietur amicus,
> Si reddat veterem cum totâ ærugine fœlem;
> Prodigiosa fides, et Thuscis digna libellis,
> Quæque coronatâ lustrari debeat agnâ. JUV. Sat. 13.

He that is better than the dregs of his own age, whose religion is something above profaneness, and whose sobriety is a step or two from downright intemperance, whose discourse is not swearing, nor yet apt to edify, whose charity is set out in piety, and a gentle yearning and saying "God help," whose alms are contemptible, and his devotion infrequent; yet, as things are now, he is "unus è millibus," "one of a thousand," and he stands eminent and conspicuous in the valleys and lower grounds of the present piety; for a bank is a mountain upon a level: but what is rare and eminent in the manners of men this day would have been scandalous, and have deserved the rod of an apostle, if it had been confronted with the fervours and rare devotion and religion of our fathers in the gospel.

Men of old looked upon themselves as they stood by the examples and precedents of martyrs, and compared their piety to the life of St. Paul, and estimated their zeal by flames of the Boanerges, St. James and his brother; and the bishops were thought reprovable, as they fell short of the ordinary government of St. Peter and St. John; and the assemblies of christians were so holy, that every meeting had religion enough to hallow a house, and convert it to a church; and every day of feasting was a communion, and every fasting-day was a day of repentance and alms, and every day of thanksgiving was a day of joy and alms; and religion began all their actions, and prayer consecrated them, and they ended in charity, and were not polluted with design: they despised the world heartily, and pursued after heaven greedily; they knew no ends, but to serve God and to be saved; and had no designs upon their neighbours, but to lead them to God and to felicity; till Satan, full of envy to see such excellent days, mingled covetousness and ambition within the throngs and conventions of the church, and a vice crept into an office, and then the mutual confidence grew less, and so charity was lessened; and heresies crept in, and then faith began to be sullied; and pride crept in, and then men snatched at offices, not for the work, but for the dignity; and then they served themselves more than God and the church; till at last it came to that pass where now it is, that the clergy live lives no better than the laity, and the laity are stooped to imitate the evil customs of strangers and enemies of christianity; so that we should think religion in a good condition, if that men did offer up to God but the actions of an ordinary, even, and just life, without the scandal and allays of a great impiety. But because such is the nature of things, that either they grow towards perfection, or decline towards dissolution; there is no proper way to secure it but by setting its growth forward: for religion hath no station or natural periods; if it does not grow better it grows much worse; not that it always returns the man into scandalous sins, but that it establishes and fixes him in a state of indifference and lukewarmness; and he is more averse to a state of improvement, and dies in an incurious, ignorant, and unrelenting condition.

"But grow in grace:"—That is the remedy, and that would make us all wise and happy, blessed in

this world, and sure of heaven: concerning which, we are to consider, first, What the state of grace is into which every one of us must be entered, that we may "grow" in it: secondly, The proper parts, acts, and offices of "growing in grace:" thirdly, The signs, consequences, and proper significations, by which if we cannot perceive the "growing," yet afterwards we may perceive that "we are grown," and so judge of the state of our duty, and concerning our final condition of being saved.

1. Concerning the state of grace, I consider that no man can be said to be in the state of grace, who retains an affection to any one sin. The state of pardon and the Divine favour begins at the first instance of anger against our crimes, when we leave our fondnesses and kind opinions, when we excuse them not, and will not endure their shame, when we feel the smarts of any of their evil consequents: for he that is a perfect lover of sin, and is sealed up to a reprobate sense, endures all that sin brings along with it; and is reconciled to all its mischiefs; he can suffer the sickness of his own drunkenness, and yet call it pleasure; he can wait like a slave to serve his lust, and yet count it no disparagement; he can suffer the dishonour of being accounted a base and dishonest person, and yet look confidently, and think himself no worse. But when the grace of God begins to work upon a man's spirit, it makes the conscience nice and tender: and although the sin, as yet, does not displease the man, but he can endure the flattering and alluring part, yet he will not endure to be used so ill by his sin; he will not be abused and dishonoured by it. But because God hath so allayed the pleasure of his sin, that he that drinks the sweet should also strain the dregs through his throat; by degrees God's grace doth-irreconcile the convert, and discovers, first, its base attendants, then its worse consequents, then the displeasure of God; that here commence the first resolutions of leaving the sin, and trying if, in the service of God, his spirit and the whole appetite of man may be better entertained. He that is thus far entered, shall quickly perceive the difference, and meets arguments enough to invite him farther; for then God treats the man as he treated the spies, that went to discover the land of promise; he ordered the year in plenty, and directed them to a pleasant and a fruitful place, and prepared bunches of grapes of a miraculous and prodigious greatness, that they might report good things of Canaan, and invite the whole nation to attempt its conquest; so God's grace represents to the new converts, and the weak ones in faith, the pleasures and first deliciousnesses of religion; and when they come to spy the good things of that way that leads to heaven, they presently perceive themselves eased of the load of an evil conscience, of their fears of death, of the confusion of their shame; and God's Spirit gives them a cup of sensible comfort, and makes them to rejoice in their prayers, and weep with pleasures mingled with innocent passion and religious changes. And although God does not deal with all men in the same method, or in manners that can regularly be described; and all men do not feel, or do not observe, or cannot, for want of skill, discern, such accidental sweetnesses and pleasant grapes at their first entrance into religion; yet God to every man does minister excellent arguments of invitation; and such, that if a man will attend to them, they will certainly move either his affections or his will, his fancy or his reason, and most commonly both. But while the Spirit of God is doing this work in man, man must also be *σύνεργος τοῦ Θεοῦ*, "a fellow-worker with God;" he must entertain the Spirit, attend his inspirations, receive his whispers, obey all his motions, invite him farther, and truly renounce all confederacy with his enemy, sin; at no hand suffering any "root of bitterness to spring up," not allowing to himself any reserve of carnal pleasure, no clancular lust, no private oppressions, no secret covetousness, no love to this world, that may discompose his duty. For if a man prays all day, and at night is intemperate; if he spends his time in reading, and his recreation be sinful; if he studies religion, and practises self-interest; if he leaves his swearing, and yet retains his pride; if he becomes chaste, and yet remains peevish and imperious; this man is not changed from the state of sin into the first stage of the state of grace, he does at no hand belong to God; he hath suffered himself to be scared from one sin, and tempted from another by interest, and hath left a third by reason of his inclination, and a fourth for shame or want of opportunity; but the Spirit of God hath not yet planted one perfect plant there: God may make use of the accidentally-prepared advantages; but as yet the Spirit of God hath not begun the proper and direct work of grace in his heart. But when we leave every sin, when we resolve never to return to the chains, when we have no love for the world but such as may be a servant of God; then I account that we are entered into a state of grace, from whence I am now to begin to reckon the commencement of this precept, "Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

2. And now the first part of this duty is,—to make religion to be the business of our lives;—for this is the great instrument which will naturally produce our growth in grace, and the perfection of a christian. For a man cannot, after a state of sin, be instantly a saint; the work of Heaven is not done by a flash of lightning, or a dash of affectionate rain, or a few tears of a relenting pity: God and his church have appointed holy intervals, and have taken portions of our time for religion, that we may be called off from the world, and remember the end of our creation, and do honour to God, and think of heaven with hearty purposes and peremptory designs to get thither. But as we must not neglect those times, which God hath reserved for his service, or the church hath prudently decreed; nor yet act religion upon such days with forms and outsides, or to comply with customs, or to seem religious; so we must take care, that all the other portions of our time be hallowed with little retirements of our thoughts, and short conversations with God, and all along be guided with holy intention; that even our works of nature may pass into the re-

lations of grace, and the actions of our calling may help towards the "obtaining the prize of our high calling;" while our eatings are actions of temperance, our labours are profitable, our humiliations are acts of obedience, and our alms of charity, and our marriages are chaste; and "whether we eat or drink," sleep or wake, we may "do all to the glory of God," by a direct intuition, or by a reflex act; by design, or by supplement; by foresight, or by an after-election. And to this purpose we must not look upon religion as our trouble and our hinderance, nor think alms chargeable or expensive, nor our fastings vexatious and burdensome; nor our prayers a weariness of spirit; but we must make these, and all other the duties of religion, our employment, our care, the work and end for which we came into the world; and remember that we never do the work of men, nor serve the ends of God, nor are in the proper employment and business of our life, but when we worship God, or live like wise or sober persons, or do benefit to our brother.

I will not turn this discourse into a reproof, but leave it represented as a duty. Remember that God sent you into the world for religion; we are but to pass through our pleasant fields, or our hard labours; but to dodge a little while in our fair palaces, or our meaner cottages; but to bait in the way at our full tables, or with our spare diet; but then only man does his proper employment, when he prays and does charity, and mortifies his unruly appetites, and restrains his violent passions, and becomes like to God and imitates his holy Son, and writes after the copies of apostles and saints. Then he is dressing himself for eternity, where he must dwell or abide, either in an excellent beatifical country, or in a prison of amazement and eternal horror: and after all this, you may, if you please, call to mind how much time you allow to God and to your souls every day, or every month, or in a year, if you please, for I fear the account of the time is soon made; but the account for the neglect will be harder; and it will not easily be answered, that all our days and years are little enough to attend perishing things, and to be swallowed up in avaricious and vain attendances, and we shall not attend to religion with a zeal so great as is our revenge, or as is the hunger of one meal. Without much time, and a wary life, and a diligent circumspection, we cannot mortify our sins, or do the first works of grace. I pray God we be not found to have grown like the sinews of old age, from strength to remissness; from thence to dissolution, and infirmity, and death. Menedemus was wont to say, "that the young boys that went to Athens, the first year were wise men, the second year philosophers, the third orators, and the fourth were but plebeians, and understood nothing but their own ignorance." And just so it happens to some in the progresses of religion; at first they are violent and active, and then they satiate all the appetites of religion; and that which is left is, that they were soon weary, and sat down in displeasure, and return to the world, and dwell in the business of pride or money; and, by this time, they understand that their religion is declined, and passed from the heats and follies of youth, to the coldness and infirmities of old age: the remedy of which is only a diligent spirit and a busy religion; a great industry, and a full portion of time in holy offices; that, as the oracle said to the Cirrhæans, "noctes diesque belligerandum," they could not be happy "unless they waged war night and day;" so unless we perpetually fight against our own vices, and repel our ghostly enemies, and stand upon our guard, we must stand for ever in the state of babes in Christ; or else return to the first imperfections of an unchristened soul and an unsanctified spirit.—That is the first particular.

2. The second step of our growth in grace is,—when virtues grow habitual, apt, and easy, in our manners and dispositions;—for, although many new converts have a great zeal, and a busy spirit, apt enough, as they think, to contest against all the difficulties of a spiritual life; yet they meet with such powerful oppositions from without, and a false heart within, that their first heats are soon broken; and either they are for ever discouraged, or are forced to march more slowly, and proceed more temperately for ever after.

Τὴν μέντοι κακότητα καὶ ἱλαδόν ἐστιν ἑλέσθαι
Ῥηϊδίως, ὁλίγη μὲν ὁδὸς, μάλα δ' ἐγγύθι ναίει·

"It is an easy thing to commit any wickedness, for temptation and infirmity are always too near us;" but God hath made care and sweat, prudence and diligence, experience and watchfulness, wisdom and labour at home, and good guides abroad, to be instruments and means to purchase virtue.

The way is long and difficult at first; but in the progress and pursuit, we find all the knots made plain, and the rough ways made smooth.

—— jam monte potitus
Ridet ——

Now the spirit of grace is like a new soul within him, and he hath new appetites and new pleasures, when the things of the world grow unsavoury, and the things of religion are delicious: when his temptations to his old crimes return but seldom, and prevail not at all, or in very inconsiderable instances, and stay not at all, but are reproached with a penitential sorrow and speedy amendment; when we do actions of virtue quickly, frequently, and with delight, then we have grown in grace, in the same degree in which they can perceive these excellent dispositions. Some persons there are who dare not sin; they dare not omit their hours of prayer, and they are restless in their spirits till they have done; but they go to it as to execution; they stay from it as long as they can, and they drive, like Pharaoh's chariots, with the wheels off, sadly and heavily; and, besides that, such persons have reserved to themselves the best part of their sacrifice, and do not give their will to God; they do not love him with all their heart; they are, also, soonest tempted to retire and fall off. Sextius Romanus resigned the honours and offices of the city, and betook himself to the severity of a philosophical life; but when his unusual diet and hard labour began to pinch his flesh, and he felt his propositions smart; and that,

which was fine in discourse at a symposiac or an academical dinner, began to sit uneasily upon him in the practice, he so despaired, that he had like to have cast himself into the sea, to appease the labours of his religion; because he never had gone farther than to think it a fine thing to be a wise man: he would commend it, but he was loath to pay for it at the price that God and the philosopher set upon it. But he that is "grown in grace," and hath made religion habitual to his spirit, is not at ease but when he is doing the works of the new man: he rests in religion, and comforts his sorrows with thinking of his prayers; and in all crosses of the world he is patient, because his joy is at hand to refresh him when he list, for he cares not so he may serve God; and if you make him poor here, he is rich there, and he counts that to be his proper service, his work, his recreation, and reward.

3. But because in the course of holy living, although the duty be regular and constant, yet the sensible relishes and the flowerings of affections, the zeal and the visible expressions, do not always make the same emission; but sometimes by design, sometimes by order, and sometimes by affection, we are more busy, more entire, and more intent upon the actions of religion: in such cases we are to judge of our growth in grace, if after every interval of extraordinary piety, the next return be more devout and more affectionate, the labour be more cheerful and more active, and if religion returns oftener, and stays longer in the same expressions, and leaves more satisfaction upon the spirit. Are your communions more frequent? and, when they are, do you approach nearer to God? Have you made firmer resolutions, and entertained more hearty purposes of amendment? Do you love God more dutifully, and your neighbour with a greater charity? Do you not so easily return to the world as formerly? Are not you glad when the thing is done? Do you go to your secular accounts with a more weaned affection than before? If you communicate well, it is certain that you will still do it better; if you do not communicate well, every opportunity of doing it is but a new trouble, easily excused, readily omitted; done because it is necessary, but not because we love it; and we shall find that such persons, in their old age, do it worst of all. And it was observed by a Spanish confessor, who was also a famous preacher, that in persons not very religious, the confessions, which they made upon their death-bed, were the coldest, the most imperfect, and with less contrition than all that he had observed them to make in many years before. For so the canes of Egypt, when they newly arise from their bed of mud and slime of Nilus, start up into an equal and continual length, and are interrupted but with few knots, and are strong and beauteous, with great distances and intervals; but when they are grown to their full length, they lessen into the point of a pyramid, and multiply their knots and joints, interrupting the fineness and smoothness of its body; so are the steps and declensions of him that does not grow in grace. At first, when he springs up from his impurity by the waters of baptism and repentance, he grows straight and strong, and suffers but few interruptions of piety; and his constant courses of religion are but rarely intermitted, till they ascend up to a full age, or towards the ends of their life; then they are weak, and their devotions often intermitted, and their breaches are frequent, and they seek excuses, and labour for dispensations, and love God and religion less and less,—till their old age, instead of a crown of their virtue and perseverance, ends in levity and unprofitable courses; light and useless as the tufted feathers upon the cane, every wind can play with it and abuse it, but no man can make it useful. When, therefore, our piety interrupts its greater and more solemn expressions, and, upon the return of the greater offices and bigger solemnities, we find them to come upon our spirits like the wave of a tide, which retired only because it was natural so to do, and yet came farther upon the strand at the next rolling; when every new confession, every succeeding communion, every time of separation, for more solemn and intense prayer is better spent, and more affectionate, leaving a greater relish upon the spirit, and possessing greater portions of our affections, our reason, and our choice; then we may give God thanks, who hath given us more grace to use that grace, and a blessing to endeavour our duty, and a blessing upon our endeavour.

4. To discern our growth in grace,—we must inquire concerning our passions, whether they be mortified and quiet, complying with our ends of virtue, and under command;—for since the passions are the matter of virtue and vice respectively, he that hath brought into his power all the strengths of the enemy, and the forts from whence he did infest him, he only hath secured his holy walking with God. But because this thing is never perfectly done, and yet must always be doing, grace grows according as we have finished our portions of this work. And in this we must not only inquire concerning our passions, whether they be sinful and habitually prevalent, for if they be we are not in the state of grace; but whether they return upon us in violences and undecencies, in transportation, and unreasonable and imprudent expressions; for although a good man may be incident to a violent passion, and that without sin, yet a perfect man is not; a well-grown christian hath seldom such sufferings. To suffer such things sometimes may stand with the being of virtue, but not with its security; for if passions range up and down, and transport us frequently and violently, we may keep in our forts and in our dwellings; but our enemy is master of the field, and our virtues are restrained, and apt to be starved, and will not hold out long. A good man may be spotted with a violence, but a wise man will not; and he that does not add wisdom to his virtue, the knowledge of Jesus Christ to his virtuous habits, will be a good man but till a storm come. But, beyond this, inquire after the state of your passions in actions of religion. Some men fast to mortify their lust, and their fasting makes them peevish; some reprove a vice, but they do it with much impatience; some charitably give

excellent counsel, but they do that, also, with a pompous and proud spirit; and passion, being driven from open hostilities, is forced to march along in the retinue and troops of virtue. And, although this be rather a deception and a cozenage than an imperfection, and supposes a state of sin, rather than an imperfect grace; yet, because it tacitly and secretly creeps along among the circumstances of pious actions,—as it spoils a virtue in some, so it lessens it in others, and therefore is considerable also in this question.

And although no man must take accounts of his being in or out of the state of grace, by his being dispassionate, and free from all the assaults of passion; yet, as to the securing his being in the state of grace, he must provide that he be not a slave of passion: so, to declare his growth in grace, he must be sure to take the measures of his affections, and see that they be lessened, more apt to be suppressed; not breaking out to inconvenience and imprudences; not rifling our spirit, and drawing us from our usual and more sober tempers. Try, therefore, if your fear be turned into caution; your lust, into chaste friendships; your imperious spirit, into prudent government; your revenge, into justice; your anger, into charity; and your peevishness and rage, into silence and suppression of language. Is our ambition changed into virtuous and noble thoughts? Can we emulate without envy? Is our covetousness lessened into good husbandry, and mingled with alms, that we may certainly discern the love of money to be gone? Do we leave to despise our inferiors? and can we willingly endure to admit him that excels us in any gift or grace whatsoever, and to commend it without abatement, and mingling allays with the commendation, and disparagements to the man? If we be arrived but thus far, it is well, and we must go farther. But we use to think that all disaffections of the body are removed, if they be changed into the more tolerable, although we have not an athletic health, or the strength of porters or wrestlers. For, although it be felicity to be quit of all passion that may be sinful or violent, and part of the happiness of heaven shall consist in that freedom; yet our growth in grace consists in the remission and lessening of our passions: only he that is incontinent in his lust, or in his anger; in his desires of money, or of honour; in his revenge, or in his fear; in his joys, or in his sorrows; that man is not grown at all in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. This only: in the scrutiny and consequent judgment concerning our passions, it will concern the curiosity of our care to watch against passions in the reflex act, against pride or lust; complacency and peevishness attending upon virtue. For he was noted for a vain person, who, being overjoyed for the cure (as he thought) of his pride, cried out to his wife: "Cerne, Dionysia, deposui fastum;" "Behold, I have laid aside all my pride:" and of that very dream the silly man thought he had reason to boast; but considered not that it was an act of pride and levity besides. If thou hast given a noble present to thy friend; if thou hast rejected the unjust desire of thy prince; if thou hast endured thirst and hunger for religion or continence; if thou hast refused an offer like that which was made to Joseph; sit down and rest in thy good conscience, and do not please thyself in opinions and fantastic noises abroad; and do not despise him that did not do so, as thou hast done, and reprove no man with an upbraiding circumstance; for it will give thee but an ill return, and a contemptible reward, if thou shalt overlay thy infant virtue, or drown it with a flood of breast-milk.

SERMON XV.

PART II.

5. He is well grown in or towards the state of grace, who is more patient of a sharp reproof than of a secret flattery. For a reprehension contains so much mortification to the pride and complacencies of a man, is so great an affront to an easy and undisturbed person, is so empty of pleasure and so full of profit, that he must needs love virtue in a great degree, who can take in that which only serves her end, and is displeasant to himself and all his gaieties. A severe reprehender of another's vice comes dressed like Jacob, when he went to cozen his brother of the blessing; his outside is "rough and hairy," but "the voice is Jacob's voice:" rough hands and a healthful language get the blessing, even against the will of him that shall feel it; but he that is patient and even, not apt to excuse his fault, that is less apt to anger, or to scorn him that snatches him rudely from the flames of hell, he is virtue's confessor, and suffers these lesser stripes for that interest, which will end in spiritual and eternal benedictions.

They who are furious against their monitors, are incorrigible; but it is one degree of meekness to suffer discipline; and a meek man cannot easily be an ill man, especially in the present instance; he appears, at least, to have a healthful constitution; he hath good flesh to heal; his spirit is capable of medicine; and that man can never be despaired of, who hath a disposition so near his health as to improve all physic, and whose nature is relieved from every good accident from without. But that which I observe is, that this is not only a good disposition towards repentance and restitution, but is a sign of growth in grace, according as it becomes natural, easy, and habitual. Some men chide themselves for all their misdemeanors, because they would be represented to the censures and opinions of other men with a fair character, and such as need not to be reproved: others, out of inconsideration, sleep in their own dark rooms, and, until the charity of a guide or of a friend draws the curtain, and lets in a beam of light, dream on, until the grave opens, and hell devours them: but if they be called upon by the grace of God, let down with a sheet of counsels and friendly precepts, they are presently inclined to be obedient to the heavenly monitions; but

unless they be dressed with circumstances of honour and civility, with arts of entertainment and insinuation, they are rejected utterly, or received unwillingly. Therefore, although upon any terms to endure a sharp reproof be a good sign of amendment, yet the growth of grace is not properly signified by every such sufferance: for when this disposition begins, amendment also begins, and goes on in proportion to the increment of this. To endure a reproof without adding a new sin is the first step to amendment; that is, to endure it without scorn, or hatred, or indignation. 2. The next is to suffer reproof without excusing ourselves; for he that is apt to excuse himself, is only desirous in a civil manner to set the reproof aside, and to represent the charitable monitor to be too hasty in his judgment, and deceived in his information; and the fault to dwell there, not with himself. 3. Then he that proceeds in this instance, admits the reprover's sermon or discourse without a private regret; he hath no secret murmurs or unwillingnesses to the humiliation, but is only ashamed that he should deserve it; but for the reprehension itself, *that* troubles him not, but he looks on it as his own medicine, and the other's charity. 4. But if to this he adds, that he voluntarily confesses his own fault, and of his own accord vomits out the loads of his own intemperance, and eases his spirit of the infection; then it is certain he is not only a professed and hearty enemy against sin, but a zealous, and a prudent, and an active person against all its interest; and never counts himself at ease but while he rests upon the banks of Sion, or at the gates of the temple; never pleased but in virtue and religion: then he knows the state of his soul and the state of his danger; he reckons it no abjection to be abased in the face of man, so he may be gracious in the eyes of God: and that is a sign of a good grace and a holy wisdom; that man is "grown in the grace of God, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." "Justus in principio sermonis est accusator sui," said the wise man; "The righteous accuseth himself *in the beginning*;" that is, *quickly*, lest he be prevented. And certain it is, he cannot be either wise or good, that had rather have a real sin within him, than that a good man should believe him to be a repenting sinner; that had rather keep his crime than lose his reputation; that is, rather to *be* so than to be *thought* so; rather be without the favour of God than of his neighbour. Diogenes once spied a young man coming out of a tavern or place of entertainment, who, perceiving himself observed by the philosopher, with some confusion stepped back again, that he might, if possible, preserve his fame with that severe person. But Diogenes told him, "Quantò magis intraveris, tantò magis eris in cauponâ;" "The more you go back, the longer you are in the place where you are ashamed to be seen." And he that conceals his sin, still retains that which he counts his shame and his burden. Hippocrates was noted for an ingenuous person, that he published and confessed his error concerning the sutures of the head: and all ages since St. Austin have called him pious, for writing his book of Retractations, in which he published his former ignorances and mistakes, and so set his shame off to the world invested with a garment of modesty, and above half changed before they were seen. I did the rather insist upon this particular, because it is a consideration of huge concernment, and yet much neglected in all its instances and degrees. We neither confess our shame nor endure it: we are privately troubled, and publicly excuse it; we turn charity into bitterness, and our reproof into contumacy and scorn; and who is there amongst us that can endure a personal charge, or is not to be taught his personal duty by general discoursings, by parable and apologue, by acts of insinuation and wary distances? But by this state of persons we know the estate of our own spirits.

When God sent his prophets to the people, and "they stoned them with stones, and sawed them asunder, and cast them into dungeons, and made them beggars," the people fell into the condition of Babylon, "Quam curavimus, et non est sanata;" "We healed her," said the prophets, "but she would not be cured:" "Derelinquamus eam," that is her doom; let her enjoy her sins, and all the fruits of sin laid up in treasures of wrath against the day of vengeance and retribution.

6. He that is grown in grace and the knowledge of Christ esteems no sin to be little or contemptible, none fit to be cherished or indulged to. For it is not only inconsistent with the love of God, to entertain any indecency or beginning of a crime, any thing that displeases him; but he always remembers how much it cost him to arrive at the state of good things, whither the grace of God hath already brought him; he thinks of his prayers and tears, his restless nights and his daily fears, his late escape and his present danger, the ruins of his former state, and the difficulty and imperfect reparations of this new, his proclivity and aptness to vice, and natural averseness and uneasy inclinations to the strictness of holy living; and when these are considered truly, they naturally make a man unwilling to entertain any beginnings of a state of life contrary to that, which, with so much danger and difficulty, through so many objections and enemies, he hath attained. And the truth is, when a man hath escaped the dangers of his first state of sin, he cannot but be extremely unwilling to return again thither, in which he can never hope for heaven. And so it must be; for a man must not flatter himself in a small crime, and say, as Lot did, when he begged a reprieve for Zoar, "Alas! Lord, is it not a little one, and my soul shall live?" And it is not, therefore, to be entertained because it is little: for it is the more without excuse, if it be little: the temptations to it are not great, the allurements not mighty, the promises not insnaring, the resistance easy; and a wise man considers it is a greater danger to be overcome by a little sin, than by a great one: a greater danger, I say; not directly, but accidentally; not in respect of the crime, but in relation to the person: for he that cannot overcome a small crime, is in the state of infirmity so great, that he

perishes infallibly, when he is arrested by the sins of a stronger temptation: but he that easily can, and yet will not, he is in love with sin, and courts his danger, that he may at least kiss the apples of paradise, or feast himself with the parings, since he is, by some displeasing instrument, affrighted from glutting himself with the forbidden fruit in ruder and bigger instances. But the well-grown christian is curious of his newly-trimmed soul; and, like a nice person with clean clothes, is careful that no spot or stain sully the virgin whiteness of his robe; whereas another, whose albs of baptism are sullied in many places with the smoke and filth of Sodom and uncleanness, cares not in what paths he treads; and a shower of dirt changes not *his* state, who already lies wallowing in the puddles of impurity. It makes men negligent and easy, when they have an opinion, or certain knowledge, that they are persons extraordinary in nothing, that a little care will not mend them, that another sin cannot make them much worse: but it is a sign of a tender conscience, and a reformed spirit, when it is sensible of every alteration, when an idle word is troublesome, when a wandering thought puts the whole spirit upon its guard, when too free a merriment is wiped off with a sigh and a sad thought, and a severe recollection, and a holy prayer. Polycletus was wont to say, "That they had work enough to do, who were to make a curious picture of clay and dirt, when they were to take accounts for the handling of mud and mortar." A man's spirit is naturally careless of baser and uncostly materials; but if a man be to work in gold, then he will save the filings of his dust, and suffer not a grain to perish: and when a man hath laid his foundations in precious stones, he will not build vile matter, stubble, and dirt, upon it. So it is in the spirit of a man; if he have built upon the Rock, Christ Jesus, and is grown up to a good stature in Christ, he will not easily dishonour his building, or lose his labours, by an incurious entertainment of vanities and little instances of sin; which as they can never satisfy any lust or appetite to sin, so they are like a fly in a box of ointment, or like little follies to a wise man; they are extremely full of dishonour and disparagement, they disarray a man's soul of his virtue, and dishonour him for cockle-shells and baubles, and tempt to a greater folly; which every man, who is grown in the knowledge of Christ, therefore carefully avoids, because he fears a relapse with a fear as great as his hopes of heaven are; and knows that the entertainment of small sins does but entice a man's resolutions to disband; they unravel and untwist his holy purposes, and begin in infirmities, and proceed in folly, and end in death.

7. He that is grown in grace, pursues virtue for its own interest, purely and simply, without the mixture and allay of collateral designs and equally-inclining purposes. God, in the beginning of our returns to him, entertains us with promises and threatenings, the apprehensions of temporal advantages, with fear and shame, and with reverence of friends and secular respects, with reputation and coercion of human laws; and at first, men snatch at the lesser and lower ends of virtue; and such rewards as are visible, and which God sometimes gives in hand, to entertain our weak and imperfect desires. The young philosophers were very forward to get the precepts of their sect, and the rules of severity, that they might discourse with kings, not that they might reform their own manners; and some men study to get the ears and tongues of the people, rather than to gain their souls to God; and they obey good laws for fear of punishment, or to preserve their own peace; and some are worse, they do good deeds out of spite, and "preach Christ out of envy," or to lessen the authority and fame of others. Some of these lessen the excellency of the act, others spoil it quite: it is in some imperfect, in others criminal; in some it is consistent with a beginning infant-grace, in others it is an argument of the state of sin and death; but in all cases, the well-grown christian, he that improves or goes forward in his way to heaven, brings virtue forth, not into discourses and panegyrics, but into his life and manners. His virtue, although it serves many good ends accidentally, yet, by his intention, it only suppresses his inordinate passions, makes him temperate and chaste, casts out his devils of drunkenness and lust, pride and rage, malice and revenge; it makes him useful to his brother and a servant of God. And although these flowers cannot choose but please his eye and delight his smell, yet he chooses to gather honey, and licks up the dew of heaven, and feasts his spirit upon the manna, and dwells not in the collateral usages and accidental sweetnesses, which dwell at the gates of other senses; but, like a bee, loads his thighs with wax and his bag with honey, that is, with the useful parts of virtue, in order to holiness and felicity; of which the best signs and notices we can take, will be;—if we as earnestly pursue virtues which are acted in private, as those whose scene lies in public; if we pray in private, under the only eye of God and his ministering angels, as in churches; if we give our alms in secret rather than in public; if we take more pleasure in the just satisfaction of our consciences, than securing our reputation; if we rather pursue innocence than seek an excuse; if we desire to please God, though we lose our fame with men; if we be just to the poorest servant as to the greatest prince; if we choose to be among the jewels of God, though we be the περικαθάρματα, "the off-scouring" of the world; if, when we are secure from witnesses and accusers, and not obnoxious to the notices of the law, we think ourselves obliged by conscience and practice, and live accordingly: then our services and intentions in virtue are right; then we are past the twilights of conversion, and the umbrages of the world, and walk in the light of God, of his word and of his Spirit, of grace and reason, as becometh not babes, but men in Christ Jesus. In this progress of grace I have not yet expressed, that perfect persons should serve God out of mere love of God and the Divine excellencies, without the considerations of either heaven or hell; such a thing as that is talked of in mystical theology. And I doubt not but many good persons come to that growth of charity, that

the goodness and excellency of God are more incumbent and actually pressing upon their spirit than any considerations of reward. But then I shall add this, that when persons come to that height of grace, or contemplation rather, and they love God for himself, and do their duties in order to the fruition of him and his pleasure; all that is but heaven in another sense, and under another name: just as the mystical theology is the highest duty, and the choicest part of obedience under a new method. But in order to the present, that which I call a signification of our growth in grace is, a pursuance of virtue upon such reasons as are propounded to us as motives in Christianity, (such as are to glorify God, and to enjoy his promises in the way and in our country, to avoid the displeasure of God, and to be united to his glories,) and then to exercise virtue in such parts and to such purposes as are useful to good life, and profitable to our neighbours; not to such only where they serve reputation or secular ends. For though the great Physician of our souls hath mingled profits and pleasures with virtue, to make its chalice sweet and apt to be drank off; yet he that takes out the sweet ingredient, and feasts his palate with the less wholesome part, because it is delicious, serves a low end of sense or interest, but serves not God at all, and as little does benefit to his soul. Such a person is like Homer's bird, deplumes himself to feather all the naked callows that he sees, and holds a taper that may light others to heaven, while he burns his own fingers: but a well-grown person, out of habit and choice, out of love of virtue and just intention, goes on his journey in straight ways to heaven, even when the bridle and coercion of laws, or the spurs of interest or reputation, are laid aside; and desires witnesses of his actions, not that he may advance his fame, but for reverence and fear, and to make it still more necessary to do holy things.

8. Some men there are in the beginning of their holy walking with God, and while they are babes in Christ, who are presently busied in delights of prayers, and rejoice in public communion, and count all solemn assemblies festival; but as they are pleased with them, so they can easily be without them. It is a sign of common and vulgar love, only to be pleased with the company of a friend, and to be as well without him: "Amoris at morsum qui verè senserit," "He that has felt the sting of a sharp and very dear affection," is impatient in the absence of his beloved object: the soul that is sick and swallowed up with holy fire, loves nothing else; all pleasures else seem unsavoury; company is troublesome, visitors are tedious, homilies of comfort are flat and useless. The pleasures of virtue to a good and perfect man, are not like the perfumes of nard-pistic, which is very delightful when the box is newly broken, but the want of it is no trouble, we are well enough without it: but virtue is like hunger and thirst, it must be satisfied or we die. And when we feel great longings after religion, and faintings for want of holy nutriment, when a famine of the word and sacraments is more intolerable, and we think ourselves really most miserable when the church-doors are shut against us, or like the christians, in the persecution of the Vandals,—who thought it worse than death that their bishops were taken from them: if we understand excommunication, or church-censures, (abating the disreputation and secular appendages,) in the sense of the Spirit, to be a misery next to hell itself; then we have made a good progress in the charity and grace of God: till then we are but pretenders, or infants, or imperfect, in the same degree in which our affections are cold and our desires remiss. For a constant and prudent zeal is the best testimony of our masculine and vigorous heats, and an hour of fervour is more pleasing to God than a month of lukewarmness and indifference.

9. But as some are active only in the presence of a good object, but remiss and careless for the want of it; so, on the other side, an infant-grace is safe in the absence of a temptation, but falls easily when it is in presence. He, therefore, that would understand if he be grown in grace, may consider if his safety consists only in peace, or in the strength of the Spirit. It is good that we will not seek out opportunities to sin; but are not we too apprehensive of it when it is presented? or do we not sink under it when it presses us? Can we hold our tapers near the flame, and not suck it in greedily like naphtha or prepared nitre? or can we, like the children of the captivity, walk in the midst of flames, and not be scorched or consumed? Many men will not, like Judah, go into highways, and untie the girdles of harlots; but can you reject the importunity of a beauteous and an imperious lady, as Joseph did? We had need pray that we be "not led into temptation:" that is, not only into the possession, but not into the allurements and neighbourhood of it, lest by little and little, our strongest resolutions be untwist, and crack in sunder, like an easy cord severed into single threads; but if we, by the necessity of our lives and manner of living, dwell where a temptation will assault us, then to resist is the sign of a great grace; but such a sign, that without it the grace turns to wantonness, and the man into a beast, and an angel into a devil. R. Moses will not allow a man to be a true penitent, until he hath left all his sin, and in all the like circumstances refuses those temptations, under which formerly he sinned and died; and indeed it may happen, that such a trial only can secure our judgment concerning ourselves. And although to be tried in all the same accidents be not safe, nor always contingent, and in such cases it is sufficient to resist all the temptations we have, and avoid the rest, and decree against all;—yet if it please God we are tempted, as David was by his eyes, or the martyrs by tortures, or Joseph by his wanton mistress, then to stand sure, and to ride upon the temptation like a ship upon a wave, or to stand like a rock in an impetuous storm, that is the sign of a great grace, and of a well-grown christian.

10. No man is grown in grace, but he that is ready for every work, that chooses not his employment, that refuses no imposition from God or his superior. A ready hand, an obedient heart, and a

willing, cheerful soul, in all the work of God, and in every office of religion, is a great index of a good proficient in the ways of godliness. The heart of a man is like a wounded hand or arm, which, if it be so cured that it can only move one way, and cannot turn to all postures and natural uses, it is but imperfect, and still half in health and half wounded: so is our spirit; if it be apt for prayer and close-fisted in alms, if it be sound in faith and dead in charity, if it be religious to God and unjust to our neighbour, there wants some integral part, or there is a lameness; and "the deficiency in any one duty implies the guilt of all," said St. James; and, "Bonum ex integrâ causâ, malum ex quâvis particulari:" every fault spoils a grace, but one grace alone cannot make a good man. But as to be universal in our obedience is necessary to our being in the state of grace, so, readily to change employment from the better to the worse, from the honourable to the poor, from useful to seemingly unprofitable, is a good character of a well-grown christian, if he takes the worst part with indifference, and a spirit equally choosing all the events of the Divine providence. Can you be content to descend from ruling of a province to the keeping of a herd, from the work of an apostle to be confined in a prison, from disputing before princes to a conversation with shepherds? Can you be willing to all that God is willing, and suffer all that he chooses, as willingly as if you had chosen your own fortune? In the same degree in which you can conform to God, in the same you have approached towards that perfection, whither we must, by degrees, arrive, in our journey towards heaven.

This is not to be expected of beginners; for they must be enticed with apt employments; and, it may be, their office and work so fits their spirits, that it makes them first in love with it, and then with God for giving it. And many a man goes to heaven in the days of peace, whose faith, and hope, and patience, would have been dashed in pieces, if he had fallen into a storm of persecution. "Oppression will make a wise man mad," saith Solomon: there are some usages that will put a sober person out of all patience, such which are besides the customs of this life, and contrary to all his hopes, and unworthy of a person of his quality. And when Nero durst not die, yet when his servants told him, that the senators had condemned him to be put to death, "more majorum," that is, "by scourging like a slave," he was forced into preternatural confidence, and fell upon his own sword. But when God so changes thy estate, that thou art fallen into accidents, to which thou art no otherwise disposed but by grace and a holy spirit, and yet thou canst pass through them with quietness, and do the work of suffering as well as the works of prosperous employment;—this is an argument of a great grace and an extraordinary spirit. For many persons, in a change of fortune, perish, who, if they had still been prosperous, had gone to prison, being tempted in a persecution to perjuries, and apostasy, and unhandsome compliances, and hypocrisy, and irreligion; and many men are brought to virtue, and to God, and to felicity, by being persecuted and made unprosperous. And these are effects of a more absolute and irrespective predestination. But when the grace of God is great, and prudent, and masculine, and well grown, it is unaltered in all changes; save only that every accident that is new and violent, brings him nearer to God, and makes him, with greater caution and severity, to dwell in virtue.

11. Lastly: Some there are, who are firm in all great and foreseen changes, and have laid up in the storehouses of the spirit,—*reason* and *religion*,—arguments and discourses enough to defend them against all violences, and stand at watch so much, that they are safe, where they can consider and deliberate; but there may be something wanting yet; and in the direct line, in the straight progress to heaven, I call that an infallible sign of a great grace, and indeed the greatest degree of a great grace, when a man is prepared against sudden invasions of the spirit, surreptitious and extemporary assaults. Many a valiant person dares fight a battle, who yet will be timorous and surprised in a midnight alarm, or if he falls into a river. And how many discreet persons are there, who, if you offer them a sin, and give them time to consider, and tell them of it beforehand, will rather die than be perjured, or tell a deliberate lie, or break a promise; who, it may be, tell many sudden lies, and excuse themselves, and break their promises, and yet think themselves safe enough, and sleep without either affrightments or any apprehension of dishonour done to their persons or their religion! Every man is not armed for all sudden arrests of passions. Few men have cast such fetters upon their lusts, and have their passions in so strict confinement, that they may not be overrun with a midnight flood or an unlooked-for inundation. He that does not start, when he is smitten suddenly, is a constant person. And that is it which I intend in this instance; that he is a perfect man, and well grown in grace, who hath so habitual a resolution, and so unhasty and wary a spirit, as that he decrees upon no act, before he hath considered maturely, and changed the sudden occasion into a sober counsel. David, by chance, spied Bathsheba washing herself; and, being surprised, gave his heart away, before he could consider; and when it was once gone, it was hard to recover it; and sometimes a man is betrayed by a sudden opportunity, and all things fitted for his sin ready at the door; the act stands in all its dress, and will not stay for an answer; and inconsideration is the defence and guard of the sin, and makes that his conscience can the more easily swallow it: what shall the man do then? Unless he be strong by his old strengths, by a great grace, by an habitual virtue, and a sober unmoved spirit,—he falls and dies the death, and hath no new strengths, but such as are to be employed for his recovery; none for his present guard, unless upon the old stock, and if he be a well-grown christian.

These are the parts, acts, and offices of our growing in grace; and yet I have sometimes called

them signs; but they are signs, as eating and drinking are signs of life; they are signs so as also they are parts of life; and these are parts of our growth in grace, so that a man can grow in grace to no other purpose but to these or the like improvements.

Concerning which I have a caution or two to interpose. 1. The growth of grace is to be estimated as other moral things are, not according to the growth of things natural. Grace does not grow by observation, and a continual efflux, and a constant proportion: and a man cannot call himself to an account for the growth of every day, or week, or month: but, in the greater portions of our life, in which we have had many occasions and instances to exercise and improve our virtues, we may call ourselves to account; but it is a snare to our consciences to be examined in the growth of grace in every short revolution of solemn duty, as against every communion or great festival.

2. Growth in grace is not always to be discerned, either in single instances or in single graces. Not in single instances: for every time we are to exercise a virtue, we are not in the same natural dispositions, nor do we meet with the same circumstances; and it is not always necessary that the next act should be more earnest and intense than the former: all single acts are to be done after the manner of men, and, therefore, are not always capable of increasing, and they have their times, beyond which they cannot easily swell; and, therefore, if it be a good act and zealous, it may proceed from a well-grown grace; and yet a younger and weaker person may do some acts as great and as religious as it. But neither do single graces always afford a regular and certain judgment in this affair. For some persons, at the first, had rather die than be unchaste or perjured; and "greater love than this no man hath, that he lay down his life" for God: he cannot easily grow in the substance of that act; and if other persons or himself, in process of time, do it more cheerfully or with fewer fears, it is not always a sign of a greater grace, but sometimes of greater collateral assistances, or a better habit of body, or more fortunate circumstances: for he that goes to the block trembling for Christ, and yet endures his death certainly, and endures his trembling too, and runs through all his infirmities and the bigger temptations, looks not so well many times in the eyes of men, but suffers more for God, than those confident martyrs that courted death in the primitive church; and therefore, may be much dearer in the eyes of God. But that which I say in this particular, is, that a smallness in one is not an argument of the imperfection of the whole estate: because God does not always give to every man occasions to exercise, and therefore not to improve, every grace; and the passive virtues of a christian are not to be expected to grow so fast in prosperous as in suffering christians. But in this case we are to take accounts of ourselves by the improvement of those graces which God makes to happen often in our lives; such as are charity and temperance in young men; liberality and religion in aged persons; ingenuity and humility in scholars; justice in merchants and artificers; forgiveness of injuries in great men and persons tempted by law-suits: for since virtues grow like other moral habits, by use, diligence, and assiduity,—there where God hath appointed our work and our instances, there we must consider concerning our growth in grace; in other things we are but beginners. But it is not likely that God will try us concerning degrees hereafter, in such things, of which, in this world, he was sparing to give us opportunities.

3. Be careful to observe that these rules are not all to be understood negatively, but positively and affirmatively: that is, that a man may conclude that he is grown in grace, if he observes these characters in himself, which I have here discoursed of; but he must not conclude negatively, that he is not grown in grace, if he cannot observe such signal testimonies: for sometimes God covers the graces of his servants, and hides the beauty of his tabernacle with goat's hair and the skins of beasts, that he may rather suffer them to want present comfort than the grace of humility. For it is not necessary to preserve the gaieties and their spiritual pleasures; but if their humility fails, (which may easily be under the sunshine of conspicuous and illustrious graces,) their virtues and themselves perish in a sad declension. But sometimes men have not skill to make a judgment; and all this discourse seems too artificial to be tried by, in the hearty purposes of religion. Sometimes they let pass much of their life, even of their better days, without observance of particulars; sometimes their cases of conscience are intricate, or allayed with unavoidable infirmities; sometimes they are so uninstructed in the more secret parts of religion, and there are so many illusions and accidental miscarriages, that if we shall conclude negatively in the present question, we may produce scruples infinite, but understand nothing more of our estate, and do much less of our duty.

4. In considering concerning our growth in grace, let us take more care to consider matters that concern justice and charity, than that concern the virtue of religion; because in this there may be much, in the other there cannot easily be any, illusion and cozenage. That is a good religion that believes, and trusts, and hopes in God, through Jesus Christ, and for his sake does all justice and all charity that he can; and our blessed Lord gives no other description of "love" to God, but obedience and "keeping his commandments." Justice and charity are like the matter, religion is the form, of christianity: but although the form be more noble and the principle of life, yet it is less discernible, less material, and less sensible; and we judge concerning the form by the matter, and by material accidents, and by actions: and so we must of our religion, that is, of our love to God, and of the efficacy of our prayers, and the usefulness of our fastings; we must make our judgments by the more material parts of our duty, that is, by sobriety, and by justice, and by charity.

I am much prevented in my intention for the perfecting of this so very material consideration: I

shall therefore only tell you, that to these parts and actions of a good life, or of our growth in grace, some have added some accidental considerations, which are rather signs than parts of it. Such are: 1. To praise all good things, and to study to imitate what we praise. 2. To be impatient that any man should excel us; not out of envy to the person, but of noble emulation to the excellency. For so Themistocles could not sleep, after the great victory at Marathon purchased by Miltiades, till he had made himself illustrious by equal services to his country. 3. The bearing of sickness patiently, and ever with improvement, and the addition of some excellent principle, and the firm pursuing it. 4. Great devotion, and much delight in our prayers. 5. Frequent inspirations, and often whispers, of the Spirit of God, prompting us to devotion and obedience; especially if we add to this a constant and ready obedience to all those holy invitations. 6. Offering peace to them that have injured me, and the abating of the circumstances of honour or of right, when either justice or charity is concerned in it. 7. Love to the brethren. 8. To behold our companions, or our inferiors, full of honour and fortune; and if we sit still at home and murmur not, or if we can rejoice both in their honour and our own quiet, that is a fair work of a good man. And now, 9. After all this, I will not trouble you with reckoning a freedom from being tempted, not only from being overcome but from being tried: for though that be a rare felicity, and hath in it much safety; yet it hath less honour, and fewer instances of virtue, unless it proceed from a confirmed and heroical grace; which is indeed a little image of heaven and of a celestial charity, and never happens signally to any, but to old and very eminent persons. 10. But some also add an excellent habit of body and material passions, such as are chaste and virtuous dreams; and suppose, that, as a disease abuses the fancy, and a vice does prejudice it, so may an excellent virtue of the soul smooth and calcine the body, and make it serve perfectly, and without rebellious indispositions. 11. Others are in love with Mary Magdalen's tears, and fancy the hard knees of St. James, and the sore eyes of St. Peter, and the very recreations of St. John; "Proh! quam virtute præditos omnia decent!" thinking "all things become a good man," even his gestures and little incuriosities. And though this may proceed from a great love of virtue, yet because some men do thus much and no more, and this is to be attributed to the lustre of virtue, which shines a little through a man's eyelids, though he perversely winks against the light; yet (as the former of these two is too metaphysical, so is the latter too fantastical) he that, by the foregoing material parts and proper significations of a growing grace, does not understand his own condition, must be content to work on still "super totam materiam," without considerations of particulars; he must pray earnestly, and watch diligently, and consult with prudent guides, and ask of God great measures of his Spirit, and "hunger and thirst after righteousness:" for he that does so, shall certainly "be satisfied." And if he understands not his present good condition, yet if he be not wanting in the downright endeavours of piety, and in hearty purposes, he shall then find that he is grown in grace, when he springs up in the resurrection of the just, and shall be ingrafted upon a tree of paradise, which beareth fruit for ever, glory to God, rejoicing to saints and angels, and eternal felicity to his own pious, though undiscerning soul. "Prima sequentem, honestum est in secundis aut tertiis consistere."[a]

SERMON XVI.

OF GROWTH IN SIN: OR, THE SEVERAL STATES AND DEGREES OF SINNERS, WITH THE MANNER HOW THEY ARE TO BE TREATED.

PART I.

And of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire.—Jude Epist. ver. 22, 23.

MAN hath but one entrance into the world; but a thousand ways to pass from thence. And as it is in the natural, so it is in the spiritual: nothing but the union of faith and obedience can secure our regeneration, and our new birth, and can bring us to see the light of heaven; but there are a thousand passages of turning into darkness. And it is not enough, that our bodies are exposed to so many sad infirmities and dishonourable imperfections, unless our soul also be a subject capable of so many diseases, irregular passions, false principles, accursed habits and degrees of perverseness, that the very kinds of them are reducible to a method, and make up the part of a science. There are variety of stages and descents to death, as there are diversity of torments, and of sad regions of misery in hell, which is the centre and kingdom of sorrows. But that we may a little refresh the sadnesses of this consideration; for every one of these stages of sin, God hath measured out a proportion of mercy: for, "If sin abounds, grace shall much more abound;" and "God hath concluded all under sin," not with purpose to destroy us, but "ut omnium misereatur," "that he might have mercy upon all;" that light may break forth from the deepest enclosures of darkness, and mercy may rejoice upon the recessions of justice, and grace may triumph upon the ruins of sin, and God may be glorified in the miracles of our conversion, and the wonders of our preservation, and glories of our being saved. There is no state of sin, but, if we be persons capable (according to God's method of healing) of receiving antidotes, we shall find a sheet of mercy spread over our wounds and nakedness. If our diseases be small, almost necessary, scarce avoidable; then God does, and so we are commanded to cure them,

[a] Cicero.

and cover them with a veil of pity, compassion, and gentle remedies: if our evils be violent, inveterate, gangrened, and incorporated into our nature by evil customs, they must be pulled from the flames of hell with censures, and cauteries, and punishments, and sharp remedies, quickly and rudely; their danger is present and sudden, its effect is quick and intolerable, and there are no soft counsels then to be entertained; they are already in the fire, but they may be saved for all that. So great, so infinite, so miraculous is God's mercy, that he will not give a sinner over, though the hairs of his head be singed with the flames of hell. God's desires of having us to be saved continue, even when we begin to be damned; even till we will not be saved, and are gone beyond God's method, and all the revelations of his kindness. And certainly that is a bold and a mighty sinner, whose iniquity is swelled beyond all the bulk and heap of God's revealed loving-kindness: if sin hath swelled beyond grace, and superabounds over it, that sin is gone beyond the measures of a man; such a man is removed beyond all the malice of human nature, into the evil and spite of devils and accursed spirits; there is no greater sadness in the world than this. God hath not appointed a remedy in the vast treasures of grace for some men, and some sins; they have sinned like the fallen angels, and having overrun the ordinary evil inclinations of their nature, they are without the protection of the Divine mercy, and the conditions of that grace, which was designed to save all the world, and was sufficient to have saved twenty. This is a condition to be avoided with the care of God and his angels, and all the whole industry of man. In order to which end, my purpose now is to remonstrate to you the several states of sin and death, together with those remedies which God had proportioned out to them; that we may observe the evils of the least, and so avoid the intolerable mischiefs of the greater, even of those sins which still are within the power and possibilities of recovery; lest insensibly we fall into those sins, and into those circumstances of person, for which Christ never died, which the Holy Ghost never means to cure, and which the eternal God never will pardon: for there are of this kind more than commonly men imagine, whilst they amuse their spirits with gaieties and false principles, till they have run into horrible impieties, from whence they are not willing to withdraw their foot, and God is resolved never to snatch and force them thence.

I. "Of some have compassion."—And these I shall reduce to four heads or orders of men and actions; all which have their proper cure proportionable to their proper state, gentle remedies to the lesser irregularities of the soul. 1. The first are those, that sin without observation of their particular state; either because they are uninstructed in the special cases of conscience, or because they do an evil, against which there is no express commandment. It is a sad calamity, that there are so many millions of men and women that are entered into a state of sickness and danger, and yet are made to believe they are in perfect health; and they do actions, concerning which they never made a question whether they were just or no, nor were ever taught by what names to call them. For while they observe that modesty is sometimes abused by a false name, and called clownishness and want of breeding; and contentedness and temperate living is suspected to be want of courage and noble thoughts; and severity of life is called imprudent and unsociable; and simplicity and hearty honesty is counted foolish and impolitic: they are easily tempted to honour prodigality and foolish dissolution of their estates with the title of liberal and noble usages. Timorousness is called caution, rashness is called quickness of spirit, covetousness is frugality, amorousness is society and gentile, peevishness and anger is courage, flattery is humane and courteous: and under these false veils virtue slips away (like truth from under the hand of them that fight for her) and leaves vice dressed up with the same imagery, and the fraud not discovered till the day of recompences, when men are distinguished by their rewards. But so men think they sleep freely, when their spirits are laden with a lethargy; and they call a hectic fever the vigour of a natural heat, till nature changes those less discerned states into the notorious images of death. Very many men never consider, whether they sin or no in ten thousand of their actions, every one of which is very disputable, and do not think they are bound to consider: these men are to be pitied and instructed, they are to be called upon to use religion like a daily diet; their consciences must be made tender, and their catechism enlarged; teach them, and make them sensible, and they are cured.

But the other in this place are more considerable: men sin without observation, because their actions have no restraint of an express commandment, no letter of the law to condemn them by an express sentence. And this happens when the crime is comprehended under a general notion, without the instancing of particulars: for if you search over all the Scripture, you shall never find incest named and marked with the black character of death; and there are divers sorts of uncleanness to which Scripture therefore gives no name, because she would have them have no being. And it had been necessary that God should have described all particulars, and all kinds, if he had not given reason to man: for so it is fit that a guide should point out every turning, if he be to teach a child or a fool to return unto his father's roof. But he that bids us avoid intemperance for fear of a fever, supposes you to be sufficiently instructed that you may avoid the plague: and, when to look upon a woman with lust is condemned, it will not be necessary to add, "You must not do more," when even the least is forbidden: and when to uncover the nakedness of Noah brought an universal plague upon the posterity of Cham, it was not necessary that the lawgiver should say, "You must not ascend to your father's bed, or draw the curtains from your sister's retirements." When the Athenians forbade to transport figs from Athens, there was no need to name the gardens of Alcibiades; much less was it necessary to add, that

Chabrias should send no plants to Sparta. Whatsoever is comprised under the general notion, and partakes of the common nature and the same iniquity, needs no special prohibition; unless we think we can mock God, and elude his holy precepts with an absurd trick of mistaken logic. I am sure that will not save us harmless from a thunderbolt.

Men sin without an express prohibition, when they commit a thing that is like a forbidden evil. And when St. Paul had reckoned many works of the flesh, he adds, "and such like," all that have the same unreasonableness and carnality. For thus polygamy is unlawful: for if it be not lawful for a christian "to put away his wife and marry another, unless for adultery," much less may he keep a first, and take a second, when the first is not put away. If a christian may not be drunk with wine, neither may he be drunk with passion; if he may not kill his neighbour, neither then must he tempt him to sin, for that destroys him more; if he may not wound him, then he may not persuade him to intemperance, and a drunken fever; if it be not lawful to cozen a man, much less is it permitted that he make a man a fool, and a beast, and exposed to every man's abuse, and to all ready evils. And yet men are taught to start at the one half of these, and make no conscience of the other half; whereof some have a greater baseness than the other that are named, and all have the same unreasonableness.

3. A man is guilty, even when no law names his action, if he does any thing that is a cause or an effect, a part or unhandsome adjunct, of a forbidden instance. He that forbade all intemperance, is as much displeased with the infinite of foolish talk that happens at such meetings, as he is at the spoiling of the drink, and the destroying the health. If God cannot endure wantonness, how can he suffer lascivious dressings, tempting circumstances, wanton eyes, high diet? If idleness be a sin, then all immoderate mispending of our time, all long and tedious games, all absurd contrivances how to throw away a precious hour, and a day of salvation also, are against God and against religion. He that is commanded to be charitable, it is also intended he should not spend his money vainly, but be a good husband and provident, that he may be able to give to the poor, as he would be to purchase a lordship, or pay his daughter's portion. And upon this stock it is that christian religion forbids jeering and immoderate laughter, and reckons "jestings" amongst the "things that are unseemly." This also would be considered.

4. Besides the express laws of our religion, there is a universal line and limit to our passions and designs, which is called "the analogy of christianity;" that is, the proportion of its sanctity, and the strictness of its holy precepts. This is not forbidden; but does this become you? Is it decent to see a christian live in plenty and ease, and heap up money, and never to partake of Christ's passions? There is no law against a judge's being a dresser of gardens, or a gatherer of sycamore fruits; but it becomes him not, and deserves a reproof. If I do exact justice to my neighbour, and cause him to be punished legally for all the evils he makes me suffer, I have not broken a fragment from the stony tables of the law: but this is against the analogy of our religion; it does not become the disciple of so gentle a Master to take all advantages that he can. Christ, that quitted all the glories that were essential to him, and that grew up in his nature when he lodged in his Father's bosom; Christ, that suffered all the evils due for the sins of mankind, himself remaining most innocent; Christ, that promised persecution, injuries, and affronts, as part of our present portion, and gave them to his disciples as a legacy, and gave us his Spirit to enable us to suffer injuries, and made that the parts of suffering evils should be the matter of three or four christian graces, of patience, of fortitude, of longanimity, and perseverance; he that of eight beatitudes, made that five of them should be instanced in the matter of humiliation and suffering temporal inconvenience; —that blessed Master was certainly desirous that his disciples should take their crowns from the cross, not from the evenness and felicities of the world; he intended we should give something, and suffer more things, and forgive all things, all injuries whatsoever. And though together with this may consist our securing a just interest; yet, in very many circumstances, we shall be put to consider, how far it becomes us to quit something of that to pursue peace; and when we have secured the letter of the law, that we also look to its analogy; when we do what we are strictly bound to, then also we must consider what becomes us who are disciples of such a Master, who are instructed with such principles, charmed with so severe precepts, and invited with the certainty of infinite rewards. Now, although this discourse may seem new and strange and very severe, yet it is infinitely reasonable, because christianity is a law of love and voluntary services; it can in no sense be confined with laws and strict measures: well may the ocean receive its limits, and the whole capacity of fire be glutted, and the grave have his belly so full that it shall cast up all its bowels, and disgorge the continued meal of so many thousand years; but love can never have a limit; and it is indeed to be swallowed up, but nothing can fill it but God, who hath no bound. Christianity is a law for sons, not for servants; and God, that gives his grace without measure, and rewards without end, and acts of favour beyond our askings, and provides for us beyond our needs, and gives us counsels beyond commandments, intends not to be limited out by the just evennesses and stricken measures of the words of a commandment. Give to God "full measure, shaken together, pressed down, heaped up, and running over;" for God does so to us: and when we have done so to him, we are infinitely short of the least measure of what God does for us; "we are still unprofitable servants." And therefore, as the breaking any of the laws of christianity provokes God to anger, so the prevaricating in the analogy of christianity stirs him up to jealousy. He hath reason to suspect our hearts are not right with him, when we are so reserved in the matter and measures of our services; and if we will give God but just what he calls

for by express mandate, it is just in him to require all of that at our hands without any abatement, and then we are sure to miscarry. And let us remember, that when God said he was "a jealous God," he expressed the meaning of it to be, he did "punish to the third and fourth generation." "Jealousy is like the rage of a man;" but if it be also like the anger of God, it is insupportable, and will crush us into the ruins of our grave.

But because these things are not frequently considered, there are very many sins committed against religion, which, because the commandment hath not marked, men refuse to mark, and think God requires no more. I am entered into a sea of matter, which I must not now prosecute; but I shall only note this to you, that it is but reasonable we should take accounts of our lives by the proportions, as well as by the express rules, of our religion, because in human and civil actions all the nations of the world use to call their subjects to account. For that which in the accounts of men is called reputation and public honesty, is the same which in religion we call analogy and proportion; in both cases there being some things which are besides the notices of laws, and yet are the most certain consignations of an excellent virtue. He is a base person that does any thing against public honesty; and yet no man can be punished, if he marries a wife the next day after his first wife's funeral: and so he that prevaricates the proportions and excellent reasons of christianity, is a person without zeal and without love; and, unless care be taken of him, he will quickly be without religion. But yet these, I say, are a sort of persons, which are to be used with gentleness, and treated with compassion: for no man must be handled roughly to force him to do a kindness; and coercion of laws and severity of judges, serjeants, and executioners, are against offenders of commandments; but the way to cure such persons is the easiest and gentlest remedy of all others. They are to be instructed in all the parts of duty, and invited forward by the consideration of the great rewards which are laid up for all the sons of God, who serve him without constraint, without measures and allays, even as fire burns, and as the roses grow, even as much as they can, and to all the extent of their natural and artificial capacities. For it is a thing fit for our compassion, to see men fettered in the iron bands of laws, and yet to break the golden chains of love; but all those instruments, which are proper to enkindle the love of God, and to turn fear into charity, are the proper instances of that compassion, which is to be used towards these men.

2. The next sort of those who are in the state of sin, and yet to be handled gently and with compassion, are those who entertain themselves with the beginnings and little entrances of sin: which as they are to be more pitied, because they often come by reason of inadvertency, and an unavoidable weakness in many degrees; so they are more to be taken care of, because they are undervalued, and undiscernibly run into inconvenience. When we see a child strike a servant rudely, or jeer a silly person, or wittingly cheat his play-fellow, or talk words light as the skirt of a summer garment; we laugh, and are delighted with the wit and confidence of the boy, and encourage such hopeful beginnings: and in the mean time we consider not, that from these beginnings he shall grow up, till he become a tyrant, an oppressor, a goat, and a traitor. "Nemo simul malus fit, et malus esse cernitur; sicut nec scorpiis tum innascuntur stimuli, cum pungunt:" "No man is discerned to be vicious so soon as he is so;" and vices have their infancy and their childhood; and it cannot be expected that in a child's age should be the vice of a man; that were monstrous, as if he wore a beard in his cradle; "and we do not believe that a serpent's sting does just then grow, when he strikes us in a vital part;" the venom and the little spear was there, when it first began to creep from his little shell. And little boldnesses and looser words, and wrangling for nuts, and lying for trifles, are of the same proportion to the malice of a child, as impudence, and duels, and injurious law-suits, and false witness in judgment, and perjuries, are in men. And the case is the same when men enter upon a new stock of any sin: the vice is at first apt to be put out of countenance, and a little thing discourages it, and it amuses the spirit with words, and fantastic images, and cheap instances of sin; and men think themselves safe, because they are as yet safe from laws, and the sin does not as yet outcry the healthful noise of Christ's loud cryings and intercession with his Father, nor call for thunder or an amazing judgment: but, according to the old saying, "The thorns of Dauphine will never fetch blood, if they do not scratch the first day;" and we shall find that the little indecencies and riflings of our souls, the first openings and disparkings of our virtue, differ only from the state of perdition, as infancy does from old age, as sickness from death; it is the entrance into those regions, whither whosoever passes finally, shall lie down and groan with an eternal sorrow. Now in this case it may happen, that a compassion may ruin a man, if it be the pity of an indiscreet mother, and nurse the sin from its weakness to the strength of habit and impudence. The compassion that is to be used to such persons, is the compassion of a physician or a severe tutor: chastise thy infant-sin by discipline, and acts of virtue; and never begin that way, from whence you must return with some trouble and much shame; or else, if you proceed, you finish your eternal ruin.

He that means to be temperate, and avoid the crime and dishonour of being a drunkard, must not love to partake of the songs, or to bear a part in the foolish scenes of laughter, which distract wisdom, and fright her from the company. And Lavina, that was chaster than the elder Sabines, and severer than her philosophical guardian, was well instructed in the great lines of honour and cold justice to her husband: but when she gave way to the wanton ointments and looser circumstances of the Baiæ, and bathed often in Avernus, and from thence hurried to the companies and dressings of Lucrinus, she quenched her honour, and gave her virtue and

her body as a spoil to the follies and intemperance of a young gentleman. For so have I seen the little purls of a spring sweat through the bottom of a bank, and intenerate the stubborn pavement, till it hath made it fit for the impression of a child's foot; and it was despised, like the descending purls of a misty morning, till it had opened its way, and made a stream large enough to carry away the ruins of the undermined strand, and to invade the neighbouring gardens; but then the despised drops were grown into an artificial river, and an intolerable mischief. So are the first entrances of sin stopped with the antidotes of a hearty prayer, and checked into sobriety by the eye of a reverend man, or the counsels of a single sermon: but when such beginnings are neglected, and our religion hath not in it so much philosophy as to think any thing evil as long as we can endure it, they grow up to ulcers and pestilential evils; they destroy the soul by their abode, who, at their first entry, might have been killed with the pressure of a little finger.

Ἀρχὴν ἰᾶσθαι πολὺ λώϊον ἠὲ τελευτήν.

Those men are in a condition, in which they may, if they please, pity themselves; keep their green wound from festering and uncleanness, and it will heal alone: "Non procul absunt," "They are not far" from the kingdom of heaven, but they are not yet within its portion. And let me say this, that although little sins have not yet made our condition desperate, but left it easily recoverable; yet it is a condition that is quite out of God's favour: although they are not far advanced in their progress to ruin, yet they are not at all in the state of grace; and, therefore, though they are to be pitied and relieved accordingly, yet that supposes the incumbency of a present misery.

3. There are some very much to be pitied and assisted, because they are going into hell, and, as matters stand with them, they cannot, or they think they cannot, avoid it. "Quidam ad alienum dormiunt somnum, ad alienum edunt appetitum: amare et odisse (res omnium maximè liberas) jubentur:" "There are some persons whose life is so wholly in dependence from others, that they sleep when others please, they eat and drink according to their masters' appetite or intemperance: they are commanded to love or hate, and are not left free in the very charter and privileges of nature." "Miserum est, servire sub dominis parum felicibus." For suppose the prince or the patron be vicious; suppose he calls his servants to bathe their souls in the goblets of intemperance; if he be also imperious, (for such persons love not to be contradicted in their vices,) it is the loss of that man's fortune not to lose his soul; and it is the servant's excuse, and he esteems it also his glory, that he can tell a merry tale, how his master and himself did swim in drink, till they both talked like fools, and then did lie down like beasts. "Facinus quos inquinat, æquat:" There is then no difference, but that the one is the fairest bull, and the master of the herd. And how many tenants and relatives are known to have a servile conscience, and to know no affirmation or negation but such as shall serve their landlord's interest! Alas! the poor men live by it, and they must beg their bread, if ever they turn recreant, or shall offer to be honest. There are trades whose very foundation is laid in the vice of others; and in many others, if a thread of deceit do not quite run through all their negociations, they decay into the sorrows of beggary; and, therefore, they will support their neighbour's vice, that he may support their trade. And what would you advise those men to do, to whom a false oath is offered to their lips and a dagger at their heart? Their reason is surprised, and their choice is seized upon, and all their consultation is arrested; and if they did not prepare beforehand, and stand armed with religion and perfect resolution, would not any man fall, and think that every good man will say his case is pitiable? Although no temptation is bigger than the grace of God, yet many temptations are greater than our strengths; and we do not live at the rate of a mighty and a victorious grace.

Those persons which cause these vicious necessities upon their brethren, will lie low in hell; but the others will have but small comfort in feeling a lesser damnation.

Of the same consideration it is, when ignorant people are catechized into false doctrine, and know nothing but such principles which weaken the nerves and enfeeble the joints of holy living; they never heard of any other. Those that follow great and evil examples, the people that are engaged in the public sins of a kingdom, which they understand not, and either must venture to be undone upon the strength of their own little reasonings and weak discoursings, or else must go "quâ itur, non quâ eundum est," there where the popular misery hath made the way plain before their eyes, though it be uneven and dangerous to their consciences. In these cases I am forced to reckon a catalogue of mischiefs; but it will be hard to cure any of them. Aristippus, in his discourses, was a great flatterer of Dionysius of Sicily, and did own doctrines which might give an easiness to some vices, and knew not how to contradict the pleasures of his prince, but seemed like a person disposed to partake of them, that the example of a philosopher and the practice of a king might do countenance to a shameful life. But when Dionysius sent him two women-slaves, fair and young, he sent them back, and shamed the easiness of his doctrine by the severity of his manners; he daring to be virtuous when he was alone, though, in the presence of him whom he thought it necessary to flatter, he had no boldness to own the virtue. So it is with too many: if they be left alone, and that they stand unshaken with the eye of their tempter, or the authority of their lord, they go whither their education or their custom carries them: but it is not in some natures to deny the face of a man and the boldness of a sinner, and, which is yet worse, it is not in most men's interest to do it. These men are in a pitiable condition, and are to be helped by the following rules.

1. Let every man consider that he hath two relations to serve, and he stands between God and his master and his nearest relative; and in such cases it comes to be disputed whether interest be preferred,

which of the persons is to be displeased, God or my master, God or my prince, God or my friend. If we be servants of the man, remember also that I am a servant of God: add to this, that if my present service to the man be a slavery in me, and a tyranny in him, yet God's service is a noble freedom. And Apollonius said well, "It was for slaves to lie, and for freemen to speak the truth." "If you be freed by the blood of the Son of God, then you are free indeed:" and then consider how dishonourable it is to lie, to the displeasure of God, and only to please your fellow-servant. The difference here is so great, that it might be sufficient only to consider the antithesis. Did the man make you what you are? Did he pay his blood for you, to save you from death? Does he keep you from sickness? True: you eat at his table; but they are of God's provisions that he and you feed of. Can your master free you from a fever, when you have drunk yourself into it; and restore your innocence, when you have forsworn yourself for his interest? Is the change reasonable? He gives you meat and drink, for which you do him service: but is not he a tyrant and a usurper, an oppressor and an extortioner, if he will force thee to give thy soul for him, to sell thy soul for old shoes and broken bread? But when thou art to make thy accounts of eternity, will it be taken for an answer, My patron or my governor, my prince or my master, forced me to it? or if it will not, will he undertake a portion of thy flames? or, if that may not be, will it be, in the midst of all thy torments, any ease to thy sorrows to remember all the rewards and clothes, all the money and civilities, all the cheerful looks and familiarity and fellowship of vices, which, in your lifetime, made your spirit so gay and easy? It will, in the eternal loads of sorrow, add a duplicate of groans and indignation, when it shall be remembered for how base and trifling an interest, and upon what weak principles, we fell sick and died eternally.

2. The next advice to persons thus tempted is, that they would learn to separate duty from mistaken interest, and let them be both served in their just proportions, when we have learned to make a difference. A wife is bound to her husband in all his just designs, and in all noble usages and christian comportments: but a wife is no more bound to pursue her husband's vicious hatreds, than to serve and promote his unlawful and wandering loves. It is not always a part of duty to think the same propositions, or to curse the same persons, or to wish him success in unjust designs: and yet the sadness of it is, that a good woman is easily tempted to believe the cause to be just; and when her affection hath forced her judgment, her judgment for ever after shall carry the affection to all its erring and abused determinations. A friend is turned a flatterer, if he does not know that the limits of friendship extend no further than the pale and enclosures of reason and religion. No master puts it into his covenant that his servant shall be drunk with him, or give in evidence in his master's cause, according to his master's scrolls: and, therefore, it is besides and against the duty of a servant to sin by that authority; it is as if he should set mules to keep his sheep, or make his dogs to carry burdens; it is besides their nature and design. And if any person falls under so tyrannical relation, let him consider how hard a master he serves, where the devil gives the employment, and shame is his entertainment, and sin is his work, and hell is his wages. Take, therefore, the counsel of the son of Sirach: "Accept no person against thy soul, and let not the reverence of any man cause thee to fall."[a]

3. When passion mingles with duty, and is a necessary instrument of serving God, let not passion run its own course, and pass on to liberty, and thence to license and dissolution; but let no more of it be entertained than will just do the work. For no zeal of duty will warrant a violent passion to prevaricate a duty. I have seen some officers of war, in passion and zeal of their duty, have made no scruple to command a soldier with a dialect of cursing and accents of swearing, and pretended they could not else speak words effective enough, and of sufficient authority: and a man may easily be overtaken in the issues of his government, while his authority serves itself with passion; if he be not curious in his measures, his passion also will serve itself upon the authority, and overrule the ruler.

4. Let every such tempted person remember, that all evil comes from ourselves, and not from others; and, therefore, all pretences and prejudices, all commands and temptations, all opinions and necessities, are but instances of our weakness, and arguments of our folly; for, unless we listed, no man can make us drink beyond our measures; and if I tell a lie for my master's or my friend's advantage, it is because I prefer a little end of money or flattery before my honour and my innocence. They are huge follies which go up and down in the mouths and heads of men. "He that knows not how to dissemble, knows not how to reign:" he that will not do as his company does, must go out of the world, and quit all society of men. We create necessities of our own, and then think we have reason to serve their importunity. "Non ego sum ambitiosus, sed nemo aliter Romæ potest vivere; non ego sumptuosus, sed urbs ipsa magnas impensas exigit. Non est meum vitium quòd iracundus sum, quòd nondum constitui certum vitæ genus; adolescentia hæc facit:" "The place we live in makes us expensive, the state of life I have chosen renders me ambitious, my age makes me angry or lustful, proud or peevish." These are nothing else but resolutions never to mend as long as we can have excuses for our follies, and until we can cozen ourselves no more. There is no such thing as a necessity for a prince to dissemble, or for a servant to lie, or for a friend to flatter, for a civil person and a sociable to be drunk: we cozen ourselves with thinking the fault is so much derivative from others, till the smart and the shame falls upon ourselves, and covers our heads with sorrow. And unless this gap be stopped, and that we build our duty upon our own bottoms, as supported with the grace of God, there is no vice but may find a patron,—and no age, or relation, or state of life,

[a] Ecclus. iv. 22.

but will be an engagement to sin; and we shall think it necessary to be lustful in our youth, and revengeful in our manhood, and covetous in our old age; and we shall perceive that every state of men, and every trade and profession, lives upon the vices of others, or upon their miseries, and, therefore, they will think it necessary to promote or to wish it. If men were temperate, physicians would be poor; and unless some princes were ambitious, or others injurious, there would be no employment for soldiers. The vintner's retail supports the merchant's trade, and it is a vice that supports the vintner's retail; and if all men were wise and sober persons, we should have fewer beggars and fewer rich. And if our lawgivers should imitate Demades of Athens, who condemned a man that lived by selling things belonging to funerals, as supposing he could not choose but wish the death of men, by whose dying he got his living; we should find most men accounted criminals, because vice is so involved in the affairs of the world, that it is made the support of many trades, and the business of great multitudes of men. Certainly from hence it is that iniquity does so much abound; and unless we state our questions right, and perceive the evil to be designed only from ourselves, and that no such pretence shall keep off the punishment or the shame from ourselves, we shall fall into a state which is only capable of compassion, because it is irrecoverable; and then we shall be infinitely miserable, when we can only receive a useless and ineffective pity. Whatsoever is necessary cannot be avoided; he, therefore, that shall say, he cannot avoid his sin, is out of the mercies of this text: they who are appointed guides and physicians of souls, cannot, to any purpose, do their offices of pity. It is necessary that we serve God, and do our duty, and secure the interest of our souls, and be as careful to preserve our relations to God as to our friend or prince. But if it can be necessary for any man, in any condition, to sin, it is also necessary for that man to perish.

SERMON XVII.

PART II.

4. THE last sort of them that sin, and yet are to be treated with compassion, is of them that interrupt the course of an honest life with single acts of sin, stepping aside and "starting like a broken bow;" whose resolution stands fair, and their hearts are towards God, and they sojourn in religion, or rather dwell there; but that, like evil husbands, they go abroad, and enter into places of dishonour and unthriftiness. Such as these all stories remember with a sad character; and every narrative concerning David, which would end in honour and fair report, is sullied with the remembrances of Bathsheba; and the Holy Ghost hath called him "a man after God's own heart, save in the matter of Uriah:" there, indeed, he was a man after his own heart; even then, when his reason was stolen from him by passion, and his religion was sullied by the beauties of a fair woman. I wish we lived in an age, in which the people were to be treated with concerning renouncing the single actions of sin, and the seldom interruptions of piety. Men are taught to say, that every man sins in every action he does; and this is one of the doctrines, for the believing of which he shall be accounted a good man: and upon this ground it is easy for men to allow themselves some sins, when, in all cases and in every action, it is unavoidable. I shall say nothing of the question, save that the scriptures reckon otherwise; and in the accounts of David's life reckon but one great sin; and in Zachary and Elizabeth give a testimony of an unblamable conversation; and Hezekiah did not make his confession when he prayed to God in his sickness, and said, "he had walked uprightly before God:" and, therefore, St. Paul, after his conversion, designed and laboured hard, and therefore, certainly, with hopes to accomplish it, that "he might keep his conscience void of offence, both towards God and towards man;" and one of Christ's great purposes is, "to present his whole church pure and spotless to the throne of grace;" and St. John the Baptist offended none but Herod; and no pious christian brought a bill of accusation against the holy virgin-mother. Certain it is, that God hath given us precepts of such a holiness and such a purity, such a meekness and such humility, as hath no pattern but Christ, no precedent but the purities of God: and, therefore, it is intended we should live with a life, whose actions are not chequered with white and black, half sin and half virtue. God's sheep are not like Jacob's flock, "streaked and spotted;" it is an entire holiness that God requires, and will not endure to have a holy course interrupted by the dishonour of a base and ignoble action. I do not mean that a man's life can be as pure as the sun, or the rays of celestial Jerusalem; but like the moon, in which there are spots, but they are no deformity; a lessening only and an abatement of light, no cloud to hinder and draw a veil before its face, but sometimes it is not so serene and bright as at other times. Every man hath his indiscretions and infirmities, his arrests and sudden incursions, his neighbourhoods and semblances of sin, his little violences to reason, and peevish melancholy, and humorous, fantastic discourses; unaptness to a devout prayer, his fondness to judge favourably in his own cases, little deceptions, and voluntary and involuntary cozenages, ignorances, and inadvertences, careless hours, and unwatchful seasons. But no good man ever commits one act of adultery; no godly man will, at any time, be drunk; or if he be, he ceases to be a godly man, and is run into the confines of death, and is sick at heart, and may die of the sickness, die eternally. This happens more frequently in persons of an infant piety, when the virtue is not corroborated by a long abode, and a confirmed resolution, and a usual victory, and a triumphant grace; and the longer we are accustomed to piety,

the more infrequent will be the little breaches of folly, and a returning to sin. But as the needle of a compass, when it is directed to its beloved star, at the first addresses waves on either side, and seems indifferent in his courtship of the rising or declining sun; and when it seems first determined to the north, stands awhile trembling, as if it suffered inconvenience in the first fruition of its desires, and stands not still in full enjoyment till after first a great variety of motion, and then an undisturbed posture; so is the piety and so is the conversion of a man wrought by degrees and several steps of imperfection; and at first our choices are wavering; convinced by the grace of God, and yet not persuaded; and then persuaded, but not resolved; and then resolved, but deferring to begin; and then beginning, but, as all beginnings are, in weakness and uncertainty; and we fly out often into huge indiscretions, and look back to Sodom, and long to return to Egypt; and when the storm is quite over, we find little bubblings and unevennesses upon the face of the waters, we often weaken our own purposes by the returns of sin; and we do not call ourselves conquerors, till by the long possession of virtues it is a strange and unusual, and, therefore, an uneasy and unpleasant thing, to act a crime. When Polemon of Athens, by chance coming into the schools of Xenocrates, was reformed upon the hearing of that one lecture, some wise men gave this censure of him: "Peregrinatus est hujus animus in nequitiâ, non habitavit:" "His mind wandered in wickedness, and travelled in it, but never dwelt there." The same is the case of some men; they make inroads into the enemy's country, not like enemies to spoil, but like Dinah, to be satisfied with the stranger beauties of the land, till their virtues are deflowered, and they enter into tragedies, and are possessed by death and intolerable sorrows. But because this is like the fate of Jacob's daughter, and happens not by design, but folly; not by malice, but surprise; not by the strength of will, but by the weakness of grace; and yet carries a man to the same place whither a great vice usually does; it is hugely pitiable, and the persons are to be treated with compassion, and to be assisted by the following considerations and exercises.

First, let us consider, that for a good man to be overtaken in a single crime is the greatest dishonour and unthriftiness in the whole world. "As a fly in a box of ointment, so is a little folly to him who is accounted wise," said the son of Sirach. No man chides a fool for his weaknesses, or scorns a child for playing with flies, and preferring the present appetite before all the possibilities of tomorrow's event; but men wondered when they saw Socrates ride upon a cane; and when Solomon laid his wisdom at the foot of Pharaoh's daughter, and changed his glory for the interest of wanton sleep, he became the discourse of heaven and earth: and men think themselves abused, and their expectation cozened, when they see a wise man do the actions of a fool, and a good man seized upon by the dishonours of a crime. But the loss of his reputation is the least of his evil. It is the greatest improvidence in the world to let a healthful constitution be destroyed in the surfeit of one night. For although when a man, by the grace of God and a long endeavour, hath obtained the habit of christian graces, every single sin does not spoil the habit of virtue, because that cannot be lost but as it was gotten, that is, by parts and succession; yet every crime interrupts the acceptation of the grace, and makes the man to enter into the state of enmity and displeasure with God. The habit is only lessened naturally, but the value of it is wholly taken away. And in this sense is that of Josephus, Τὸ γὰρ ἐπὶ μικροῖς καὶ μεγάλοις παρανομεῖν ἰσοδύναμόν ἐστι· which St. James well renders, "He that keeps the whole law, and offends in one point, is guilty of all;"[a] that is, if he prevaricates in any commandment, the transgression of which, by the law, was capital, he shall as certainly die as if he broke the whole law. And the same is the case of those single actions which the school calls deadly sins, that is, actions of choice in any sin that hath a name; and makes a kind, and hath a distinct matter. And sins once pardoned return again to all the purposes of mischief, if we, by a new sin, forfeit God's former loving-kindness. "When the righteous man turneth from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, all his righteousness that he hath done shall not be remembered: in the trespass that he hath trespassed, and in the sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die."[b] Now then consider how great a fool he is, who, when he hath, with much labour and by suffering violence, contradicted his first desires; when his spirit hath been in agony and care, and, with much uneasiness, hath denied to please the lower man; when, with many prayers and groans, and innumerable sighs, and strong cryings to God, with sharp sufferances and a long severity, he hath obtained of God to begin his pardon and restitution, and that he is in some hopes to return to God's favour, and that he shall become an heir of heaven; when some of his amazing fears and distracting cares begin to be taken off; when he begins to think that now it is not certain he shall perish in a sad eternity, but he hopes to be saved, and he considers how excellent a condition that is; he hopes, when he dies, to go to God, and that he shall never enter into the possession of devils; and this state, which is but the twilight of a glorious felicity, he hath obtained with great labour, and much care, and infinite danger: that this man should throw all this structure down, and then, when he is ready to reap the fruits of his labours, by one indiscreet action to set fire upon his corn fields, and destroy all his dear-earned hopes, for the madness and loose wanderings of an hour: this man is an indiscreet gamester, who doubles his stake as he thrives, and, at one throw, is dispossessed of all the prosperities of a lucky hand.

They that are poor, as Plutarch observes, are careless of little things; because, by saving them, they think no great moments can accrue to their estates; and they, despairing to be rich, think such

[a] Chap. ii. 10.

[b] Ezek. xviii. 24.

frugality impertinent: but they that feel their banks swell, and are within the possibilities of wealth, think it useful if they reserve the smaller minutes of expense, knowing that every thing will add to their heap. But then, after long sparing, in one night to throw away the wealth of a long purchase, is an imprudence becoming none but such persons who are to be kept under tutors and guardians, and such as are to be chastised by their servants, and to be punished by them whom they clothe and feed.

————ἀλλὰ καὶ ἔμπης
Αἰσχρόν τοι δηρόν τε μένειν, κενεόν τε νέεσθαι. HOM. Il. β.

These men sow much and gather little, stay long and return empty; and after a long voyage they are dashed in pieces, when their vessels are laden with the spoils of provinces. Every deadly sin destroys the rewards of a seven-years' piety. I add to this, that God is more impatient at a sin committed by his servants, than at many by persons that are his enemies; and an uncivil answer from a son to a father, from an obliged person to a benefactor, is a greater indecency, than if an enemy should storm his house, or revile him to his head. Augustus Cæsar taxed all the world, and God took no public notices of it; but when David taxed and numbered a petty province, it was not to be expiated without a plague; because such persons, besides the direct sin, add the circumstance of ingratitude to God, who hath redeemed them from their vain conversation, and from death, and from hell, and consigned them to the inheritance of sons, and given them his grace and his Spirit, and many periods of comfort, and a certain hope, and visible earnests of immortality. Nothing is baser than that such a person, against his reason, against his interest, against his God, against so many obligations, against his custom, against his very habits and acquired inclinations, should do an action

Quam nisi seductis nequeas committere divis;

which a man must for ever be ashamed of, and, like Adam, must run from God himself to do it, and depart from the state in which he had placed all his hopes, and to which he had designed all his labours. The consideration is effective enough, if we sum up the particulars; for he that hath lived well, and then falls into a deliberate sin, is infinitely dishonoured, is most imprudent, most unsafe, and most unthankful.

2. Let persons tempted to the single instances of sin in the midst of a laudable life, be very careful that they suffer not themselves to be drawn aside by the eminence of great examples. For some think drunkenness hath a little honesty derived unto it by the example of Noah; and adultery is not so scandalous and intolerably dishonourable, since Bathsheba bathed, and David was defiled; and men think a flight is no cowardice, if a general turns his head and runs:

"Pompeio fugiente timent." LUCAN.

Well might all the gowned "Romans fear, when Pompey fled." And who is there that can hope to be more righteous than David, or stronger than Samson, or have less hypocrisy than St. Peter, or be more temperate than Noah? These great examples bear men of weak discourses and weaker resolutions from the severity of virtues. But, as Diagoras, to them that showed to him the votive garments of those that had escaped shipwreck, upon their prayers and vows to Neptune, answered, that they kept no account of those that prayed and vowed, and yet were drowned: so do these men keep catalogues of those few persons, who broke the thread of a fair life in sunder with the violence of a great crime, and, by the grace of God, recovered, and repented, and lived; but they consider not concerning those infinite numbers of men, who died in their first fit of sickness, who, after a fair voyage, have thrown themselves over-board, and perished in a sudden wildness. One said well, "Si quid Socrates aut Aristippus contra morem et consuetudinem fecerunt, idem sibi ne arbitretur quis licere: magnis enim illi et divinis bonis hanc licentiam assequebantur:" "If Socrates did any unusual thing, it is not for thee, who art of an ordinary virtue, to assume the same license; for he, by a divine and excellent life, hath obtained leave or pardon respectively" for what thou must never hope for, till thou hast arrived to the same glories. First, be as devout as David, as good a christian as St. Peter, and then thou wilt not dare, with design, to act that which they fell into by surprise; and if thou dost fall as they did, by that time thou hast also repented like them, it may be said concerning thee, that thou didst fall and break thy bones, but God did heal thee and pardon thee. Remember that all the damned souls shall bear an eternity of torments for the pleasures of a short sinfulness; but for a single transient action to die for ever, is an intolerable exchange, and the effect of so great a folly, that whosoever falls into it, and then considers it, it will make him mad and distracted for ever.

3. Remember, that since no man can please God, or be partaker of any promises, or reap the reward of any actions in the returns of eternity, unless he performs to God an entire duty, according to the capacities of a man so taught, and so tempted, and so assisted; such a person must be curious, that he be not cozened with the duties and performances of any one relation. 1. Some there are, that think all our religion consists in prayers and public or private offices of devotion, and not in moral actions, or intercourses of justice and temperance, of kindness and friendships, of sincerity and liberality, of chastity and humility, of repentance and obedience. Indeed no humour is so easy to be counterfeited as devotion; and yet no hypocrisy is more common among men, nor any so useless as to God: for it being an address to him alone, who knows the heart and all the secret purposes, it can do no service in order to heaven, so long as it is without the power of godliness, and the energy and vivacity of a holy life. God will not suffer us to commute a duty, because all is his due; and religion shall not pay for want of temperance. If the devoutest hermit be proud; or he that "fasts thrice in the week,"

be uncharitable once; or he that gives much to the poor gives also too much liberty to himself; he hath planted a fair garden, and invited a wild boar to refresh himself under the shade of the fruit-trees; and his guest, being something rude, hath disordered his paradise, and made it become a wilderness. 2. Others there are, that judge themselves by the censures that kings and princes give concerning them, or as they are spoken of by their betters; and so make false judgments concerning their condition. For, our betters, to whom we show our best parts, to whom we speak with caution and consider what we represent, they see our arts and our dressings, but nothing of our nature and deformities: trust not their censures concerning thee; but to thy own opinion of thyself, whom thou knowest in thy retirements, and natural peevishness, and unhandsome inclinations, and secret baseness. 3. Some men have been admired abroad, in whom the wife and the servant never saw any thing excellent: a rare judge and a good commonwealth's man in the streets and public meetings, and a just man to his neighbour, and charitable to the poor; for in all these places the man is observed, and kept in awe by the sun, by light, and by voices: but this man is a tyrant at home, an unkind husband, an ill father, an imperious master. And such men are like "prophets in their own countries," not honoured at home; and can never be honoured by God, who will not endure that many virtues should excuse a few vices, or that any of his servants shall take pensions of the devil, and in the profession of his service do his enemy single advantages.

4. He that hath passed many stages of a good life, to prevent his being tempted to a single sin, must be very careful that he never entertain his spirit with the remembrances of his past sin, nor amuse it with the fantastic apprehensions of the present. When the Israelites fancied the sapidness and relish of the flesh-pots, they longed to taste and to return.

So when a Libyan tiger, drawn from his wilder foragings, is shut up, and taught to eat civil meat, and suffer the authority of a man, he sits down tamely in his prison, and pays to his keeper fear and reverence for his meat: but if he chance to come again, and taste a draught of warm blood, he presently leaps into his natural cruelty. He scarce abstains from eating those hands, that brought him discipline and food.[d] So is the nature of a man made tame and gentle by the grace of God, and reduced to reason, and kept in awe by religion and laws, and, by an awful virtue, is taught to forget those alluring and sottish relishes of sin: but if he diverts from his path, and snatches handfuls from the wanton vineyards, and remembers the lasciviousness of his unwholesome food, that pleased his childish palate; then he grows sick again, and hungry after unwholesome diet, and longs for the apples of Sodom. A man must walk through the world without eyes or ears, fancy or appetite, but such as are created and sanctified by the grace of God; and being once made a new man, he must serve all the needs of nature by the appetites and faculties of grace; nature must be wholly a servant: and we must so look towards the deliciousness of our religion and the ravishments of heaven, that our memory must be for ever useless to the affairs and perceptions of sin. We cannot stand, we cannot live, unless we be curious and watchful in this particular.

By these, and all other arts of the spirit, if we stand upon our guard, never indulging to ourselves one sin because it is but one, as knowing that one sin brought in death upon all the world, and one sin brought slavery upon the posterity of Cham; and always fearing lest death surprise us in that one sin; we shall, by the grace of God, either not need, or else easily perceive the effects and blessings of that compassion which God reserves, in the secrets of his mercy, for such persons whom his grace hath ordained and disposed with excellent dispositions unto life eternal.

These are the sorts of men which are to be used with compassion, concerning whom we are to make a difference; "making a difference," so says the text. And it is of high concernment that we should do so, that we may relieve the infirmities of the men, and relieve their sicknesses, and transcribe the copy of the Divine mercy, who loves not to "quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed." For although all sins are against God's commandments directly, or by certain consequents, by line, or by analogy; yet they are not all of the same tincture and mortality.

> Nec vincit ratio hoc, tantundem ut peccet idemque,
> Qui teneros caules alieni fregerit horti,
> Et qui nocturnus divûm sacra legerit.

"He that robs a garden of coleworts, and carries away an armful of spinage, does not deserve hell, as he that steals the chalice from the church, or betrays a prince;" and therefore men are distinguished accordingly.

> Est inter Tanaim quiddam socerumque Viselli.—HOR.

The poet that Sejanus condemned for dishonouring the memory of Agamemnon, was not an equal criminal with Catiline or Gracchus: and Simon Magus and the Nicolaitans committed crimes which God hated more than the complying of St. Barnabas, or the dissimulation of St. Peter; and therefore God does treat these persons severally. Some of these are restrained with a fit of sickness, some with a great loss, and in these there are degrees; and some arrive at death. And in this manner God scourged the Corinthians, for their irreverent and disorderly receiving the holy sacrament. For although even the least of the sins that I have discoursed of will lead to death eternal, if their course be not interrupted, and the disorder chastised; yet because we do not stop their progress instantly, God many times does, and visits us with proportionable judgments; and so not only checks the rivulet from swelling into rivers and a vastness, but plainly tells

[c] Sic ubi, desuetæ sylvis, in carcere clausæ,
Mansuevere feræ, et vultus posuêre minaces,
Atque hominem didicere pati; si torrida parvus
Venit in ora cruor, redeunt rabiesque furorque,
Admonitæque tument gustato sanguine fauces;
Fervet, et à trepido vix abstinet ira magistro:—PHARS.

us, that although smaller crimes shall not be punished with equal severity as the greatest, yet even in hell there are eternal rods as well as eternal scorpions; and the smallest crime that we act with an infant malice and manly deliberation, shall be revenged with the lesser strokes of wrath, but yet with the infliction of a sad eternity. But then that we also should make a difference, is a precept concerning church-discipline, and therefore not here proper to be considered, but only as it may concern our own particulars in the actions of repentance, and our brethren in fraternal correction.

——————adsit
Regula, quæ pœnas peccatis irroget æquas,
Ne scuticâ dignum horribili sectêre flagello. HOR.

Let us be sure that we neglect no sin, but repent for every one, and judge ourselves for every one, according to the proportion of the malice, or the scandal, or the danger. And although in this there is no fear that we would be excessive; yet, when we are to reprove a brother, we are sharp enough, and, either by pride or by animosity, by the itch of government or the indignation of an angry mind, we run beyond the gentleness of a christian monitor. We must remember, that by Christ's law some are to be admonished privately, some to be shamed and corrected publicly; and, beyond these, there is an abscission, or a cutting off from the communion of faithful people, "a delivering over to Satan." And to this purpose is that old reading of the words of my text, which is still in some copies, *καὶ τοὺς μὲν ἐλέγχετε διακρινομένους*, "Reprove them sharply, when they are convinced," or "separate by sentence." But because this also is a design of mercy acted with an instance of discipline, it is a punishment of the flesh, that the soul may be saved in the day of the Lord; it means the same with the usual reading, and with the last words of the text, and teaches us our usage towards the worst of recoverable sinners.

11. "Others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire." Some sins there are, which in their own nature are damnable, and some are such as will certainly bring a man to damnation: the first are curable, but with much danger; the second are desperate and irrecoverable. When a man is violently tempted, and allured with an object that is proportionable and pleasant to his vigorous appetite, and his unabated, unmortified nature, this man falls into death; but yet we pity him, as we pity a thief that robs for his necessity: this man did not tempt himself, but his spirit suffers violence, and his reason is invaded, and his infirmities are mighty, and his aids not yet prevailing. But when this single temptation hath prevailed for a single instance, and leaves a relish upon the palate, and this produces another, and that also is fruitful, and swells into a family and kindred of sin, that is, it grows, first into approbation, then to a clear assent, and an untroubled conscience, thence into frequency, from thence unto a custom, and easiness, and a habit; this man is fallen into the fire. There are also some single acts of so great a malice, that they must suppose a man habitually sinful, before he could arrive at that height of wickedness. No man begins his sinful course with killing of his father or his prince: and Simon Magus had preambulatory impieties; he was covetous and ambitious long before he offered to buy the Holy Ghost. "Nemo repente fuit turpissimus." And although such actions may have in them the malice and the mischief, the disorder and the wrong, the principle and the permanent effect of a habit and a long course of sin; yet because they never, or very seldom, go alone, but after the predisposition of other ushering crimes, we shall not amiss comprise them under the name of habitual sins; for such they are, either formally or equivalently. And if any man hath fallen into a sinful habit, into a course and order of sinning, his case is little less than desperate; but that little hope that is remanent, hath its degree, according to the infancy or the growth of the habit.

1. For all sins less than habitual, it is certain a pardon is ready to penitent persons; that is, to all that sin in ignorance or in infirmity, by surprise or inadvertency, in smaller instances or infrequent returns, with involuntary actions or imperfect resolutions. *Ἐκτείνατε τὰς χεῖρας ὑμῶν πρὸς τὸν αὐτοκράτορα Θεὸν, ἱκετεύοντες αὐτὸν ἵλεων γενέσθαι, εἴ τι ἄκοντες ἡμάρτετε*, said Clemens in his epistle: "Lift up your hands to Almighty God, and pray him to be merciful to you in all things, when you sin unwillingly;" that is, in which you sin with an imperfect choice. For no man sins against his will directly, but when his understanding is abused by an inevitable or an intolerable weakness, or their wills follow their blind guide, and are not the perfect mistresses of their own actions; and therefore leave a way and easiness to repent, and be ashamed of them, and therefore a possibility and readiness for pardon. And these are the sins that we are taught to pray to God that he would pardon, as he gives us our bread, that is, every day. For "in many things we offend all," said St. James; that is, in many smaller matters, in matters of surprise or inevitable infirmity. And therefore Possidonius said, that St. Austin was used to say, that "he would not have even good and holy priests go from this world without the susception of equal and worthy penances:" and the most innocent life in our account is not a competent instrument of a peremptory confidence, and of justifying ourselves. "I am guilty of nothing," said St. Paul; that is, of no ill intent, or negligence, in preaching the gospel; "yet I am not hereby justified;" for God, it may be, knows many little irregularities and insinuations of sin. In this case we are to make a difference; but humility, and prayer, and watchfulness, are the direct instruments of the expiation of such sins.

But then, secondly, whosoever sins without these abating circumstances, that is, in great instances, in which a man's understanding cannot be cozened, as in drunkenness, murder, adultery; and in the frequent repetitions of any sort of sin whatsoever, in which a man's choice cannot be surprised, and in which it is certain there is a love of the sin, and a delight in it, and a power over a man's resolutions; in these cases it is a miraculous grace, and an ex-

traordinary change, that must turn the current and the stream of the iniquity; and when it is begun, the pardon is more uncertain, and the repentance more difficult, and the effect much abated, and the man must be made miserable, that he may not be accursed for ever.

1. I say, his pardon is uncertain; because there are some sins which are unpardonable, (as I shall show,) and they are not all named in particular; and the degrees of malice being uncertain, the salvation of that man is to be wrought with infinite fear and trembling. It was the case of Simon Magus: "Repent, and ask pardon for thy sin, if peradventure the thought of thy heart may be forgiven thee."[c] *If peradventure;* it was a new crime, and concerning its possibility of pardon no revelation had been made, and by analogy to other crimes it was very like an unpardonable sin: for it was "a thinking a thought" against the Holy Ghost, and that was next to "speaking a word" against him. Cain's sin was of the same nature: "It is greater than it can be forgiven:" his passion and his fear was too severe and decretory; it was pardonable, but truly we never find that God did pardon it.

2. But besides this, it is uncertain in the pardon, because it may be the time of pardon is past; and though God hath pardoned to other people the same sins, and to thee too sometimes before, yet it may be, he will not now: he hath not promised pardon so often as we sin, and in all the returns of impudence, apostasy, and ingratitude; and it may be, "thy day is past," as was Jerusalem's in the day that they crucified the Saviour of the world.

3. Pardon of such habitual sins is uncertain, because life is uncertain; and such sins require much time for their abolition and expiation. And therefore, although these sins are not "necessariò mortifera," that is, unpardonable; yet by consequence they become deadly; because our life may be cut off, before we have finished or performed those necessary parts of repentance, which are the severe, and yet the only condition of getting pardon. So that you may perceive, that not only every great single crime, but the habit of any sin is dangerous: and therefore these persons are to be "snatched from the fire," if you mean to rescue them: ἐκ τοῦ πυρὸς ἁρπάζοντες. If you stay a day, it may be you stay too long.

4. To which I add this fourth consideration, that every delay of return is, in the case of habitual sins, an approach to desperation; because the nature of habits is like that of crocodiles, they grow as long as they live; and if they come to obstinacy or confirmation, they are in hell already, and can never return back. For so the Pannonian bears, when they have clasped a dart in the region of their liver, wheel themselves upon the wound, and with anger and malicious revenge strike the deadly barb deeper, and cannot be quit from that fatal steel; but, in flying, bear along that which themselves make the instrument of a more hasty death: so is every vicious person struck with a deadly wound, and his own hands force it into the entertainments of the heart; and because it is painful to draw it forth by a sharp and salutary repentance, he still rolls and turns upon his wound, and carries his death in his bowels, where it first entered by choice, and then dwelt by love, and at last shall finish the tragedy by Divine judgments and an unalterable decree.

But as the pardon of these sins is uncertain, so the conditions of restitution are hard even to them who shall be pardoned: their pardon, and themselves too, must be fetched from the fire; water will not do it; tears and ineffective sorrow cannot take off a habit, or a great crime.

> O nimiùm faciles, qui tristia crimina cædis
> Tolli flumineâ posse putatis aquâ!

Bion, seeing a prince weep and tearing his hair for sorrow, asked if baldness would cure his grief? Such pompous sorrows may be good indices, but no perfect instruments of restitution. St. James plainly declares the possibilities of pardon to great sins, in the cases of contention, adultery, lust, and envy, which are the four great indecencies that are most contrary to christianity:[d] and in the fifth chapter,[e] he implies also a possibility of pardon to an habitual sinner, whom he calls τὸν πλανηθέντα ἀπὸ τῆς ὁδοῦ τῆς ἀληθείας, "one that errs from the truth," that is, from the life of a christian, the life of the Spirit of truth: and he adds, that such a person may be reduced, and so be pardoned, though he have sinned long; "He that converts such a one, shall hide a multitude of sins." But then the way that he appoints for the restitution of such persons, is humility and humiliation, penances and sharp penitential sorrows, and afflictions, resisting the devil, returning to God, weeping and mourning, confessions, and prayers, as you may read at large in the fourth and fifth chapters: and there it is that you shall find it a duty, that such persons should "be afflicted," and should "confess to their brethren:" and these are harder conditions than God requires in the former cases; these are a kind of fiery trial.

I have now done with my text; and should add no more, but that the nature of these sins is such, that they may increase in their weight, and duration, and malice, and then they increase in mischief and fatality, and so go beyond the text. Cicero said well, "Ipsa consuetudo assentiendi periculosa esse videtur et lubrica:"[f] "The very custom of consenting in the matters of civility is dangerous and slippery," and will quickly engage us in error: and then we think we are bound to defend them; or else we are made flatterers by it, and so become vicious: and we love our own vices that we are used to, and keep them till they are incurable, that is, till we will never repent of them; and some men resolve never to repent, that is, they resolve they will not be saved, they tread under foot the blood of the everlasting covenant. Those persons are in the fire too, but they will not be pulled out: concerning whom God's prophets must say as once concerning Babylon, "Curavimus, et non est sanata; derelinquamus eam:"—"We would have healed them, but

[c] Acts viii. 22. [d] Chap. iv. 1, 3. [e] Ver. ult.

[f] Acad. Qu. lib. iv.

they would not be healed; let us leave them in their sins, and they shall have enough of it." Only this: those that put themselves out of the condition of mercy, are not to be endured in christian societies; they deserve it not, and it is not safe that they should be suffered.

But besides all this, I shall name one thing more unto you; for

> ———nunquam adeò fœdis adeòque pudendis
> Utimur exemplis, ut non pejora supersint. JUV.

There are some single actions of sin of so great a malice, that in their own nature they are beyond the limit of gospel pardon: they are not such things for the pardon of which God entered into covenant, because they are such sins which put a man into perfect indispositions and incapacities of entering into or being in the covenant. In the first ages of the world atheism was of that nature, it was against their whole religion; and the sin is worse now, against the whole religion still, and against a brighter light. In the ages after the flood, idolatry was also just such another: for God was known first only as the Creator; then he began to manifest himself in special contracts with men, and he quickly was declared the God of Israel; and idolatry perfectly destroyed all that religion, and therefore was never pardoned entirely, but God did visit it upon them that sinned; and when he pardoned it in some degrees, yet he also punished it in some: and yet rebellion against the supreme power of Moses and Aaron was worse; for that also was a perfect destruction of the whole religion, because it refused to submit to those hands, upon which God had placed all the religion and all the government. And now, if we would know in the gospel what answers these precedent sins; I answer, first, the same sins acted by a reasonable hand and heart are worse now than ever they were: and a third or fourth is also to be added; and that is apostasy, or a voluntary malicious renouncing the faith. The church hath often declared that sin to be unpardonable. Witchcraft, or final impenitence and obstinacy in any sin, are infallibly desperate; and in general, and by a certain parity of reason, whatsoever does destroy charity, or the good life of a christian, with the same general venom and deletery as apostasy destroys faith: and he that is a renegado from charity, is as unpardonable as he that returns to solemn atheism or infidelity; for all that is directly the sin against the Holy Ghost, that is, a throwing that away whereby only we can be christians, whereby only we can hope to be saved. To "speak a word against the Holy Ghost," in the Pharisees was declared unpardonable, because it was such a word which, if it had been true or believed, would have destroyed the whole religion; for they said that Christ wrought by Beelzebub, and by consequence did not come from God. He that destroys all the whole order of priesthood, destroys one of the greatest parts of the religion, and one of the greatest effects of the Holy Ghost: he that destroys government, destroys another part. But that we may come nearer to ourselves: To "quench the Spirit of God" is worse than to speak some words against him; to "grieve the Spirit of God" is a part of the same impiety; to "resist the Holy Ghost" is another part: and if we consider that every great sin does this in proportion, it would concern us to be careful lest we fall into "presumptuous sins, lest they get the dominion over us." Out of this that I have spoken, you may easily gather what sort of men those are, who cannot be "snatched from the fire;" for hom, as St. John says, "we are not to pray;" and how near men come to it that continue in any known sin. If I should descend to particulars, I might lay a snare to scrupulous and nice consciences. This only: every confirmed habitual sinner does manifest the Divine justice in punishing the sins of a short life with a never-dying worm and a never-quenched flame; because he hath an affection to sin, that no time will diminish, but such as would increase to eternal ages; and accordingly, as any man hath a degree of love, so he hath lodged in his soul a spark, which, unless it be speedily and effectively quenched, will break forth into unquenchable fire.

SERMON XVIII.

THE FOOLISH EXCHANGE.

PART I.

For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? —Matt. xvi. 26.

WHEN the eternal mercy of God had decreed to rescue mankind from misery and infelicity, and so triumphed over his own justice; the excellent wisdom of God resolved to do it in ways contradictory to the appetites and designs of man, that it also might triumph over our weaknesses and imperfect conceptions. So God decreed to glorify his mercy by curing our sins, and to exalt his wisdom by the reproof of our ignorance, and the representing upon what weak and false principles we had built our hopes and expectations of felicity; pleasure and profit, victory over our enemies, riches and pompous honours, power and revenge, desires according to sensual appetites, and prosecutions violent and passionate of those appetites, health and long life, free from trouble, without poverty or persecution.

> Hæc sunt, jucundissime Martialis,
> Vitam quæ faciunt beatiorem. MART.

These are the measures of good and evil, the object of our hopes and fears, the securing our content, and the portion of this world; and for the other, let it be as it may. But the blessed Jesus,—having made revelations of an immortal duration, of another world, and of a strange restitution to it, even by the resurrection of the body, and a new investiture of

the soul with the same upper garment, clarified and made pure, so as no fuller on earth can whiten it; —hath also preached a new philosophy, hath cancelled all the old principles, reduced the appetites of sense to the discourses of reason, and heightened reason to the sublimities of the Spirit, teaching us abstractions and immaterial conceptions, giving us new eyes, and new objects, and new proportions: for now sensual pleasures are not delightful, riches are dross, honours are nothing but the appendages of virtue, and in relation to it are to receive their account. But now if you would enjoy life, you must die; if you would be at ease, you must take up Christ's cross, and conform to his sufferings; if you would "save your life," you must "lose it;" and if you would be rich, you must abound in good works, you must be "poor in spirit," and despise the world, and be rich unto God: for whatsoever is contrary to the purchases and affections of this world, is an endearment of our hopes in the world to come. And, therefore, he having stated the question so, that either we must quit this world or the other; our affections, I mean, and adherences to this, or our interest and hopes of the other: the choice is rendered very easy by the words of my text, because the distance is not less than infinite, and the comparison hath terms of a vast difference; heaven and hell, eternity and a moment, vanity and real felicity, life and death eternal, all that can be hoped for, and all that can be feared; these are the terms of our choice: and if a man have his wits about him, and be not drunk with sensuality and senselessness, he need not much to dispute before he pass the sentence. For nothing can be given to us to recompense the loss of heaven; and if our souls be lost, there is nothing remaining to us whereby we can be happy.

"What shall it profit a man?" or, "What shall a man give?" Is there any exchange for a man's soul? The question is an *αὔξησις* of the negative. Nothing can be given for an *ἀντάλλαγμα*, or "a price," to satisfy for its loss.

The blood of the Son of God was given to recover it, or as an *ἀντάλλαγμα* to God; and when our souls were forfeit to him, nothing less than the life and passion of God and man could pay the price, I say, to God; who yet was not concerned in the loss, save only that such was his goodness, that it pitied him to see his creature lost. But to us what shall be the *ἀντάλλαγμα*? what can make us recompence when we have lost our own souls, and are lost in a miserable eternity? What can then recompense us? Not all the world, not ten thousand worlds: and of this that miserable man whose soul is lost is the best judge. For the question is *ἀδυνητικὸν*, and hath a potential signification, and means *πόσα ἂν δώσῃ*· that is, Suppose a man ready to die, condemned to the sentence of a horrid death, heightened with the circumstances of trembling and amazement, "what would he give" to save his life? "Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, and all that a man hath, will he give for his life." And this turned to a proverb among the Jews; for so the last words of the text are, *τί δώσει ἄνθρωπος ἀντάλλαγμα τῆς ψυχῆς*; which proverb being usually meant concerning a temporal death, and intended to represent the sadnesses of a condemned person, our blessed Saviour fits to his own purpose, and translates to the signification of death eternal, which he first revealed clearly to the world. And because no interest of the world can make a man recompence for his life, because to lose that makes him incapable of enjoying the exchange, (and he were a strange fool, who, having no design upon immortality or virtue, should be willing to be hanged for a thousand pounds "per annum,") this argument increases infinitely in the purpose of our blessed Saviour; and to gain the world, and to lose our souls, in the christian sense, is infinitely more madness, and a worse exchange, than when our souls signify nothing but a temporal life. And although possibly the indefinite hopes of Elysium, or an honourable name, might tempt some hardy persons to leave this world, hoping for a better condition, even among the heathen; yet no excuse will acquit a christian from madness, if, for the purchase of this world, he lose his eternity.

Here, then, first, we will consider the propositions of the exchange, the "world and a man's soul," by way of supposition, supposing all that is propounded were obtained, "the whole world." Secondly, we will consider, what is likely to be obtained "really" and "indeed" of the world, and what are really the miseries of a lost soul. For it is propounded in the text, by way of supposition, "if a man should gain the world," which no man ever did nor ever can; and he that gets most, gets too little to be exchanged for a temporal life. And, thirdly, I shall apply it to your practice, and make material considerations.

1. First, then, suppose a man gets all the world, what is it that he gets? It is a bubble and a fantasm, and hath no reality beyond a present transient use; a thing that is impossible to be enjoyed, because its fruits and usages are transmitted to us by parts and by succession. He that hath all the world, (if we can suppose such a man,) cannot have a dish of fresh summer-fruits in the midst of winter, not so much as a green fig; and very much of its possessions is so hid, so fugacious, and of so uncertain purchase, that it is like the riches of the sea to the lord of the shore; all the fish and wealth within all its hollownesses are his, but he is never the better for what he cannot get: all the shell-fishes that produce pearl, produce them not for him; and the bowels of the earth shall hide her treasures in undiscovered retirements; so that it will signify as much to this great purchaser to be entitled to an inheritance in the upper region of the air; he is so far from possessing all its riches, that he does not so much as know of them, nor understand the philosophy of her minerals.

2. I consider, that he that is the greatest possessor in the world, enjoys its best and most noble parts, and those which are of most excellent perfection, but in common with the inferiôr persons, and the most despicable of his kingdom. Can the greatest prince enclose the sun, and set one little

star in his cabinet for his own use, or secure to himself the gentle and benign influences of any one constellation? Are not his subjects' fields bedewed with the same showers that water his gardens of pleasure?

Nay, those things which he esteems his ornament, and the singularity of his possessions, are they not of more use to others than to himself? For suppose his garments splendid and shining, like the robe of a cherub, or the clothing of the fields, all that he that wears them enjoys, is, that they keep him warm, and clean, and modest; and all this is done by clean and less pompous vestments; and the beauty of them, which distinguishes him from others, is made to please the eyes of the beholders; and he is like a fair bird, or the meretricious painting of a wanton woman, made wholly to be looked on, that is, to be enjoyed by every one but himself: and the fairest face and the sparkling eye cannot perceive or enjoy their own beauties but by reflection. It is I that am pleased with beholding his gaiety; and the gay man, in his greatest bravery, is only pleased because I am pleased with the sight; so borrowing his little and imaginary complacency from the delight that I have, not from any inherency of his own possession.

The poorest artisan of Rome, walking in Cæsar's gardens, had the same pleasures which they ministered to their lord; and although, it may be, he was put to gather fruits to eat from another place, yet his other senses were delighted equally with Cæsar's; the birds made him as good music, the flowers gave him as sweet smells; he there sucked as good air, and delighted in the beauty and order of the place, for the same reason and upon the same perception as the prince himself; save only that Cæsar paid, for all that pleasure, vast sums of money, the blood and treasure of a province, which the poor man had for nothing.

3. Suppose a man lord of all the world (for still we are but in supposition); yet since every thing is received, not according to its own greatness and worth, but according to the capacity of the receiver, it signifies very little as to our content or to the riches of our possession. If any man should give to a lion a fair meadow full of hay, or a thousand quince trees; or should give to the goodly bull, the master and the fairest of the whole herd, a thousand fair stags; if a man should present to a child a ship laden with Persian carpets, and the ingredients of the rich scarlet; all these, being disproportionate either to the appetite or to the understanding, could add nothing of content, and might declare the freeness of the presenter, but they upbraid the incapacity of the receiver. And so it does if God should give the whole world to any man. He knows not what to do with it; he can use no more but according to the capacities of a man; he can use nothing but meat, and drink, and clothes; and infinite riches, that can give him changes of raiment every day and a full table, do but give him a clean trencher every bit he eats; it signifies no more but wantonness and variety, to the same, not to any new purposes. He to whom the world can be given to any purpose greater than a private estate can minister, must have new capacities created in him; he needs the understanding of an angel, to take the accounts of his estate; he had need have a stomach like fire or the grave, for else he can eat no more than one of his healthful subjects; and unless he hath an eye like the sun, and a motion like that of a thought, and a bulk as big as one of the orbs of heaven, the pleasures of his eye can be no greater than to behold the beauty of a little prospect from a hill, or to look upon the heap of gold packed up in a little room, or to dote upon a cabinet of jewels, better than which there is no man that sees at all, but sees every day. For, not to name the beauties and sparkling diamonds of heaven, a man's, or a woman's, or a hawk's eye, is more beauteous and excellent than all the jewels of his crown. And when we remember that a beast, who hath quicker senses than a man, yet hath not so great delight in the fruition of any object, because he wants understanding and the power to make reflex acts upon his perception; it will follow, that understanding and knowledge is the greatest instrument of pleasure, and he that is most knowing, hath a capacity to become happy, which a less knowing prince, or a rich person, hath not; and in this only a man's capacity is capable of enlargement. But then, although they only have power to relish any pleasure rightly, who rightly understand the nature, and degrees, and essences, and ends of things; yet they that do so, understand also the vanity and the unsatisfyingness of the things of this world, so that the relish, which could not be great but in a great understanding, appears contemptible, because its vanity appears at the same time; the understanding sees all, and sees through it.

4. The greatest vanity of this world is remarkable in this, that all its joys summed up together are not big enough to counterpoise the evil of one sharp disease, or to allay a sorrow. For imagine a man great in his dominion as Cyrus, rich as Solomon, victorious as David, beloved like Titus, learned as Trismegist, powerful as all the Roman greatness; all this, and the results of all this, give him no more pleasure, in the midst of a fever or the tortures of the stone, than if he were only lord of a little dish, and a dishful of fountain water. Indeed the excellency of a holy conscience is a comfort and a magazine of joy, so great, that it sweetens the most bitter potion of the world, and makes tortures and death not only tolerable, but amiable; and, therefore, to part with this, whose excellency is so great, for the world, that is of so inconsiderable a worth, as not to have in it recompence enough for the sorrows of a sharp disease, is a bargain fit to be made by none but fools and madmen. Antiochus Epiphanes, and Herod the Great, and his grandchild, Agrippa, were sad instances of this great truth; to every of which it happened, that the grandeur of their fortune, the greatness of their possessions, and the increase of their estate, disappeared and expired like camphire, at their arrest by those several sharp diseases, which covered their head with cypress, and hid their crowns in an inglorious grave.

For what can all the world minister to a sick person, if it represents all the spoils of nature, and the choicest delicacies of land and sea? Alas! his appetite is lost, and to see a pebble-stone is more pleasing to him: for he can look upon that without loathing, but not so upon the most delicious fare that ever made famous the Roman luxury. Perfumes make his head ache; if you load him with jewels, you press him with a burden as troublesome as his grave-stone: and what pleasure is in all those possessions that cannot make his pillow easy, nor tame the rebellion of a tumultuous humour, nor restore the use of a withered hand, or straighten a crooked finger? Vain is the hope of that man, whose soul rests upon vanity and such unprofitable possessions.

5. Suppose a man lord of all this world, a universal monarch, as some princes have lately designed; all that cannot minister content to him; not that content which a poor contemplative man, by the strength of christian philosophy, and the support of a very small fortune, daily does enjoy. All his power and greatness cannot command the sea to overflow his shores, or to stay from retiring to the opposite strand: it cannot make his children dutiful or wise. And though the world admired at the greatness of Philip the Second's fortune, in the accession of Portugal and the East Indies to his principalities, yet this could not allay the infelicity of his family, and the unhandsomeness of his condition, in having a proud, and indiscreet, and vicious young prince, likely to inherit all his greatness. And if nothing appears in the face of such a fortune to tell all the world that it is spotted and imperfect; yet there is, in all conditions of the world, such weariness and tediousness of the spirits, that a man is ever more pleased with hopes of going off from the present, than in dwelling upon that condition, which, it may be, others admire and think beauteous, but none knoweth the smart of it but he that drank off the little pleasure, and felt the ill relish of the appendage. How many kings have groaned under the burden of their crowns, and have sunk down and died! How many have quitted their pompous cares, and retired into private lives, there to enjoy the pleasures of philosophy and religion, which their thrones denied!

And if we consider the supposition of the text, the thing will demonstrate itself. For he who can be supposed the owner and purchaser of the whole world, must either be a king or a private person. A private person can hardly be supposed to be the man; for if he be subject to another, how can he be lord of the whole world? But if he be a king, it is certain that his cares are greater than any man's, his fears are bigger, his evils mountainous, the accidents that discompose him are more frequent, and sometimes intolerable; and of all his great possessions he hath not the greatest use and benefit; but they are like a great harvest, which more labourers must bring in, and more must eat of; only he is the centre of all the cares, and they fix upon him, but the profits run out to all the lines of the circle, to all that are about him, whose good is therefore greater than the good of the prince, because what they enjoy is the purchase of the prince's care; and so they feed upon his cost.

Privatusque magis vivam te rege beatus.—HOR. l. i. sat. 3.

Servants live the best lives, for their care is single, only how to please their lord; but all the burden of a troublesome providence and ministration makes the outside pompous and more full of ceremony, but intricates the condition and disturbs the quiet of the great possessor.

And imagine a person as blest as can be supposed upon the stock of worldly interest; when all his accounts are cast up, he differs nothing from his subjects or his servants but in mere circumstance, nothing of reality or substance. He hath more to wait at his tables, or persons of higher rank to do the meanest offices; more ceremonies of address, a fairer escutcheon, louder titles: but can this multitude of dishes make him have a good stomach, or does not satiety cloy it? when his high diet is such, that he is not capable of being feasted, and knows not the frequent delights and oftener possibilities a a poor man hath of being refreshed, while not only his labour makes hunger, and so makes his meat delicate (and then it cannot be ill fare, let it be what it will); but also his provision is such, that every little addition is a direct feast to him, while the greatest owner of the world, giving to himself the utmost of his desires, hath nothing left beyond his ordinary, to become the entertainment of his festival days, but more loads of the same meat.[a] And then let him consider how much of felicity can this condition contribute to him, in which he is not further gone beyond a person of a little fortune in the greatness of his possession, than he is fallen short in the pleasures and possibility of their enjoyment.

And that is a sad condition, when, like Midas, all that the man touches shall turn to gold: and his is no better, to whom a perpetual full table, not recreated with fasting, not made pleasant with intervening scarcity, ministers no more good than a heap of gold does; that is, he hath no benefit of it, save the beholding of it with his eyes. Cannot a man quench his thirst as well out of an urn or chalice as out of a whole river? It is an ambitious thirst, and a pride of draught, that had rather lay his mouth to Euphrates than to a petty goblet; but if he had rather, it adds not so much to his content as to his danger and his vanity.

——— eo fit,
Plenior ut siquos delectet copia justo,
Cum ripâ simul avulsos ferat Aufidus acer.—HOR.

For so I have heard of persons whom the river hath swept away, together with the turf they pressed, when they stooped to drown their pride rather than their thirst.

6. But this supposition hath a lessening term. If a man could be born heir of all the world, it were something; but no man ever was so, except him only who enjoyed the least of it, the Son of man, that "had not where to lay his head." But in the supposition it is, "If a man could gain the whole world," which supposes labour and sorrow, trouble

[a] Rare volte ha fame chista sempre à tavola.

and expense, venture and hazard, and so much time expired in its acquist and purchase, that, besides the possession is not secured to us for a term of life, so our lives are almost expired before we become estated in our purchases. And, indeed, it is a sad thing to see an ambitious or a covetous person make his life unpleasant, troublesome, and vexatious, to grasp a power bigger than himself, to fight for it with infinite hazards of his life, so that it is a thousand to one but he perishes in the attempt, and gets nothing at all but an untimely grave, a reproachful memory, and an early damnation. But suppose he gets a victory, and that the unhappy party is put to begin a new game; then to see the fears, the watchfulness, the diligence, the laborious arts to secure a possession, lest the desperate party should recover a desperate game. And suppose this, with a new stock of labours, danger, and expense, be seconded by a new success; then to look upon the new emergencies, and troubles, and discontents, among his friends, about parting the spoil; the envies, the jealousies, the slanders, the underminings, and the perpetual insecurity of his condition: all this, I say, is to see a man take infinite pains to make himself miserable. But if he will be so unlearned as to call this gallantry or a splendid fortune; yet, by this time, when he remembers he hath certainly spent much of his time in trouble, and how long he shall enjoy this he is still uncertain; he is not certain of a month; and suppose it be seven years, yet when he comes to die, and cast up his accounts, and shall find nothing remaining but a sad remembrance of evils and troubles past, and expectations of worse, infinitely worse, he must acknowledge himself convinced, that to gain all this world is a fortune not worth the labour and the dangers, the fears and transportations of passions, though the soul's loss be not considered in the bargain.

II. But I told you all this while that this is but a supposition still, the putting of a case, or like a fiction of law; nothing real. For if we consider, in the second place, how much every man is likely to get really, and how much it is possible for any man to get, we shall find the account far shorter yet, and the purchase most trifling and inconsiderable. For, first, the world is at the same time enjoyed by all its inhabitants, and the same portion of it by several persons in their several capacities. A prince enjoys his whole kingdom, not as all his people enjoy it, but in the manner of a prince; the subject in the manner of subjects. The prince hath certain regalia beyond the rest; but the feudal right of subjects does them more emolument, and the regalia does the prince more honour: and those that hold the fees in subordinate right, transmit it also to their tenants, beneficiaries, and dependants, to public uses, to charity, and hospitality; all which is a lessening of the lord's possessions, and a cutting his river into little streams, not that himself alone, but that all his relatives, may drink to be refreshed. Thus the well where the woman of Samaria sat, was Jacob's well, and he drank of it; but so did his wives, and his children, and his cattle. So that what we call ours, is really ours but for our portion of expense and use; we have so little of it, that our servants have far more; and that which is ours, is nothing but the title, and the care, and the trouble of securing and dispensing; save only that God, whose stewards we all are, will call such owners (as they are pleased to call themselves) to strict accounts for their disbursements. And by this account, the possession or dominion is but a word, and serves a fancy, or a passion, or a vice, but no real end of nature. It is the use and spending it that makes a man, to all real purposes of nature, to be the owner of it; and in this the lord and master hath but a share.

2. But, secondly, consider how far short of the whole world the greatest prince that ever reigned did come. Alexander, that wept because he had no more worlds to conquer, was in his knowledge deceived and brutish as in his passion: he overran much of Asia; but he could never pass the Ganges, and never thrust his sword in the bowels of Europe, and knew nothing of America. And the *οἰκουμένη*, or "the whole world," began to have an appropriate sense; and was rather put to the Roman greatness, as an honourable appellative, than did signify that they were lords of the world, who never went beyond Persia, Egypt, or Britain.

But why do I talk of great things in this question of the exchange of the soul for the world? Because it is a real bargain which many men (too many, God knows) do make, we must consider it as applicable to practice. Every man that loses his soul for the purchase of the world, must not look to have the portion of a king. How few men are princes! and of those that are not born so, how seldom instances are found in story of persons, that, by their industry, became so! But we must come far lower yet. Thousands there are that damn themselves; and yet their purchase, at long-running, and after a base and weary life spent, is but five hundred pounds a year: nay, it may be, they only cozen an easy person out of a good estate, and pay for it at an easy rate, which they obtain by lying, by drinking, by flattery, by force; and the gain is nothing but a thousand pounds in the whole, or, it may be, nothing but a convenience. Nay how many men hazard their salvation for an acre of ground, for twenty pounds, to please a master, to get a small and a kind usage from a superior! These men get but little, though they did not give so much for it: so little, that Epictetus thought the purchase dear enough, though you paid nothing for it but flattery and observance: *Οὐ παρεκλήθης ἐφ' ἑστιάσίν τινος; οὐ γὰρ ἔδωκας τῷ καλοῦντι ὅσου πωλεῖται τὸ δεῖπνον· ἐπαίνου δ' αὐτὸ πωλεῖ, θεραπείας πωλεῖ·* "Observance was the price of his meal;" and he paid too dear for one that gave his birthright for it; but he that exchanges his soul for it, knows not the vanity of his purchase nor the value of his loss. He that gains the purchase and spoil of a kingdom, hath got that, which to all, that are placed in heaven, or to a man that were seated in the paths of the sun, seems but like a spot in an eye, or a mathematical point, so without vastness, that it seems to be without dimensions. But he whose

purchase is but his neighbour's field, or a few unjust acres, hath got that which is inconsiderable, below the notice and description of the map: for by such hieroglyphical representments, Socrates chid the vanity of a proud Athenian.

3. Although these premises may suffice to show that the supposed purchase is but vain, and that all which men use really to obtain, is less than trifles; yet even the possession of it, whatsoever it be, is not mere and unmixed, but allayed with sorrow and uneasiness; the gain hath but enlarged his appetite, and, like a draught to an hydropic person, hath enraged his thirst; and still that which he hath not, is infinitely bigger than what he hath, since the first enlargement of his purchase was not to satisfy necessity, but his passion, his lust or his avarice, his pride or his revenge. These things cease not by their fuel; but their flames grow bigger, and the capacities are stretched, and they want more than they did at first. For who wants most, he that wants five pounds, or he that wants five thousand? And supposing a man naturally supported and provided for, in the dispensations of nature there is no difference, but that the poor hath enough to fill his belly, and the rich man can never have enough to fill his eye. The poor man's wants are no greater than what may be supplied by charity; and the rich man's wants are so big that none but princes can relieve them; and they are left to all the temptations of great vices and huge cares to make their reparations.

Dives eget gemmis, Cereali munere pauper:
Sed cum egeant ambo, pauper egens minus est. AUSON.

If the greatness of the world's possessions produce such fruits, vexation, and care, and want; the ambitious requiring of great estates is but like the selling of a fountain to buy a fever, a parting with content to buy necessity, and the purchase of an unhandsome condition at the price of infelicity.

4. He that enjoys a great portion of this world, hath most commonly the allay of some great cross, which, although sometimes God designs in mercy, to wean his affections from the world, and for the abstracting them from sordid adherences and cohabitation, to make his eyes like stars, to fix them in the orbs of heaven and the regions of felicity, yet they are an inseparable appendant and condition of humanity. Solomon observed the vanity of some persons, that heaped up great riches for their heirs, and yet "knew not whether a wise man or a fool should possess them; this is a great evil under the sun." And if we observe the great crosses many times God permits in great families, as discontent in marriages, artificial or natural bastardies, a society of man and wife like the conjunction of two politics, full of state, and ceremony, and design, but empty of those sweet caresses, and natural hearty complications and endearments, usual in meaner and innocent persons; the perpetual sickness, fulness of diet, fear of dying, the abuse of flatterers, the trouble and noise of company, the tedious officiousness of impertinent and ceremonious visits, the declension of estate, the sadness of spirit, the notoriousness of those dishonours which the meanness of lower persons conceals, but their eminency makes as visible as the spots in the moon's face; we shall find him to be most happy that hath most of wisdom and least of the world, because he only hath the least danger and the most security.

5. And lastly, his soul so gets nothing that wins all this world, if he loses his soul, that it is ten to one but he that gets the one therefore shall lose the other; for to a great and opulent fortune, sin is so adherent and insinuating, that it comes to him in the nature of civility. It is a sad sight to see a great personage undertake an action passionately and upon great interest; and let him manage it as indiscreetly, let the whole design be unjust, let it be acted with all the malice and impotency in the world, he shall have enow to tell him that he proceeds wisely enough, to be servants of his interest, and promoters of his sin, instruments of his malice, and actors of revenge. But which of all his relatives shall dare to tell him of his indiscretion, of his rage, and of his folly? He had need be a bold man and a sèvere person that shall tell him of his danger, and that he is in a direct progress towards hell. And indeed such personages have been so long nourished up in softness, flattery, and effeminacy, that too often themselves are impatient of a monitor, and think the charity and duty of a modest reprehension to be a rudeness and incivility. That prince is a wise man that loves to have it otherwise; and, certainly, it is a strange civility and dutifulness in friends and relatives, to suffer him to go to hell uncontrolled, rather than to seem unmannerly towards a great sinner. But, certainly, this is none of the least infelicities of them who are lords of the world, and masters of great possessions.

I omit to speak of the habitual intemperance which is too commonly annexed to festival and delicious tables, where there is no other measure or restraint upon the appetite, but its fulness and satiety, and when it cannot or dare not eat more. Oftentimes it happens, that the intemperance of a poor table is more temperate and hath less of luxury in it than the temperance of a rich. To this are consequent all the evil accidents and effects of fulness, pride, lust, wantonness, softnesses of disposition, and dissolution of manners, huge talking, imperiousness, despite and contempt of poor persons; and, at the best, it is a great temptation for a man to have in his power whatsoever he can have in his sensual desires. Who then shall check his voracity, or calm his revenge, or allay his pride, or mortify his lust, or humble his spirit? It is like as when a lustful young and tempted person lives perpetually with his amorous and delicious mistress: if he escapes burning that is inflamed from within and set on fire from without, it is a greater miracle than the escaping from the flames of the furnace by the three children of the captivity. And just such a thing is the possession of the world; it furnishes us with abilities to sin and opportunities of ruin, and it makes us to dwell with poisons, and dangers, and enemies.

And although the grace of God is sufficient to great personages and masters of the world, and that it is possible for a young man to be tied upon a bed of flowers, and fastened by the arms and band of a courtesan, and tempted wantonly, and yet to escape the danger and the crime, and to triumph gloriously; (for so St. Jerome reports of a son of the king of Nicomedia;) and riches and a free fortune are designed by God to be a mercy, and an opportunity of doing noble things, and excellent charity, and exact justice, and to protect innocence, and to defend oppressed people; yet it is a mercy mixed with much danger; yea, it is like the present of a whole vintage to a man in an hectic fever; he will be shrewdly tempted to drink of it, and, if he does, he is inflamed, and may chance to die with the kindness. Happy are those persons who use the world, and abuse it not; who possess a part of it, and love it for no other ends but for necessities of nature, and conveniences of person, and discharge of all their duty and the offices of religion, and charity to Christ and all Christ's members. But since he that hath all the world cannot command nature to do him one office extraordinary, and enjoys the best part but in common with the poorest man in the world, and can use no more of it but according to a limited and a very narrow capacity; and whatsoever he can use or possess, cannot outweigh the present pressure of a sharp disease, nor can it at all give him content, without which there can be nothing of felicity; since a prince, in the matter of using the world, differs nothing from his subjects, but in mere accidents and circumstances, and yet these very many trifling differences are not to be obtained but by so much labour and care, so great expense of time and trouble, that the possession will not pay thus much of the price; and, after all this, the man may die two hours after he hath made his troublesome and expensive purchase, and is certain not to enjoy it long. Add to this last, that most men get so little of the world, that it is altogether of a trifling and inconsiderable interest; that they who have the most of this world, have the most of that but in title and in supreme rights and reserved privileges, the real use descending upon others to more substantial purposes; that the possession of this trifle is mixed with sorrow upon other accidents, and is allayed with fear; and that the greatness of men's possessions increases their thirst, and enlarges their wants, by swelling their capacity; and, above all, is of so great danger to a man's virtue, that a great fortune and a very great virtue are not always observed to grow together. He that observes all this, and much more he may observe, will see that he that gains the whole world, hath made no such great bargain of it, although he had it for nothing but the necessary unavoidable troubles in getting it. But how great a folly it is to buy so great a trouble, so great a vanity, with the loss of our precious souls, remains to be considered in the following parts of the text.

SERMON XIX.

PART II.

"AND lose his own soul?" or, "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"—And now the question is finally stated, and the dispute is concerning the sum of affairs.

De morte hominis nulla est cunctatio longa. JUV.

And, therefore, when the soul is at stake, not for its temporal, but for its eternal interest, it is not good to be hasty in determining, without taking just measures of the exchange. Solomon had the good things of the world actually in possession; and he tried them at the touchstone of prudence and natural value, and found them allayed with vanity and imperfection; and we that see them "weighed in the balance of the sanctuary," and tried by the touchstone of the Spirit, find them not only light and unprofitable, but pungent and dolorous. But now we are to consider what it is that men part with and lose, when, with passion and impotency, they get the world; and that will present the bargain to be an huge infelicity. And this I observe to be intimated in the word *lose*. For he that gives gold for cloth, or precious stones for bread, serves his needs of nature, and loses nothing by it; and the merchant that found a pearl of great price, and sold all that he had to make the purchase of it, made a good venture; he was no loser: but here the case is otherwise; when a man gains the whole world, and his soul goes in the exchange, he hath not done like a merchant, but like a child or prodigal; he hath given himself away, he hath lost all that can distinguish him from a slave or a miserable person, he loses his soul in the exchange. For the soul of a man all the world cannot be a just price; a man may lose it, or throw it away, but he can never make a good exchange when he parts with this jewel; and therefore, our blessed Saviour rarely well expresses it by ζημιοῦν, which is fully opposed to κέρδος, "gain;" it is such an ill market a man makes, as if he should proclaim his riches and goods vendible for a garland of thistles decked and trimmed up with the stinking poppy.

But we shall better understand the nature of this bargain if we consider the soul that is exchanged; what it is in itself, in order, not of nature, but to felicity and the capacities of joy; secondly, what price the Son of God paid for it; and, thirdly, what it is to lose it; that is, what miseries and tortures are signified by losing a soul.

I. First, if we consider what the soul is in its own capacity to happiness, we shall find it to be an excellency greater than the sun, of an angelical substance, sister to a cherubim, an image of the Divinity, and the great argument of that mercy whereby God did distinguish us from the lower form of beasts, and trees, and minerals.

For, so it was, the Scripture affirms that "God made man after his own image," that is, "secun-

dum illam imaginem et ideam quam concepit ipse;" nor according to the likeness of any of those creatures which were pre-existent to man's production, nor according to any of those images or ideas whereby God created the heavens and the earth, but by a new form, to distinguish him from all other substances; "he made him by a new idea of his own," by an uncreated exemplar. And besides, that this was a donation of intelligent faculties, such as we understand to be perfect and essential, or rather the essence of God, it is also a designation of him to a glorious immortality, and communication of the rays and reflections of his own essential felicities.

But the soul is all that whereby we may be, and without which we cannot be, happy. It is not the eye that sees the beauties of the heaven, nor the ear that hears the sweetness of music, or the glad tidings of a prosperous accident, but the soul that perceives all the relishes of sensual and intellectual perfections; and the more noble and excellent the soul is, the greater and more savoury are its perceptions. And, if a child beholds the rich ermine, or the diamonds of a starry night, or the order of the world, or hears the discourses of an apostle; because he makes no reflex acts upon himself, and sees not that he sees, he can have but the pleasure of a fool, or the deliciousness of a mule. But, although the reflection of its own acts be a rare instrument of pleasure or pain respectively, yet the soul's excellency is, upon the same reason, not perceived by us, by which the sapidness of pleasant things of nature are not understood by a child; even because the soul cannot reflect far enough. For as the sun, which is the fountain of light and heat, makes violent and direct emissions of his rays from himself, but reflects them no farther than to the bottom of a cloud, or the lowest imaginary circle of the middle region, and, therefore, receives not a duplicate of his own heat: so is the soul of man; it reflects upon its own inferior actions of particular sense, or general understanding; but, because it knows little of its own nature, the manners of volition, the immediate instruments of understanding, the way how it comes to meditate; and cannot discern how a sudden thought arrives, or the solution of a doubt not depending upon preceding premises; therefore, above half its pleasures are abated, and its own worth less understood; and, possibly, it is the better it is so. If the elephant knew his strength, or the horse the vigorousness of his own spirit, they would be as rebellious against their rulers as unreasonable men against government; nay, the angels themselves, because their light reflected home to their orbs, and they understood all the secrets of their own perfection, they grew vertiginous, and fell from the battlements of heaven. But the excellency of a human soul shall then be truly understood, when the reflection will make no distraction of our faculties, nor enkindle any irregular fires; when we may understand ourselves without danger.

In the mean this consideration is gone high enough, when we understand the soul of a man to be so excellently perfect, that we cannot understand how excellently perfect it is; that being the best way of expressing our conceptions of God himself. And, therefore, I shall not need by distinct discourses to represent that the will of man is the last resort and sanctuary of true pleasure, which, in its formality, can be nothing else but a conformity of possession or of being to the will; that the understanding, being the channel and conveyance of the noblest perceptions, feeds upon pleasures in all its proportionate acts, and unless it be disturbed by intervening sins and remembrances derived hence, keeps a perpetual festival; that the passions are every of them fitted with an object, in which they rest as in their centre; that they have such delight in these their proper objects, that too often they venture a damnation rather than quit their interest and possession. But yet from these considerations it would follow, that to lose a soul, which is designed to be an immense sea of pleasure, even in its natural capacities, is to lose all that whereby a man can possibly be, or be supposed happy. And so much the rather is this understood to be an insupportable calamity, because losing a soul in this sense is not a mere privation of those felicities, of which a soul is naturally designed to be a partaker, but it is an investing it with contrary objects, and cross effects, and dolorous perceptions: for the will, if it misses its desires, is afflicted; and the understanding, when it ceases to be ennobled with excellent things, is made ignorant as a swine, dull as the foot of a rock; and the affections are in the destitution of their perfective actions made tumultuous, vexed and discomposed to the height of rage and violence. But this is but the ἀρχὴ ὠδίνων, "the beginning of those throes," which end not but in eternal infelicity.

2. Secondly: If we consider the price that the Son of God paid for the redemption of a soul, we shall better estimate of it, than from the weak discourses of our imperfect and unlearned philosophy. Not the spoil of rich provinces, not the estimate of kingdoms, not the price of Cleopatra's draught, nor any thing that was corruptible or perishing; for that which could not one minute retard the term of its own natural dissolution, could not be a price for the redemption of one perishing soul. And if we list but to remember, and then consider, that a miserable, lost, and accursed soul, does so infinitely undervalue and disrelish all the goods and riches that this world dotes on, that he hath no more gust in them, or pleasure, than the fox hath in eating a turf; that, if he could be imagined to be the lord of ten thousand worlds, he would give them all for any shadow of hope of a possibility of returning to life again; that Dives in hell would have willingly gone on embassy to his father's house, that he might have been quit a little from his flames, and on that condition would have given Lazarus the fee-simple of all his temporal possessions, though he had once denied to relieve him with the superfluities of his table; we shall soon confess that a moment of time is no good exchange for an eternity of duration; and a light unprofitable possession is not to be put in the balance against a soul, which is the glory of the creation; a soul, with whom God had

made a contract, and contracted excellent relations, it being one of God's appellatives, that he is "the Lover of the souls."

When God made a soul, it was only, "Faciamus hominem ad imaginem nostram." He spake the word, and it was done. But, when man had lost this soul which the Spirit of God breathed into him, it was not so soon recovered. It is like the resurrection, which hath troubled the faith of many, who are more apt to believe that God made a man from nothing, than that he can return a man from dust and corruption. But for this resurrection of the soul, for the reimplacing the Divine image, for the rescuing it from the devil's power, for the re-entitling it to the kingdoms of grace and glory, God did a greater work than the creation; he was fain to contract Divinity to a span, to send a person to die for us, who, of himself, could not die, and was constrained to use rare and mysterious arts to make him capable of dying; he prepared a person instrumental to his purpose, by sending his Son from his own bosom, a person both God and man, an enigma to all nations and to all sciences; one that ruled over all the angels, that walked upon the pavements of heaven, whose feet were clothed with stars, whose eyes were brighter than the sun, whose voice is louder than thunder, whose understanding is larger than that infinite space, which we imagine in the uncircumscribed distance beyond the first orb of heaven; a person to whom felicity was as essential as life to God: this was the only person that was designed, in the eternal decrees of the Divine predestination, to pay the price of a soul, to ransom us from death; less than this person could not do it. For although a soul in its essence is finite, yet there were many infinites which were incident and annexed to the condition of lost souls. For all which because provision was to be made, nothing less than an infinite excellence could satisfy for a soul who was lost to infinite and eternal ages, who was to be afflicted with insupportable and undetermined, that is, next to infinite, pains; who was to bear the load of an infinite anger from the provocation of an eternal God. And yet if it be possible that infinite can receive degrees, this is but one-half of the abyss, and I think the lesser. For that this person, who was God eternal, should be lessened in all his appearances to a span, to the little dimensions of a man; and that he should really become very contemptibly little, although, at the same time, he was infinitely and unalterably great; that is, essential, natural, and necessary felicity should turn into an intolerable, violent, and immense calamity to his person; that this great God should not be admitted to pay the price of our redemption, unless he would suffer that horrid misery, which that lost soul should suffer; as it represents the glories of his goodness, who used such rare and admirable instruments in actuating the designs of his mercy, so it shows our condition to have been very desperate, and our loss invaluable.

A soul in God's account is valued at the price of the blood, and shame, and tortures of the Son of God; and yet we throw it away for the exchange of sins, that a man naturally is ashamed to own; we lose it for the pleasure, the sottish, beastly pleasure, of a night. I need not say, we lose our soul to save our lives; for, though that was our blessed Saviour's instance of the great unreasonableness of men, who by "saving their lives, lose them," that is, in the great account of doomsday; though this, I say, be extremely unreasonable, yet there is something to be pretended in the bargain; nothing to excuse him with God, but something in the accounts of timorous men; but to lose our souls with swearing, that unprofitable, dishonourable, and unpleasant vice; to lose our souls with disobedience or rebellion, a vice that brings a curse and danger all the way in this life; to lose our souls with drunkenness, a vice which is painful and sickly in the very acting it, which hastens our damnation by shortening our lives; are instances fit to be put in the stories of fools and madmen. And all vice is a degree of the same unreasonableness; the most splendid temptation being nothing but a pretty well-weaved fallacy, a mere trick, a sophism, and a cheating and abusing the understanding. But that which I consider here is, that it is an affront and contradiction to the wisdom of God, that we should so slight and undervalue a soul, in which our interest is so concerned; a soul, which he who made it, and who delighted not to see it lost, did account a fit purchase to be made by the exchange of his Son, the eternal Son of God. To which also I add this additional account, that a soul is so greatly valued by God, that we are not to venture the loss of it to save all the world. For, therefore, whosoever should commit a sin to save kingdoms from perishing; or, if the case could be put, that all the good men, and good causes, and good things in this world, were to be destroyed by tyranny, and it were in our power by perjury to save all these; that doing this sin would be so far from hallowing the crime, that it were to offer to God a sacrifice of what he most hates, and to serve him with swine's blood; and the rescuing of all these from a tyrant, or a hangman, could not be pleasing to God upon those terms, because a soul is lost by it, which is, in itself, a greater loss and misery than all the evils in the world put together can outbalance, and a loss of that thing for which Christ gave his blood a price. Persecutions and temporal death in holy men, and in a just cause, are but seeming evils, and, therefore, not to be bought off with the loss of a soul, which is a real, but an intolerable calamity. And if God, for his own sake, would not have all the world saved by sin, that is, by the hazarding of a soul, we should do well, for our own sakes, not to lose a soul for trifles, for things that make us here to be miserable, and even here also to be ashamed.

3. But it may be, some natures, or some understandings, care not for all this; therefore, I proceed to the third and most material consideration as to us, and I consider what it is to lose a soul. Which Hierocles thus explicates, Ὡς οἷον τε τῇ ἀθανάτῳ οὐσίᾳ θανάτου μοίρας μεταλαχεῖν, οὐ τῇ εἰς τὸ μὴ εἶναι ἐκβάσει, ἀλλὰ τῇ τοῦ εὖ εἶναι ἀποπτώσει, "An immortal substance can die, not by ceasing to be,

but by losing all being well," by becoming miserable. And it is remarkable, when our blessed Saviour gave us caution that we should "not fear them that can kill the body only, but fear him" (he says not that can kill the soul, but *τὸν δυνάμενον καὶ ψυχὴν καὶ σῶμα ἀπωλέσαι ἐν γεέννῃ*) "that is able to destroy the body and soul in hell;"[a] which word signifieth not "death," but "tortures." For some have chosen death for sanctuary, and fled to it to avoid intolerable shame, to give a period to the sense of a sharp grief, or to cure the earthquakes of fear; and the damned perishing souls shall wish for death with a desire as impatient as their calamity; but this shall be denied them, because death were a deliverance, a mercy, and a pleasure, of which these miserable persons must despair for ever.

I shall not need to represent to your considerations those expressions of Scripture, which the Holy Ghost hath set down to represent to our capacities the greatness of this perishing, choosing such circumstances of character as were then usual in the world, and which are dreadful to our understanding as any thing; "hell-fire" is the common expression; for the Eastern nations accounted burnings the greatest of these miserable punishments, and burning malefactors was frequent. "Brimstone and fire," so St. John[b] calls the state of punishment, "prepared for the devil and all his servants;" he added the circumstance of brimstone, for by this time, the devil had taught the world more ingenious pains, and himself was newly escaped out of boiling oil and brimstone, and such bituminous matter; and the Spirit of God knew right well the worst expression was not bad enough. *Σκότος ἐξώτερος*, so our blessed Saviour calls it, "the outer darkness;" that is, not only an abjection from the beatific regions, where God, and his angels, and his saints, dwell for ever; but then there is a positive state of misery expressed by darkness, *ζόφον σκότους*, as two apostles, St. Peter and St. Jude, call it, "the blackness of darkness for ever." In which, although it is certain that God, whose justice there rules, will inflict but just so much as our sins deserve, and not superadd degrees of undeserved misery, as he does to the saints of glory; (for God gives to blessed souls in heaven more, infinitely more, than all their good works could possibly deserve; and therefore their glory is infinitely bigger glory than the pains of hell are great pains;) yet because God's justice in hell rules alone, without the allays and sweeter abatements of mercy, they shall have pure and unmingled misery; no pleasant thought to refresh their weariness, no comfort in another accident to alleviate their pressures, no waters to cool their flames. But because when there is a great calamity upon a man, every such man thinks himself the most miserable; and though there are great degrees of pain in hell, yet there are none perceived by him that thinks he suffers the greatest; it follows, that every man that loses his soul in this darkness, is miserable beyond all those expressions, which the tortures of this world could furnish to the writers of the Holy Scripture.

[a] Matt. xix. 28. [b] Revel. xiv. 10.

But I shall choose to represent this consideration in that expression of our blessed Saviour, Mark ix. 44. which himself took out of the prophet Isaiah lxvi. 24. "Where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." This is the *συντελείας ἐρήμωσις* spoken of by Daniel the prophet: for although this expression was a prediction of that horrid calamity and abscission of the Jewish nation, when God poured out a full vial of his wrath upon the crucifiers of his Son, and that this, which was the greatest calamity which ever did, or ever shall, happen to a nation, Christ, with great reason, took to describe the calamity of accursed souls, as being the greatest instance to signify the greatest torment: yet we must observe that the difference of each state makes the same words in the several cases to be of infinite distinction. The worm stuck close to the Jewish nation, and the fire of God's wrath flamed out till they were consumed with a great and unheard-of destruction, till many millions did die accursedly, and the small remnant became vagabonds, and were reserved, like broken pieces after a storm, to show the greatness of the storm and misery of the shipwreck: but then this being translated to signify the state of accursed souls, whose dying is a continual perishing, who cannot cease to be, it must mean an eternity of duration, in a proper and natural signification.

And that we may understand it fully, observe the place in Isa. xxxiv. 8, &c. The prophet prophesies of the great destruction of Jerusalem for all her great iniquities: "It is the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Sion. And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day, the smoke thereof shall go up for ever; from generation to generation it shall lie waste, none shall pass through it, for ever and ever." This is the final destruction of the nation; but this destruction shall have an end, because the nation shall end, and the anger also shall end in its own period, even then when God shall call the Jews into the common inheritance with the gentiles, and all "become the sons of God." And this also was the period of their "worm," as it is of their "fire," the fire of the Divine vengeance upon the nation: which was not to be extinguished till they were destroyed, as we see it come to pass. And thus also in St. Jude, "the angels who kept not their first state," are said to be "reserved" by God in everlasting chains under darkness:" which word, "everlasting," signifies not absolutely to eternity, but to the utmost end of that period; for so it follows, "unto the judgment of the great day;" that "everlasting" lasts no longer. And in ver. 7. the word "eternal" is just so used. The men of "Sodom and Gomorrah are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire;" that is, of a fire which burned till they were quite destroyed, and the cities and the country with an irreparable ruin, never to be rebuilt and reinhabited as long as this world continues. The effect of which observation is this:

That these words, "for ever,—everlasting,—eternal,—the never-dying worm,—the fire unquenchable," being words borrowed by our blessed Saviour and his apostles from the style of the Old Testament, must have a signification just proportionable to the state in which they signify: so that as this worm, when it signifies a temporal infliction, means a worm that never ceases giving torment till the body is consumed; so when it is translated to an immortal state, it must signify as much in that proportion: that "eternal," that "everlasting," hath no end at all; because the soul cannot be killed in the natural sense, but is made miserable and perishing for ever; that is, the "worm shall not die" so long as the soul shall be unconsumed; "the fire shall not be quenched" till the period of an immortal nature comes. And that this shall be absolutely for ever, without any restriction, appears unanswerable in this, because the same "for ever" that is for the blessed souls, the same "for ever" is for the accursed souls: but the blessed souls, "that die in the Lord, henceforth shall die no more, death hath no power over them; for death is destroyed, it is swallowed up in victory," saith St. Paul; and "there shall be no more death," saith St. John.[c] So that, because "for ever" hath no end, till the thing or the duration itself have end, in the same sense in which the saints and angels "give glory to God for ever," in the same sense the lost souls shall suffer the evils of their sad inheritance: and since, after this death of nature, which is a separation of soul and body, there remains no more death, but this second death, this eternal perishing of miserable accursed souls, whose duration must be eternal; it follows, that "the worm of conscience," and "the unquenchable" fire of hell, have no period at all, but shall last as long as God lasts, or the measures of a proper eternity; that they who provoke God to wrath by their base, unreasonable, and sottish practices, may know what their portion shall be in the everlasting habitations. And yet, suppose that Origen's opinion had been true, and that accursed souls should have ease and a period to their tortures after a thousand years; I pray, let it be considered, whether it be not a great madness to choose the pleasures or the wealth of a few years here, with trouble, with danger, with uncertainty, with labour, with intervals of sickness; and for this to endure the flames of hell for a thousand years together. The pleasures of the world no man can have for a hundred years; and no man hath pleasure for a hundred days together, but he hath some trouble intervening, or at least a weariness and a loathing of the pleasure: and therefore, to endure insufferable calamities, suppose it be for a hundred years, without any interruption, without so much comfort as the light of a candle, or a drop of water amounts to in a fever, is a bargain to be made by no man that loves himself, or is not in love with infinite affliction.

If a man were condemned but to lie still, or to lie in bed in one posture without turning, for seven years together, would he not buy it off with the loss of all his estate? If a man were to be put upon the rack for every day for three months together, (suppose him able to live so long,) what would not he do to be quit of his torture? Would any man curse the king to his face, if he were sure to have both his hands burnt off, and to be tormented with torments three years together. Would any man in his wits accept of a hundred pounds a year for forty years, if he were sure to be tormented in the fire for the next hundred years together without intermission? Think then what a thousand years signify; ten ages, the age of two empires. But this account, I must tell you, is infinitely short, though I thus discourse to you how great fools wicked men are, though this opinion should be true. A goodly comfort, surely, that for two or three years' sottish pleasure, a man shall be infinitely tormented but for a thousand years! But then when we cast up the minutes, and years, and ages of eternity, the consideration itself is a great hell to those persons, who, by their evil lives, are consigned to such sad and miserable portions.

A thousand years is a long while to be in torment: we find a fever of one and twenty days to be like an age in length; but when the duration of an intolerable misery is for ever in the height, and for ever beginning, and ten thousand years have spent no part of its term, but it makes a perpetual efflux, and is like the centre of a circle, which ever transmits lines to the circumference: this is a consideration so sad, that the horror of it, and the reflection upon its abode and duration, make a great part of the hell: for hell could not be hell without the despair of accursed souls; for any hope were a refreshment, and a drop of water, which would help to allay those flames, which, as they burn intolerably, so they must burn for ever.

And I desire you to consider, that although the Scripture uses the word "fire" to express the torments of accursed souls, yet fire can no more equal the pangs of hell than it can torment an immaterial substance; the pains of perishing souls being as much more afflictive than the smart of fire, as the smart of fire is troublesome beyond the softness of Persian carpets, or the sensuality of the Asian luxury. For the pains of hell, and the perishing or losing the soul, is, to suffer the wrath of God: *καὶ γὰρ ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν πῦρ κατανάλισκον*, "our God is a consuming fire," that is, the fire of hell. When God takes away all comfort from us, nothing to support our spirit is left us; when sorrow is our food, and tears our drink; when it is eternal night, without sun, or star, or lamp, or sleep; when we burn with fire without light, that is, are laden with sadness, without remedy, or hope of ease; and that this wrath is to be expressed and to fall upon us in spiritual, immaterial, but most accursed, most pungent, and dolorous emanations; then we feel what it is to lose a soul.

We may guess at it by the terrors of a guilty conscience, those "verbera et laniatus," those secret "lashings and whips" of the exterminating angel, those thorns in the soul, when a man is haunted by an evil spirit; those butcheries,—which the soul of

[c] Rev. xxi. 4.

a tyrant, or a violent or a vicious person, when he falls into fear or any calamity, does feel,—are the infinite arguments, that hell,—which is the consummation of the torment of conscience, just as manhood is the consummation of infancy, or as glory is the perfection of grace,—is an affliction greater than the bulk of heaven and earth; for there it is that God pours out the treasures of his wrath, and empties the whole magazine of thunderbolts, and all the armoury of God is employed, not in the chastising, but in the tormenting, of a perishing soul. Lucian brings in Radamanthus, telling the poor wandering souls upon the banks of Elysium, Ὁπόσα ἄν τις ὑμῶν πονηρὸς ἐργάσηται παρὰ τὸν βίον, καθ' ἕκαστον αὐτῶν ἀφανῆ στίγματα ἐπὶ τῆς ψυχῆς περιφέρει, "For every wickedness that any man commits in his life, when he comes to hell, he hath stamped upon his soul an invisible brand" and mark of torment, and this begins here, and is not cancelled by death, but there is enlarged by the greatness of infinite, and the abodes of eternity. How great these torments of conscience are here, let any man imagine that can but understand what despair means; despair upon just reason: let it be what it will, no misery can be greater than despair. And because I hope none here have felt those horrors of an evil conscience which are consignations to eternity, you may please to learn it by your own reason, or else by the sad instances of story. It is reported of Petrus Ilosuanus, a Polonian schoolmaster, that having read some ill-managed discourses of absolute decrees and Divine reprobation, began to be fantastic and melancholic, and apprehensive that he might be one of those many whom God had decreed for hell from all eternity. From possible to probable, from probable to certain, the temptation soon carried him: and when he once began to believe himself to be a person inevitably perishing, it is not possible to understand perfectly what infinite fears, and agonies, and despairs, what tremblings, what horrors, what confusion and amazement, the poor man felt within him, to consider that he was to be tormented extremely, without remedy, even to eternal ages. This, in a short continuance, grew insufferable, and prevailed upon him so far, that he hanged himself, and left an account of it to this purpose in writing in his study: "I am gone from hence to the flames of hell, and have forced my way thither, being impatient to try what those great torments are, which here I have feared with an insupportable amazement." This instance may suffice to show what it is to lose a soul. But I will take off from this sad discourse; only I shall crave your attention to a word of exhortation.

That you take care, lest for the purchase of a little, trifling, inconsiderable portion of the world, you come into this place and state of torment. Although Homer was pleased to compliment the beauty of Helena to such a height, as to say, "it was a sufficient price for all the evils which the Greeks and Trojans suffered in ten years:"

Οὐ νέμεσις Τρῶας καὶ ἐυκνήμιδας Ἀχαιοὺς
Τοιῇ δ' ἀμφὶ γυναικὶ πολὺν χρόνον ἄλγεα πάσχειν.
Iliad. γ'.

yet it was a more reasonable conjecture of Herodotus, that, during the ten years' siege of Troy, Helena, for whom the Greeks fought, was in Egypt, not in the city; because it was unimaginable but the Trojans would have thrown her over the walls, rather than, for the sake of such a trifle, have endured so great calamities. We are more sottish than the Trojans, if we retain our Helena, any one beloved lust, a painted devil, any sugared temptation, with (not the hazard, but) the certainty of having such horrid miseries, such invaluable losses. And certainly it is a strange stupidity of spirit that can sleep in the midst of such thunder; when God speaks from heaven with his loudest voice, and draws aside his curtain, and shows his arsenal and his armoury, full of arrows steeled with wrath, headed and pointed, and hardened with vengeance, still to snatch at those arrows, if they came but in the retinue of a rich fortune or a vain mistress, if they wait but upon pleasure or profit, or in the rear of an ambitious design.

But let us not have such a hardiness against the threats and representments of the Divine vengeance, as to take the little imposts and revenues of the world, and stand in defiance against God and the fears of hell; unless we have a charm that we can be ἀόρατοι τῷ κριτῇ, "invisible to the Judge" of heaven and earth, and are impregnable against, or are sure we shall be insensible of, the miseries of a perishing soul.

There is a sort of men, who, because they will be vicious and atheistical in their lives, have no way to go on with any plaisance and without huge disturbances, but by being also atheistical in their opinions; and to believe that the story of hell is but a bugbear to affright children and fools, easy-believing people, to make them soft and apt for government and designs of princes. And this is an opinion that befriends none but impure and vicious persons. Others there are, that believe God to be all mercy, that he forgets his justice; believing that none shall perish with so sad a ruin, if they do but at their death-bed ask God forgiveness, and say they are sorry, but yet continue their impiety till their house be ready to fall: being like the Circassians, whose gentlemen enter not in the church till they be threescore years old, that is, in effect, till by their age they cannot any longer use rapine; till then they hear service at their windows, dividing unequally their life between sin and devotion, dedicating their youth to robbery, and their old age to a repentance without restitution.

Our youth, and our manhood, and old age, are all of them due to God, and justice and mercy are to him equally essential; and as this life is a time of the possibilities of mercy, so to them that neglect it, the next world shall be a state of pure and unmingled justice.

Remember the fatal and decretory sentence which God hath passed upon all mankind: "It is appointed to all men once to die, and after death comes judgment." And if any of us were certain to die next morning, with what earnestness should we pray! with what hatred should we remember

our sins! with what scorn should we look upon the licentious pleasures of the world! Then nothing could be welcome unto us but a prayer-book, no company but a comforter and a guide of souls, no employment but repentance, no passions but in order to religion, no kindness for a lust that hath undone us. And if any of you have been arrested with alarms of death, or been in hearty fear of its approach, remember what thoughts and designs then possessed you, how precious a soul was then in your account, and what then you would give that you had despised the world, and done your duty to God and man, and lived a holy life. It will come to that again; and we shall be in that condition in which we shall perfectly understand, that all the things and pleasures of the world are vain, and unprofitable, and irksome, and that he only is a wise man who secures the interest of his soul, though it be with the loss of all this world, and his own life into the bargain. When we are to depart this life, to go to strange company and stranger places, and to an unknown condition, then a holy conscience will be the best security, the best possession; it will be a horror, that every friend we meet shall, with triumph, upbraid to us the sottishness of our folly: "Lo, this is the goodly change you have made! you had your good things in your lifetime, and how like you the portion that is reserved to you for ever?" The old rabbins, those poets of religion, report of Moses, that when the courtiers of Pharaoh were sporting with the child Moses, in the chamber of Pharaoh's daughter, they presented to his choice an ingot of gold in one hand and a coal of fire in the other; and that the child snatched at the coal, thrust it into his mouth, and so singed and parched his tongue, that he stammered ever after. And certainly it is infinitely more childish in us, for the glittering of the small glow-worms and the charcoal of worldly possessions, to swallow the flames of hell greedily in our choice: such a bit will produce a worse stammering than Moses had: for so the accursed and lost souls have their ugly and horrid dialect; they roar and blaspheme, blaspheme and roar, for ever. And suppose God should now, at this instant, send the great archangel with his trumpet, to summon all the world to judgment, would not all this seem a notorious visible truth, a truth which you will then wonder that every man did not lay to his heart and preserve there, in actual, pious, and effective consideration? Let the trumpet of God perpetually sound in your ears, "Surgite mortui, et venite ad judicium:" place yourselves, by meditation, every day upon your death-bed, and remember what thoughts shall then possess you, and let such thoughts dwell in your understanding for ever, and be the parent of all your resolutions and actions. The doctors of the Jews report, that when Absalom hanged among the oaks by the hair of the head, he seemed to see under him hell gaping wide ready to receive him; and he durst not cut off the hair that entangled him, for fear he should fall into the horrid lake, whose portion is flames and torment, but chose to protract his miserable life a few minutes in that pain of posture, and to abide the stroke of his pursuing enemies: his condition was sad when his arts of remedy were so vain.

Τί γὰρ βροτῶν ἂν σὺν κακοῖς μεμιγμένον
Θνήσκειν ὁ μέλλων τοῦ χρόνου κέρδος φέρει; SOPH.

A condemned man hath but small comfort to stay the singing of a long psalm; it is the case of every vicious person. Hell is wide open to every impenitent persevering sinner, to every unpurged person.

Noctes atque dies patet atri janua Ditis. Æn.

And although God hath lighted his candle, and the lantern of his word and clearest revelations is held out to us, that we can see hell in its worst colours and most horrid representments; yet we run greedily after baubles, unto that precipice which swallows up the greatest part of mankind; and then only we begin to consider, when all consideration is fruitless.

He, therefore, is a huge fool, that heaps up riches, that greedily pursues the world, and at the same time (for so it must be) "heaps up wrath to himself against the day of wrath;" when sickness and death arrest him, then they appear unprofitable, and himself extremely miserable; and if you would know how great that misery is, you may take account of it by those fearful words and killing rhetoric of Scripture: "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God;" and, "Who can dwell with the everlasting burnings?" That is, no patience can abide there one hour, where they must dwell for ever.

SERMON XX.

OF CHRISTIAN PRUDENCE.

PART I.

Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.—Matt. x. latter part of verse 16.

WHEN our blessed Saviour entailed a law and a condition of sufferings, and promised a state of persecution to his servants; and withal had charmed them with the bands and unactive chains of so many passive graces, that they should not be able to stir against the violence of tyrants, or abate the edge of axes, by any instrument but their own blood; being "sent forth as sheep among wolves," innocent and silent, harmless and defenceless, certainly exposed to sorrow, and uncertainly guarded in their persons; their condition seemed nothing else but a designation to slaughter: and when they were drawn into the folds of the church, they were betrayed into the hands of evil men, infinitely and unavoidably: and when an apostle invited a proselyte to come to Christ, it was in effect a snare laid for his life; and he could neither conceal his religion, nor hide his person, nor avoid a captious question, nor deny his

accusation, nor elude the bloody arts of orators and informers, nor break prisons, nor any thing but die. If the case stood just thus, it was well eternity stood at the outer days of our life, ready to receive such harmless people: but surely there could be no art in the design, no pitying of human weaknesses, no complying with the condition of man, no allowances made for customs and prejudices of the world, no inviting men by the things of men, no turning nature into religion: but it was all the way a direct violence, and an open prostitution of our lives, and a throwing away our fortune into a sea of rashness and credulity. But, therefore, God ordered the affairs and necessities of religion in other ways, and to other purposes. Although God bound our hands behind us, yet he did not tie our understandings up: although we might not use our swords, yet we might use our reason: we were not suffered to be violent, but we might avoid violence by all the arts of prudence and innocence: if we did take heed of sin, we might also take heed of men. And because in all contentions between wit and violence, prudence and rudeness, learning and the sword, the strong hand took it first, and the strong head possessed it last; the strong man first governed, and the witty man succeeded him, and lasted longer; it came to pass, that the wisdom of the Father hath so ordered it, that all his disciples should overcome the power of the Roman legions by a wise religion; and prudence and innocence should become the mightiest guards; and the christian, although exposed to persecution, yet is so secured that he shall never need to die, but when the circumstances are so ordered, that his reason is convinced that then it is fit he should; fit, I say, in order to God's purposes and his own.

For he that is innocent, is safe against all the rods and the axes of all the consuls of the world, if they rule by justice; and he that is prudent, will also escape from many rudenesses and irregular violences that can come by injustice: and no wit of man, no government, no armies, can do more. For Cæsar perished in the midst of all his legions and all his honours; and against chance and irregularities there is no provision less than infinite that can give security. And although prudence alone cannot do this, yet innocence gives the greatest title to that Providence which only can, if he pleases, and will, if it be fitting. Here, then, are the two arms defensive of a christian: prudence against the evils of men, innocence against the evils of devils and all that relates to his kingdom.

Prudence fences against persecution and the evil snares, against the opportunities and occasions of sin; it prevents surprises, it fortifies all its proper weaknesses, it improves our talents, it does advantage to the kingdom of Christ and the interests of the gospel, it secures our condition, and instructs our choice in all the ways and just passages to felicity, it makes us to live profitably and die wisely; and without it, simplicity would turn to silliness, zeal into passion, passion into fury, religion into scandal, conversation into a snare, civilities into temptation, courtesies into danger; and an imprudent person falls into the condition of harmless, rich, and unwary fools, or rather of birds, sheep, and beavers, who are hunted and persecuted for the spoils of their fleece or their flesh, their skins or their entrails, and have not the foresight to avoid a snare, but by their fear and undefending follies are driven thither where they die infallibly. Σκαιοῖσι πολλοῖς εἷς σοφὸς διόλλυται.[a] Every good man is encircled with many enemies and dangers; and his virtue shall be rifled, and the decency of his soul and spirit shall be discomposed, and turned into a heap of inarticulate and disorderly fancies, unless, by the methods and guards of prudence, it be managed and secured.

But in order to the following discourse and its method, we are first to consider, whether this be, or, indeed, can be, a commandment, or what it is. For can all men that give up their names in baptism, be enjoined to be wise and prudent? It is as if God would command us to be eloquent or witty men, fine speakers, or straight-bodied, or excellent scholars, or rich men: if he please to make us so, we are so. And prudence is a gift of God, a blessing of an excellent nature, and of great leisure, and a wise opportunity, and a severe education, and a great experience, and a strict observation, and good company; all which, being either wholly or in part out of our power, may be expected as free gifts, but cannot be imposed as commandments.

To this I answer, that christian prudence is, in very many instances, a direct duty; in some, an instance and advice, in order to degrees and advantages. Where it is a duty, it is put into every man's power; where it is an advice, it is only expected according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not: and even here, although the events of prudence are out of our power, yet the endeavours and the observation, the diligence and caution, the moral part of it, and the plain conduct of our necessary duty, (which are portions of this grace,) are such things which God will demand in proportion to the talent which he hath intrusted into our banks. There are, indeed, some christians very unwary and unwise in the conduct of their religion; and they cannot at all help it, at least not in all degrees; but yet they may be taught to do prudent things, though not to be prudent persons: if they have not the prudence of advice and conduct, yet they may have the prudence of obedience and of disciples. And the event is this: without prudence their virtue is unsafe, and their persons defenceless, and their interest is unguarded; for prudence is a handmaid waiting at the production and birth of virtue; it is a nurse to it in its infancy, its patron in assaults, its guide in temptations, its security in all portions of chance and contingencies; and he that is imprudent, if he have many accidents and varieties, is in great danger of being none at all; or, if he be, at the best he is but a "weak and an unprofitable servant," useless to his neighbour, vain in himself, and as to God, "the least in the kingdom:" his virtue is contingent and by chance,

[a] Stobæus.

not proportioned to the reward of wisdom, and the election of a wise religion.

Προνοίας οὐδὲν ἀνθρώποις ἔφυ
Κέρδος λαβεῖν ἄμεινον, οὐδὲ νοῦ σοφοῦ. SOPHOCL.

No purchase, no wealth, no advantage, is great enough to be compared to a wise soul and a prudent spirit; and he that wants it, hath a less virtue, and a defenceless mind, and will suffer a mighty hazard in the interest of eternity. Its parts and proper acts consist in the following particulars.

1. It is the duty of christian prudence to choose the end of a christian, that which is perfective of a man, satisfactory to reason, the rest of a christian, and the beatification of his spirit: and that is, to choose, and desire, and propound to himself heaven, and the fruition of God, as the end of all his acts and arts, his designs and purposes. For, in the nature of things, that is most eligible and most to be pursued, which is most perfective of our nature, and is the acquiescence, the satisfaction, and proper rest of our most reasonable appetites. Now the things of this world are difficult and uneasy, full of thorns and empty of pleasures; they fill a diseased faculty or an abused sense, but are an infinite dissatisfaction to reason and the appetites of the soul; they are short and transient, and they never abide, unless sorrow, like a chain, be bound about their leg, and then they never stir till the grace of God and religion breaks it, or else that the rust of time eats the chain in pieces; they are dangerous and doubtful, few and difficult, sordid and particular, not only not communicable to a multitude, but not diffusive upon the whole man, there being no one pleasure or object in this world that delights all the parts of man: and, after all this, they are originally from earth and from the creatures, only that they oftentimes contract alliances with hell and the grave, with shame and sorrow; and all these put together make no great amability or proportion to a wise man's choice. But, on the other side, the things of God are the noblest satisfactions to those desires which ought to be cherished and swelled up to infinite; their deliciousness is vast and full of relish, and their very appendant thorns are to be chosen; for they are gilded, they are safe and medicinal, they heal the wound they make, and bring forth fruit of a blessed and a holy life. The things of God and of religion are easy and sweet, they bear entertainments in their hand, and reward at their back; their good is certain and perpetual, and they make us cheerful to-day and pleasant to-morrow; and spiritual songs end not in a sigh and a groan: neither, like unwholesome physic, do they let loose a present humour, and introduce an habitual indisposition; but they bring us to the felicity of God, "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever:" they do not give a private and particular delight, but their benefit is public; like the incense of the altar, it sends up a sweet smell to heaven, and makes atonement for the religious man that kindled it, and delights all the standers-by, and makes the very air wholesome. There is no blessed soul goes to heaven, but he makes a general joy in all the mansions where the saints do dwell, and in all the chapels where the angels sing: and the joys of religion are not univocal, but productive of rare, and accidental, and preternatural pleasures; for the music of holy hymns delights the ear, and refreshes the spirit, and makes the very bones of the saint to rejoice. And charity, or the giving alms to the poor, does not only ease the poverty of the receiver, but makes the giver rich, and heals his sickness, and delivers from death: and temperance, though it be in the matter of meat, and drink, and pleasures, yet hath an effect upon his understanding, and makes the reason sober, and the will orderly, and the affections regular, and does things beside and beyond their natural and proper efficacy: for all the parts of our duty are watered with the showers of blessing, and bring forth fruit according to the influence of heaven, and beyond the capacities of nature.

And now let the voluptuous person go and try whether putting his wanton hand to the bosom of his mistress will get half such honour as Scævola put upon his head, when he put his hand into the fire. Let him see whether a drunken meeting will cure a fever or make him wise: a hearty and persevering prayer will. Let him tell me, if spending great sums of money upon his lusts will make him sleep soundly, or be rich: charity will; alms will increase his fortune, and a good conscience shall charm all his cares and sorrows into a most delicious slumber. Well may a full goblet wet the drunkard's tongue, and then the heat rising from the stomach will dry the sponge, and heat it into the scorchings and little images of hell: and the follies of a wanton bed will turn the itch into a smart, and empty the reins of all their lustful powers: but can they do honour or satisfaction in any thing that must last, and that ought to be provided for? No; all the things of this world are little, and trifling, and limited, and particular, and sometimes necessary, because men are miserable, wanting, and imperfect; but they never do any thing toward perfection, but their pleasure dies like the time in which it danced awhile; and when the minute is gone, so is the pleasure too, and leaves no footstep but the impression of a sigh, and dwells no where but in the same house where you shall find yesterday, that is, in forgetfulness and annihilation; unless its only child, sorrow, shall marry, and breed more of its kind, and so continue its memory and name to eternal ages. It is, therefore, the most necessary part of prudence to choose well in the main stake: and the dispute is not much; for if eternal things be better than temporal, the soul more noble than the body, virtue more honourable than the basest vices, a lasting joy to be chosen before an eternal sorrow, much to be preferred before little, certainty before danger, public good things before private evils, eternity before moments; then let us sit down in religion, and make heaven to be our end, God to be our Father, Christ our elder Brother, the Holy Ghost the earnest of our inheritance, virtue to be our employment; and then we shall never enter into the portion of fools and accursed ill-choosing spirits. Nazianzen said well, "Malim prudentiæ guttam quàm fœcundioris

fortunæ pelagus:" "One drop of prudence is more useful than an ocean of a smooth fortune:" for prudence is a rare instrument towards heaven; and a great fortune is made oftentimes the highway to hell and destruction. However, thus far prudence is our duty; every man can be so wise, and is bound to it, to choose heaven, and a cohabitation with God, before the possessions and transient vanities of the world.

2. It is a duty of christian prudence to pursue this great end with apt means and instruments in proportion to that end. No wise man will sail to Ormus in a cock-boat, or use a child for his interpreter; and that general is a Cyclops without an eye, who chooses the sickest men to man his towns and the weakest to fight his battles. It cannot be a vigorous prosecution, unless the means have an efficacy or worth commensurate to all the difficulty, and something of the excellency of that end which is designed. And, indeed, men use not to be so weak in acquiring the possessions of their temporals; but in matters of religion they think any thing effective enough to secure the greatest interest: as if all the fields of heaven and the regions of that kingdom were waste ground, and wanted a colony of planters; and that God invited men to heaven upon any terms, that he might rejoice in the multitude of subjects. For certain it is, men do more to get a little money than for all the glories of heaven: men "rise up early," and "sit up late," and "eat the bread of carefulness," to become richer than their neighbours; and are amazed at every loss, and impatient of an evil accident, and feel a direct storm of passion if they suffer in their interest. But in order to heaven they are cold in their religion, undevout in their prayers, incurious in their walking, unwatchful in their circumstances, indifferent in the use of their opportunities, infrequent in their discoursings of it, not inquisitive of the way, and yet think they shall surely go to heaven. But a prudent man knows, that by the greatness of the purchase he is to make an estimate of the value and the price. When we ask of God any great thing,—as wisdom, delivery from sickness, his Holy Spirit, the forgiveness of sins, the grace of chastity, restitution to his favour, or the like,—do we hope to obtain them without a high opinion of the things we ask? and if we value them highly, must we not desire them earnestly? and if we desire them earnestly, must we not beg for them fervently? and whatsoever we ask for fervently, must not we beg for frequently? And then, because prayer is but one hand toward the reaching a blessing, and God requires our co-operation and endeavour, and we must work with both hands, are we not convinced that our prayers are either faint, or a design of laziness, when we either ask coldly, or else pray loudly, hoping to receive the graces we need without labour? A prudent person, that knows to value the best object of his desires, will also know that he must observe the degrees of labour, according to the excellency of the reward. That prayer must be effectual,—fervent,—frequent,—continual,—holy,—passionate,—that must get a grace or secure a blessing: the love that we must have to God, must be such as to keep his commandments, and make us willing to part with all our estate, and all our honour, and our life, for the testimony of a holy conscience: our charity to our neighbour must be expressive in a language of a real friendship, aptness to forgive, readiness to forbear, in pitying infirmities, in relieving necessities, in giving our goods and our lives, and quitting our privileges to save his soul, to secure and support his virtue: our repentance must be full of sorrows and care, of diligence and hatred against sin; it must drive out all, and leave no affections towards it; it must be constant and persevering, fearful of relapse, and watchful of all accidents: our temperance must sometimes turn into abstinence, and most commonly be severe, and ever without reproof: "He that striveth for masteries is temperate," saith St. Paul, "in all things." He that does all this, may, with some pretence and reason, say, he intends to go to heaven. But they that will not deny a lust, nor restrain an appetite; they that will be drunk when their friends do merrily constrain them, or love a cheap religion, and a gentle and lame prayer, short and soft, quickly said and soon passed over, seldom returning and but little observed; how is it possible that they should think themselves persons disposed to receive such glorious crowns and sceptres, such excellent conditions, which they have not faith enough to believe, nor attention enough to consider, and no man can have wit enough to understand? But so might an Arcadian shepherd look from the rocks, or through the clefts of the valley where his sheep graze, and wonder that the messenger stays so long from coming to him to be crowned king of all the Greek islands, or to be adopted heir to the Macedonian monarchy. It is an infinite love of God that we have heaven upon conditions which we can perform with greatest diligence: but truly the lives of men are generally such, that they do things in order to heaven, things, I say, so few, so trifling, so unworthy, that they are not proportionable to the reward of a crown of oak or a yellow riband, the slender reward with which the Romans paid their soldiers for their extraordinary valour. True it is, that heaven is not, in a just sense of a commutation, a reward, but a gift, and an infinite favour: but yet it is not reached forth but to persons disposed by the conditions of God, which conditions when we pursue in kind, let us be very careful we do not fail of the mighty prize of our high calling, for want of degrees and just measures, the measures of zeal and a mighty love.

3. It is an office of prudence to serve God so that we may, at the same time, preserve our lives and our estates, our interest and reputation, for ourselves and our relatives, so far as they can consist together. St. Paul, in the beginning of christianity, was careful to instruct the forwardness and zeal of the new christians into good husbandry, and to catechize the men into good trades, and the women into useful employments, that they might not be unprofitable. For christian religion carrying us to heaven, does it

by the way of a man, and by the body it serves the soul, as by the soul it serves God; and, therefore, it endeavours to secure the body and its interest, that it may continue the opportunities of a crown, and prolong the stage in which we are to run for the mighty "prize of our salvation:" and this is that part of prudence which is the defensative and guard of a christian in the time of persecution, and it hath in it much of duty. He that, through an indiscreet zeal, casts himself into a needless danger, hath betrayed his life to tyranny, and tempts the sin of an enemy; he loses to God the service of many years, and cuts off himself from a fair opportunity of working his salvation, in the main parts of which we shall find a long life and very many years of reason to be little enough; he betrays the interest of his relatives, which he is bound to preserve; he disables himself of making "provision for them of his own house;" and he that fails in this duty by his own fault "is worse than an infidel;" and denies the faith, by such unseasonable dying, or being undone, which by that testimony he did intend gloriously to confess; he serves the end of ambition and popular services, but not the sober ends of religion; he discourages the weak, and weakens the hands of the strong, and by upbraiding their weariness, tempts them to turn it into rashness or despair; he affrights strangers from entering into religion, while by such imprudence he shall represent it to be impossible, at the same time, to be wise and to be religious; he turns all the whole religion into frowardness of dying or beggary, leaving no space for the parts and offices of a holy life, which, in times of persecution, are infinitely necessary for the advantages of the institution. But God hath provided better things for his servants: "Quem fata cogunt, ille cum venia est miser;" "he whom God by an inevitable necessity calls to sufferance, he hath leave to be undone;" and that ruin of his estate or loss of his life shall secure first a providence, then a crown.

> At si quis ultro se malis offert volens,
> Seque ipse torquet, perdere est dignus bona,
> Queis nescit uti: ——— SEN.

"But he that invites the cruelty of a tyrant by his own follies, or the indiscretions of an insignificant and impertinent zeal, suffers as a wilful person, and enters into the portion and reward of fools." And this is the precept of our blessed Saviour, next after my text, "Beware of men." Use your prudence to the purposes of avoiding their snare. Τῶν θηρῶν βροτὸς μᾶλλον ἀνήμερος. "Man is the most harmful of all the wild beasts." "Ye are sent as sheep among wolves; be, therefore, wise as serpents;" when you can avoid it, suffer not men to ride over your heads, or trample you under-foot; that is the wisdom of serpents. And so must we; that is, by all just compliances, and toleration of all indifferent changes in which a duty is not destroyed, and in which we are not active, so preserve ourselves, that we might be permitted to live, and serve God, and to do advantages to religion: so purchasing time to do good in, by bending in all those flexures of fortune and condition which we cannot help, and which we do not set forward, and which we never did procure. And this is the direct meaning of St. Paul: "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil;"[b] that is, we are fallen into times that are troublesome, dangerous, persecuting, and afflictive; purchase as much respite as you can; buy or "redeem the time" by all honest arts, by humility, by fair carriage and sweetnesses of society, by civility and a peaceful conversation, by good words and all honest offices, by praying for your persecutors, by patient sufferance of what is unavoidable. And when the tyrant draws you forth from all these guards and retirements, and offers violence to your duty, or tempts you to do a dishonest act, or to omit an act of obligation, then come forth into the theatre, and lay your necks down to the hangman's axe, and fear not to die the most shameful death of the cross or the gallows. For so have I known angels ascending and descending upon those ladders; and the Lord of glory suffered shame and purchased honour upon the cross. Thus we are "to walk in wisdom towards them that are without, redeeming the time:"[c] for so St. Paul renews that permission or commandment; give them no just cause of offence; with all humility, and as occasion is offered, represent their duty, and invite them sweetly to felicities and virtue, but do not, in ruder language, upbraid and reproach their baseness; and, when they are incorrigible, let them alone, lest, like cats, they run mad with the smell of delicious ointments. And, therefore, Pothinus, bishop of Lyons, being asked by the unbaptized president, "Who was the God of christians?" answered, Ἐὰν ἦῇς ἄξιος γνώσῃ, "If you be disposed with real and hearty desires of learning, what you ask you shall quickly know;" but, if your purpose be indirect, I shall not preach to you, to my hurt, and your no advantage.—Thus the wisdom of the primitive christians was careful not to profane the temples of the heathen, not to revile their false gods; and, when they were in duty to reprehend the follies of their religion, they chose to do it from their own writings, and as relators of their own records; they fled from the fury of a persecution, they hid themselves in caves, and wandered about in disguises, and preached in private, and celebrated their synaxes and communions in grottoes and retirements; and made it appear to all the world they were peaceable and obedient, charitable and patient, and at this price bought their time.

> Καιρὸς γὰρ, ὥσπερ ἀνδράσι
> Μέγιστος ἔργου παντός ἐστ' ἐπιστάτης. SOPH.

As knowing that, even in this sense, time was very precious, and the opportunity of giving glory to God by the offices of an excellent religion was not too dear a purchase at that rate. But then when the wolves had entered into the folds, and seized upon a lamb, the rest fled, and used all the innocent arts of concealment. St. Athanasius being overtaken by his persecutors, but not known, and asked whether he saw Athanasius passing that way, pointed out forward with his finger, "Non longè

[b] Eph. v. 15, 16. [c] Col. iv. 5

abest Athanasius," "the man is not far off," a swift footman will easily overtake him. And St. Paul divided the counsel of his judges, and made the Pharisees his parties by a witty insinuation of his own belief of the resurrection, which was not the main question, but an incident to the matter of his accusation. And when Plinius Secundus, in the face of a tyrant court, was pressed so invidiously to give his opinion concerning a good man in banishment, and under the disadvantage of an unjust sentence, he diverted the snare of Marcus Regulus, by referring his answer to a competent judicatory, according to the laws; being pressed again, by offering a direct answer upon a just condition, which he knew they would not accept; and, the third time, by turning the envy upon the impertinent and malicious orator; that he won great honour, the honour of a severe honesty, and a witty man, and a prudent person. The thing I have noted, because it is a good pattern to represent the arts of honest evasion, and religious, prudent honesty; which any good man may transcribe and turn into his own instances, if any equal case should occur.

For in this case, the rule is easy; if we are commanded to be "wise" and "redeem our time," that we serve God and religion, we must not use unlawful arts which set us back in the accounts of our time, no lying subterfuges, no betraying of a truth, no treachery to a good man, no insnaring of a brother, no secret renouncing of any part or proposition of our religion, no denying to confess the article when we are called to it. For when the primitive christians had got a trick to give money for certificates that they had sacrificed to idols, though indeed they did not do it, but had corrupted the officers and ministers of state, they dishonoured their religion, and were marked with the appellative of "libellatici," "libellers;" and were excommunicated, and cast off from the society of christians, and the hopes of heaven, till they had returned to God by a severe repentance. "Optandum est, ut, quod libenter facis, diu facere possis;" "It is good to have time long to do that which we ought to do;" but to pretend that which we dare not do, and to say we have when we have not, if we know we ought not, is to dishonour the cause and the person too; it is expressly against confession of Christ, of which St. Paul saith, "By the mouth confession is made unto salvation;" and our blessed Saviour, "He that confesseth me before men, I will confess him before my heavenly Father;" and if here he refuseth to own me, I will not own him hereafter. It is also expressly against christian fortitude and nobleness, and against the simplicity and sincerity of our religion, and it turns prudence into craft, and brings the devil to wait in the temple, and to minister to God; and it is a lesser kind of apostasy. And it is well that the man is tempted no farther; for, if the persecutors could not be corrupted with money, it is odds but the complying man would; and though he would, with the money, hide his shame, yet he will not, with the loss of all his estate, redeem his religion. Ανπηρῶς δ' ἔχει, εἰ τοῖς ἐμαυτῆς τὸν βίον σώζω κακοῖς· "Some men will lose their lives, rather than a fair estate:" and do not almost all the armies of the world (I mean those that fight in the justest causes) pretend to fight and die for their lands and liberties? and there are too many also, that will die twice, rather than be beggars once, although we all know that the second death is intolerable. Christian prudence forbids us to provoke a danger; and they were fond persons that ran to persecution, and, when the proconsul sat on the life and death, and made strict inquisition after christians, went and offered themselves to die; and he was a fool, that, being in Portugal, ran to the priest as he elevated the host, and overthrew the mysteries, and openly defied the rites of that religion. God, when he sends a persecution, will pick out such persons whom he will have to die, and whom he will consign to banishment, and whom to poverty. In the mean time, let us do our duty when we can, and as long as we can, and with as much strictness as we can; walking ἀκριβῶς, (as the apostle's phrase is,) "not prevaricating" in the least tittle; and then, if we can be safe with the arts of civil, innocent, inoffensive compliance, let us bless God for his permissions made to us, and his assistances in the using them. But if either we turn our zeal into the ambition of death, and the follies of an unnecessary beggary; or on the other side turn our prudence into craft and covetousness; to the first I say, that "God hath no pleasure in fools;" to the latter, "If you gain the whole world, and lose your own soul," your loss is infinite and intolerable.

SERMON XXI.

PART II.

4. IT is the office of christian prudence so to order the affairs of our life, as that, in all the offices of our souls and conversation, we do honour and reputation to the religion we profess. For the follies and vices of the professors give great advantages to the adversary to speak reproachfully, and do alienate the hearts, and hinder the compliance of those undetermined persons, who are apt to be persuaded, if their understandings be not prejudiced.

But as our necessary duty is bound upon us by one ligament more, in order to the honour of the cause of God, so it particularly binds us to many circumstances, adjuncts, and parts of duty, which have no other commandment but the law of prudence. There are some sects of christians which have some one constant indisposition, which, as a character, divides them from all others, and makes them reproved on all hands. Some are so suspicious and ill-natured, that, if a person of a facile nature and gentle disposition fall into their hands, he is presently soured, and made morose, unpleasant, and uneasy in his conversation. Others there are, that do things so like to what themselves condemn,

that they are forced to take sanctuary and labour in the mine of insignificant distinctions, to make themselves believe they are innocent; and, in the mean time, they offend all men else, and open the mouths of their adversaries to speak reproachful things, true or false (as it happens). And it requires a great wit to understand all the distinctions and devices thought of for legitimating the worshipping of images; and those people that are liberal in their excommunications, make men think they have reason to say, "their judges are proud, or self-willed, or covetous, or ill-natured people." These that are the faults of governors, and continued, are quickly derived upon the sect, and cause a disreputation to the whole society and institution. And who can think that congregation to be a true branch of the christian, which makes it their profession to kill men to save their souls against their will, and against their understanding? who, calling themselves disciples of so meek a Master, do live like bears upon prey, and spoil, and blood? It is a huge dishonour to the sincerity of a man's purposes, to be too busy in fingering money in the matters of religion; and they that are zealous for their rights, and tame in their devotion, furious against sacrilege, and companions of drunkards, implacable against breakers of a canon, and careless and patient enough with them that break the fifth or sixth commandments of the decalogue, tell all the world their private sense is to preserve their own interest with scruple and curiosity, and leave God to take care for his.

Thus Christ reproved the Pharisees for "straining at a gnat, and swallowing a camel;" the very representation of the manner and matter of fact discovers the vice by reproving the folly of it. They that are factious to get a rich proselyte, and think the poor not worth saving, dishonour their zeal, and teach men to call it covetousness: and though there may be a reason of prudence to desire one more than the other, because of a bigger efficacy the example of the one may have more than the other; yet it will quickly be discovered, if it be done by secular design; and the Scripture, that did not allow the preferring of a gay man before a poor saint in the matter of place, will not be pleased, that in the matter of souls, which are all equal, there should be a faction, and design, and an acceptation of persons. Never let sins pollute our religion with arts of the world, nor offer to support the ark with unhallowed hands, nor mingle false propositions with true, nor make religion a pretence to profit or preferment, nor do things which are like a vice; neither ever speak things dishonourable of God, nor abuse thy brother for God's sake; nor be solicitous and over-busy to recover thy own little things, neither always think it fit to lose thy charity by forcing thy brother to do justice; and all those things which are the outsides and faces, the garments and most discerned parts of religion, be sure that they be dressed according to all the circumstances of men, and by all the rules of common honesty and public reputation. Is it not a sad thing that the Jew should say, the christians worship images? or that it should become a proverb, that "the Jew spends all in his passover, the Moor in his marriage, and the christian in his law-suits?" that what the first sacrifice to religion, and the second to public joy, we should spend in malice, covetousness, and revenge?

——— Pudet hæc opprobria nobis
Et dici potuisse, et non potuisse refelli.

But among ourselves also we serve the devil's ends, and minister to an eternal disunion, by saying and doing things which look unhandsomely. One sort of men is superstitious, fantastical, greedy of honour, and tenacious of propositions to fill the purse, and his religion is thought nothing but policy and opinion. Another says, "he hath a good religion," but he is the most indifferent and cold person in the world either to maintain it, or to live according to it. The one dresses the images of saints with fine clothes; the other lets the poor go naked, and disrobes the priests that minister in the religion. A third uses God worse than all this, and says of him such things that are scandalous even to an honest man, and such which would undo a good man's reputation. And a fourth, yet, endures no governor but himself, and pretends to set up Christ, and make himself his lieutenant. And a fifth hates all government. And from all this it comes to pass, that it is hard for a man to choose his side; and he that chooses wisest, takes that which hath in it least hurt; but some he must endure, or live without communion; and every church of one denomination is, or hath been, too incurious of preventing infamy or disreputation to their confessions.

One thing I desire should be observed, that here the question being concerning prudence, and the matter of doing reputation to our religion, it is not enough to say, we can with learning justify all that we do, and make all whole with three or four distinctions: for possibly that man that went to visit the Corinthian Lais, if he had been asked why he dishonoured himself with so unhandsome an entrance, might find an excuse to legitimate his act, or at least to make himself believe well of his own person; but he that intends to do himself honour, must take care that he be not suspected, that he give no occasion of reproachful language; for fame and honour is a nice thing, tender as a woman's chastity, or like the face of the purest mirror, which a foul breath, or an unwholesome air, or a watery eye can sully, and the beauty is lost, although it be not dashed in pieces. When a man, or a sect, is put to answer for themselves in the matter of reputation, they, with their distinctions, wipe the glass, and at last can do nothing but make it appear it was not broken; but their very abstersion and laborious excuses confess it was foul and faulty. We must know that all sorts of men, and all sects of christians, have not only the mistakes of men and their prejudices to contest withal, but the calumnies and aggravation of devils; and, therefore, it will much ease our account of doomsday, if we are now so prudent that men will not be offended here, nor the devils furnished with a libel in the day of our great account.

To this rule appertains, that we be curious in observing the circumstances of men, and satisfying all their reasonable expectations, and doing things at that rate of charity and religion, which they are taught to be prescribed in the institution. There are some things which are indecencies rather than sins, such which may become a just heathen, but not a holy christian; a man of the world, but not a man "professing godliness:" because when the greatness of the man, or the excellency of the law, hath engaged us upon great severity or an exemplary virtue, whatsoever is less than it, renders the man unworthy of the religion, or the religion unworthy its fame. Men think themselves abused, and, therefore, return shame for payment. We never read of an apostle that went to law; and it is but reasonable to expect, that, of all men in the world, christians should not be such fighting people, and clergymen should not command armies, and kings should not be drunk, and subjects should not strike princes for justice, and an old man should not be youthful in talk or in his habit, and women should not swear, and great men should not lie, and a poor man should not oppress; for, besides the sin of some of them, there is an indecency in all of them; and by being contrary to the end of an office, or to the reputation of a state, or the sobrieties of a graver or sublimed person, they asperse the religion as insufficient to keep the persons within the bounds of fame and common reputation.

But, above all things, those sects of christians whose professed doctrine brings destruction and diminution to government, give the most intolerable scandal and dishonour to the institution; and it had been impossible that christianity should have prevailed over the wisdom and power of the Greeks and Romans, if it had not been humble to superiors, patient of injuries, charitable to the needy, a great exactor of obedience to kings, even to heathens, that they might be won and convinced; and to persecutors, that they might be sweetened in their anger, or upbraided for their cruel injustice: for so doth the humble vine creep at the foot of an oak, and leans upon its lowest base, and begs shade and protection, and leave to grow under its branches, and to give and take mutual refreshment, and pay a friendly influence for a mighty patronage; and they grow and dwell together, and are the most remarkable of friends and married pairs of all the leafy nation. Religion of itself is soft, easy, and defenceless; and God hath made it grow up with empires, and lean upon the arms of kings, and it cannot well grow alone; and if it shall, like the ivy, suck the heart of the oak, upon whose body it grew and was supported, it will be pulled down from its usurped eminence, and fire and shame shall be its portion. We cannot complain, if princes arm against those christians, who, if they were suffered to preach, will disarm the princes: and it will be hard to persuade that kings are bound to protect and nourish those that will prove ministers of their own exauctoration: and no prince can have juster reason to forbid, nor any man have greater reason to deny, communion to a family, than when they go about to destroy the power of the one, or corrupt the duty of the other. The particulars of this rule are very many: I shall only instance in one more, because it is of great concernment to the public interest of christendom.

There are some persons, whose religion is hugely disgraced, because they change their propositions, according as their temporal necessities or advantages do return. They that, in their weakness and beginning, cry out against all violence as against persecution, and from being sufferers swell up till they be prosperous, and from thence to power, and at last to tyranny, and then suffer none but themselves, and trip up those feet which they humbly kissed, that themselves should not be trampled upon; —these men tell all the world, that, at first, they were pusillanimous, or at last outrageous; that their doctrine at first served their fear, and at last served their rage, and that they did not at all intend to serve God: and then who shall believe them in any thing else? Thus some men declaim against the faults of governors, that themselves may govern; and when the power is in their hands, what was a fault in others, is in them necessity; as if a sin could be hallowed for coming into their hands. Some Greeks, at Florence, subscribed the article of purgatory, and condemned it in their own diocesses: and the king's supremacy in causes ecclesiastical was earnestly defended against the pretences of the bishop of Rome; and yet when he was thrust out, some men were, and are, violent to submit the king to their consistories; as if he were supreme in defiance of the pope, and yet not supreme over his own clergy. These articles are managed too suspiciously.

Omnia si perdas, famam servare memento:

"You lose all the advantages to your cause, if you lose your reputation."

5. It is a duty also of christian prudence, that the teachers of others by authority, or reprovers of their vices by charity, should also make their persons apt to do it without objection.

Loripedem rectus derideat, Æthiopem albus.—JUV.

"No man can endure the Gracchi preaching against sedition, nor Verres prating against thievery," or Milo against homicide: and if Herod had made an oration of humility, or Antiochus of mercy, men would have thought it had been a design to evil purposes. He that means to gain a soul, must not make his sermon an ostentation of his eloquence, but the law of his own life. If a grammarian should speak solecisms, or a musician sing like a bittern, he becomes ridiculous for offending in the faculty he professes. So it is in them who minister to the conversion of souls: if they fail in their own life, when they profess to instruct another, they are defective in their proper part, and are unskilful to all their purposes; and the cardinal of Crema did, with ill success, tempt the English priests to quit their chaste marriages, when himself was deprehended in unchaste embraces. For good counsel seems to be unhallowed, when it is reached forth by an impure hand; and he can ill be believed by another, whose life so confutes his rules, that it is plain he

does not believe himself. Those churches that are zealous for souls, must send into their ministries men so innocent, that evil persons may have no excuse to be any longer vicious. When Gorgias went about to persuade the Greeks to be at peace, he had eloquence enough to do advantage to his cause, and reason enough to press it: but Melanthius was glad to put him off, by telling him that he was not fit to persuade peace, who could not agree at home with his wife, nor make his wife agree with her maid; and he that could not make peace between three single persons, was unapt to prevail for the reuniting fourteen or fifteen commonwealths. And this thing St. Paul remarks, by enjoining that a bishop should be chosen such a one as knew well to rule his own house; or else he is not fit to rule the church of God. And when thou persuadest thy brother to be chaste, let him not deride thee for thy intemperance; and it will ill become thee to be severe against an idle servant, if thou thyself beest useless to the public; and every notorious vice is infinitely against the spirit of government, and "depresses the man to an evenness" with common persons: "Facinus quos inquinat æquat." To reprove belongs to a superior; and as innocence gives a man advantage over his brother, giving him an artificial and adventitious authority; so the follies and scandals of a public and governing man, destroy the efficacy of that authority that is just and natural. Now this is directly an office of christian prudence, that good offices and great authority become not ineffective by ill conduct.

Hither also it appertains, that in public or private reproofs we observe circumstances of time,—of place,—of person,—of disposition. The vices of a king are not to be opened publicly, and princes must not be reprehended as a man reproves his servant; but by categorical propositions, by abstracted declamations, by reprehensions of a crime in its single nature, in private, with humility and arts of insinuation; and it is against christian prudence, not only to use a prince or great personage with common language, but it is as great an imprudence to pretend, for such a rudeness, the examples of the prophets in the Old Testament. For their case was extraordinary, their calling peculiar, their commission special, their spirit miraculous, their authority great as to that single mission; they were like thunder or the trump of God, sent to do that office plainly, for the doing of which in that manner, God had given no commission to any ordinary minister. And therefore we never find that the priests did use that freedom which the prophets were commanded to use, whose very words being put into their mouths, it was not to be esteemed a human act, or a lawful manner of doing an ordinary office; neither could it become a precedent to them, whose authority is precarious and without coercion, whose spirit is allayed with christian graces and duties of humility, whose words are not prescribed, but left to the conduct of prudence, as it is to be advised by public necessities and private circumstances, in ages where all things are so ordered, that what was fit and pious amongst the old Jews, would be uncivil and intolerable to the latter christians. He also that reproves a vice, should also treat the persons with honour and civilities, and by fair opinions and sweet addresses place the man in the regions of modesty, and the confines of grace, and the fringes of repentance. For some men are more restrained by an imperfect feared shame, so long as they think there is a reserve of reputation which they may secure, than they can be with all the furious declamations of the world, when themselves are represented ugly and odious, full of shame, and actually punished with the worst of temporal evils, beyond which he fears not here to suffer, and from whence, because he knows it will be hard for him to be redeemed by an after-game of reputation, it makes him desperate and incorrigible by fraternal correption.

A zealous man hath not done his duty, when he calls his brother "drunkard" and "beast;" and he may better do it by telling him he is a man, and sealed with God's Spirit, and honoured with the title of a christian, and is, or ought to be, reputed as a discreet person by his friends, and a governor of a family, or a guide in his country, or an example to many, and that it is huge pity so many excellent things should be sullied and allayed with what is so much below all this. Then a reprover does his duty when he is severe against the vice, and charitable to the man, and careful of his reputation, and sorry for his real dishonour, and observant of his circumstances, and watchful to surprise his affections and resolutions there, where they are most tender and most tenable: and men will not be in love with virtue, whither they are forced with rudeness and incivilities; but they love to dwell there whither they are invited friendly, and where they are treated civilly, and feasted liberally, and led by the hand and the eye to honour and felicity.

6. It is a duty of christian prudence not to suffer our souls to walk alone, unguarded, unguided, and more single than in other actions and interests of our lives, which are of less concernment. "Væ soli et singulari," said the wise man: "Woe to him that is alone." And if we consider, how much God hath done to secure our souls, and after all that, how many ways there are for a man's soul to miscarry, we should think it very necessary to call to a spiritual man to take us by the hand to walk in the ways of God, and to lead us in all the regions of duty, and through the labyrinths of danger. For God, who best loves and best knows how to value our soul, set a price no less upon it than the life-blood of his holy Son; he hath treated it with variety of usages, according as the world had new guises and new necessities; he abates it with punishment, to make us avoid greater; he shortened our life, that we might live for ever; he turns sickness into virtue; he brings good out of evil, he turns enmities to advantages, our very sins into repentances and stricter walking; he defeats all the follies of men and all the arts of the devil, and lays snares and uses violence to secure obedience; he sends prophets and priests to invite us and to threaten us to felicities; he restrains us with laws, and he bridles us with honour and shame, reputation and society,

friends and foes; he lays hold on us by the instruments of all the passions; he is enough to fill our love; he satisfies our hope; he affrights us with fear; he gives us part of our reward in hand, and entertains all our faculties with the promises of an infinite and glorious portion; he curbs our affections; he directs our wills; he instructs our understandings with scriptures, with perpetual sermons, with good books, with frequent discourses, with particular observations and great experience, with accidents and judgments, with rare events of providence and miracles; he sends his angels to be our guard, and to place us in opportunities of virtue, and takes us off from ill company and places of danger, to set us near to good examples; he gives us his Holy Spirit, and he becomes to us a principle of a mighty grace, descending upon us in great variety and undiscerned events, besides all those parts of it which men have reduced to a method and an art: and, after all this, he forgives us infinite irregularities, and spares us every day, and still expects, and passes by, and waits all our days, still watching to do us good, and to save that soul which he knows is so precious, one of the chiefest of the works of God, and an image of Divinity. Now from all these arts and mercies of God, besides that we have infinite reason to adore his goodness, we have also a demonstration that we ought to do all that possibly we can, and extend all our faculties, and watch all our opportunities, and take in all assistances, to secure the interest of our soul, for which God is pleased to take such care, and use so many arts for its security. If it were not highly worth it, God would not do it: if it were not all of it necessary, God would not do it. But if it be worth it, and all of it be necessary, why should we not labour in order to this great end? If it be worth so much to God, it is so much more to us: for if we perish, his felicity is undisturbed; but we are undone, infinitely undone. It is, therefore, worth taking in a spiritual guide; so far we are gone.

But because we are in the question of prudence, we must consider whether it be necessary to do so: for every man thinks himself wise enough as to the conduct of his soul, and managing of his eternal interest; and divinity is every man's trade, and the scriptures speak our own language, and the commandments are few and plain, and the laws are the measure of justice; and if I say my prayers, and pay my debts, my duty is soon summed up: and thus we usually make our accounts for eternity, and at this rate only take care for heaven. But let a man be questioned for a portion of his estate, or have his life shaken with diseases; then it will not be enough to employ one agent, or to send for a good woman to minister a potion of the juices of her country-garden; but the ablest lawyers, and the skilfullest physicians, and the advice of friends, and huge caution and diligent attendances, and a curious watching concerning all the accidents and little passages of our disease. And truly a man's life and health is worth all that and much more, and, in many cases, it needs it all.

But then is the soul the only safe and the only trifling thing about us? Are not there a thousand dangers, and ten thousand difficulties, and innumerable possibilities of a misadventure? Are not all the congregations in the world divided in their doctrines, and all of them call their own way necessary, and most of them call all the rest damnable? We had need of a wise instructor and a prudent choice, at our first entrance and election of our side; and when we are well in the matter of faith for its object and institution, all the evils of myself, and all the evils of the church, and all the good that happens to evil men, every day of danger, the periods of sickness, and the day of death, are days of tempest and storm, and our faith will suffer shipwreck, unless it be strong, and supported and directed. But who shall guide the vessel, when a stormy passion or a violent imagination transports the man? Who shall awaken his reason, and charm his passion into slumber and instruction? How shall a man make his fears confident, and allay his confidence with fear, and make the allay with just proportions, and steer evenly between the extremes, or call upon his sleeping purposes, or actuate his choices, or bind him to reason in all his wanderings and ignorances, in his passions and mistakes? For suppose the man of great skill and great learning in the ways of religion; yet if he be abused by accident or by his own will, who shall then judge his cases of conscience, and awaken his duty, and renew his holy principle, and actuate his spiritual powers? for physicians, that prescribe to others, do not minister to themselves in cases of danger and violent sicknesses; and in matter of distemperature we shall not find that books alone will do all the work of a spiritual physician, more than of a natural. I will not go about to increase the dangers and difficulties of the soul, to represent the assistance of a spiritual man to be necessary. But of this I am sure, our not understanding and our not considering our soul, makes us first to neglect, and then many times to lose it. But is not every man an unequal judge in his own case? and, therefore, the wisdom of God and the laws hath appointed tribunals, and judges, and arbitrators. And that men are partial in the matter of souls, it is infinitely certain, because amongst those millions of souls that perish, not one in ten thousand but believes himself in a good condition; and all the sects of christians think they are in the right, and few are patient to inquire whether they be or no. Then add to this, that the questions of souls, being clothed with circumstances of matter and particular contingency, are or may be infinite; and most men are so unfortunate, that they have so entangled their cases of conscience, that there where they have done something good, it may be they have mingled half a dozen evils: and, when interests are confounded, and governments altered, and power strives with right, and insensibly passes into right, and duty to God would fain be reconciled with duty to our relatives, will it not be more than necessary, that we should have some one that we may inquire of after the way to heaven, which is now made intricate by our follies and inevitable accidents? But by what instrument shall men alone, and in their own cases, be able to discern the spirit of truth from the spirit of

illusion, just confidence from presumption, fear from pusillanimity? Are not all the things and assistances in the world little enough to defend us against pleasure and pain, the two great fountains of temptation? Is it not harder to cure a lust than to cure a fever? And are not the deceptions and follies of men, and the arts of the devil, and enticements of the world, and the deceptions of a man's own heart, and the evils of sin, more evil and more numerous than the sicknesses and diseases of any one man? And if a man perishes in his soul, is it not infinitely more sad than if he could rise from his grave and die a thousand deaths over? Thus we are advanced a second step in this prudential motive: God used many arts to secure our soul's interest; and there are infinite dangers and infinite ways of miscarriage in the soul's interest; and, therefore, there is great necessity God should do all those mercies of security, and that we should do all the under-ministries we can in this great work.

But what advantage shall we receive by a spiritual guide? Much, every way. For this is the way that God hath appointed, who, in every age, hath sent a succession of spiritual persons, whose office is to minister in holy things, and to be "stewards of God's household," "shepherds of the flock," "dispensers of the mysteries," under-mediators, and ministers of prayer; preachers of the law, expounders of questions, monitors of duty, conveyances of blessings; and that which is a good discourse in the mouth of another man, is, from them, an ordinance of God: and besides its natural efficacy and persuasion, it prevails by the way of blessing, by the reverence of his person, by Divine institution, by the excellency of order, by the advantages of opinion and assistances of reputation, by the influence of the Spirit, who is the president of such ministries, and who is appointed to all christians, according to the dispensation that is appointed to them; to the people, in their obedience and frequenting of the ordinance; to the priest, in his ministry and public and private offices. To which also I add this consideration, that as the holy sacraments are hugely effective to spiritual purposes, not only because they convey a blessing to the worthy suscipients, but because men cannot be worthy suscipients unless they do many excellent acts of virtue, in order to a previous disposition; so that in the whole conjunction and transaction of affairs, there is good done by way of proper efficacy and Divine blessing: so it is in following the conduct of a spiritual man, and consulting with him in the matter of our souls; we cannot do it unless we consider our souls, and make religion our business, and examine our present state, and consider concerning our danger, and watch and design for our advantages, which things of themselves will set a man much forwarder in the way of godliness: besides that naturally every man will less dare to act a sin for which he knows he shall feel a present shame in his discoveries made to the spiritual guide, the man that is made the witness of his conversation: Τοὺς ἐκ Διὸς γὰρ εἰκός ἐστι πάνθ' ὁρᾶν·[a] "Holy men ought to know all things from God," and that relate to God, in order to the conduct of souls. And there is nothing to be said against this, if we do not suffer the devil in this affair to abuse us, as he does many people, in their opinions, teaching men to suspect there is a design and a snake under the plantain. But so may they suspect kings when they command obedience, or the Levites when they read the law of tithes, or parents when they teach their children temperance, or tutors when they watch their charge. However, it is better to venture the worst of the design, than to lose the best of the assistance; and he that guides himself, hath much work and much danger; but he that is under the conduct of another, his work is easy, little, and secure; it is nothing but diligence and obedience: and though it be a hard thing to rule well, yet nothing is easier than to follow and be obedient.

[a] Sophocl.

SERMON XXII.

PART III.

7. As it is a part of christian prudence to take into the conduct of our souls a spiritual man for a guide; so it is also of great concernment that we be prudent in the choice of him, whom we are to trust in so great an interest.

Concerning which it will be impossible to give characters and significations particular enough to enable a choice, without the interval-assistances of prayer, experience, and the grace of God. He that describes a man, can tell you the colour of his hair, his stature, and proportion, and describe some general lines enough to distinguish him from a Cyclops or a Saracen; but when you chance to see the man, you will discover figures or little features, of which the description had produced in you no fantasm or expectation. And in the exterior significations of a sect, there are more semblances than in men's faces, and greater uncertainty in the signs; and what is faulty strives so craftily to act the true and proper images of things; and the more they are defective in circumstances, the more curious they are in forms; and they also use such arts of gaining proselytes, which are of most advantage towards an effect, and, therefore, such which the true christian ought to pursue, and the apostles actually did; and they strive to follow their patterns in arts of persuasion, not only because they would seem like them, but because they can have none so good, so effective to their purposes; that it follows, that it is not more a duty to take care that we be not corrupted with false teachers, than that we be not abused with false signs: for we as well find a good man teaching a false proposition, as a good cause managed by ill men; and a holy cause is not always dressed with healthful symptoms, nor is there a cross always set upon the doors of those congregations, who are infected with the plague of heresy.

When St. John was to separate false teachers from true, he took no other course but to mark the doctrine which was of God, and that should be the mark of cognizance to distinguish right shepherds from robbers and invaders: "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God; he that denieth it, is not of God." By this, he bids his scholars to avoid the present sects of Ebion, Cerinthus, Simon Magus, and such other persons as denied that Christ was at all before he came, or that he came really in the flesh and proper humanity. This is a clear note; and they that conversed with St. John, or believed his doctrine, were sufficiently instructed in the present questions. But this note will signify nothing to us: for all sects of christians "confess Jesus Christ come in the flesh," and the following sects did avoid that rock, over which a great apostle had hung out so plain a lantern.

In the following ages of the church, men have been so curious to signify misbelievers, that they have invented and observed some signs, which, indeed, in some cases, were true, real appendages of false believers; but yet such which were also, or might be, common to them with good men and members of the catholic church. Some few I shall remark, and give a short account of them, that by removing the uncertain, we may fix our inquiries and direct them by certain significations, lest this art of prudence turn into folly and faction, error and secular design.

1. Some men distinguish error from truth by calling their adversaries' doctrine, "new and of yesterday." And certainly this is a good sign, if it be rightly applied; for since all christian doctrine is that which Christ taught his church, and the Spirit enlarged or expounded, and the apostles delivered; we are to begin the christian era for our faith, and parts of religion by the period of their preaching; our account begins then, and whatsoever is contrary to what they taught is new and false, and whatsoever is besides what they taught, is no part of our religion;—and then no man can be prejudiced for believing it or not;—and if it be adopted into the confessions of the church, the proposition is always so uncertain, that it is not to be admitted into the faith; and therefore, if it be old in respect of our days, it is not, therefore, necessary to be believed; if it be new it may be received into opinion according to its probability, and no sects nor interests are to be divided upon such accounts. This only I desire to be observed, that when a truth returns from banishment by a "postliminium," if it was from the first, though the holy fire hath been buried, or the river ran under ground, yet we do not call that new; since newness is not to be accounted of by a proportion to our short-lived memories, or to the broken records and fragments of story left after the inundation of barbarism, and war, and change of kingdoms, and corruption of authors; but, by its relation to the fountain of our truths, and the birth of our religion under our fathers in Christ, the holy apostles and disciples. A camel was a new thing to them that saw it in the fable, but yet it was created as soon as a cow or the domestic creatures; and some people are apt to call every thing new which they never heard of before, as if all religion were to be measured by the standards of their observation or country customs. Whatsoever was not taught by Christ or his apostles, though it came in by Papias or Dionysius, by Arius or Liberius, is certainly new as to our account; and whatsoever is taught to us by the doctors of the present age, if it can show its test from the beginning of our period for revelation, is not to be called new, though it be pressed with a new zeal, and discoursed of by unheard-of arguments; that is, though men be ignorant, and need to learn it, yet it is not therefore new or unnecessary.

2. Some would have false teachers sufficiently signified by a name, or the owning of a private appellative, as of Papist, Lutheran, Calvinist, Zuinglian, Socinian; and think it enough to denominate them not of Christ, if they are called by the name of a man. And, indeed, the thing is in itself ill: but then, if by this mark we shall esteem false teachers sufficiently signified, we must follow no man, no church, nor no communion; for all are, by their adversaries, marked with an appellative of separation and singularity, and yet themselves are tenacious of a good name, such as they choose, or such as is permitted to them by fame, and the people, and a natural necessity of making a distinction. Thus the Donatists called themselves "the Flock of God," and the Novatians called the Catholics "Traditors," and the Eustathians called themselves "Catholics;" and the worshippers of images made "Iconoclast" to be a name of scorn; and men made names as they listed, or as the fate of the market went. And if a doctor preaches a doctrine which another man likes not, but preaches the contradictory, he that consents, and he that refuses, have each of them a teacher; by whose name, if they please to wrangle, they may be signified. It was so in the Corinthian church, with this only difference, that they divided themselves by names which signified the same religion; "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I am of Peter, and I of Christ." These apostles were ministers of Christ, and so does every teacher, new or old, among the christians pretend himself to be. Let that, therefore, be examined; if he ministers to the truth of Christ and the religion of his Master, let him be entertained a servant of the Lord; but, if an appellative be taken from his name, there is a faction commenced in it, and there is a fault in the man, if there be none in the doctrine; but that the doctrine be true or false, to be received or to be rejected, because of the name, is accidental and extrinsical, and, therefore, not to be determined by this sign.

3. Amongst some men a sect is sufficiently thought to be reproved if it subdivides and breaks into little fractions, or changes its own opinions. Indeed, if it declines its own doctrine, no man hath reason to believe them upon their word, or to take them upon the stock of reputation, which (themselves being judges) they have forfeited and renounced in the changing that, which at first they obtruded passionately. And, therefore, in this case there is

nothing to be done, but to believe the men so far as they have reason to believe themselves; that is, to consider when they prove what they say; and they that are able to do so, are not persons in danger to be seduced by a bare authority unless they list themselves; for others that sink under an unavoidable prejudice, God will take care for them, if they be good people, and their case shall be considered by and by. But for the other part of the sign, when men fall out among themselves for other interests or opinions, it is no argument that they are in an error concerning that doctrine, which they all unitedly teach or condemn respectively; but it hath in it some probability, that their union is a testimony of truth, as certainly as that their fractions are a testimony of their zeal, or honesty, or weakness,—as it happens. And if we christians be too decretory in this instance, it will be hard for any of us to keep a Jew from making use of it against the whole religion, which, from the days of the apostles, hath been rent into innumerable sects and under-sects, springing from mistake or interest, from the arts of the devil or the weakness of man. But from hence we may make an advantage in the way of prudence, and become sure that all that doctrine is certainly true, in which the generality of christians who are divided in many things, yet do constantly agree; and that that doctrine is also sufficient, since it is certain, that because in all communions and churches there are some very good men, that do all their duty to the getting of truth, God will not fail in any thing that is necessary to them, that honestly and heartily desire to obtain it; and, therefore, if they rest in the heartiness of that, and live accordingly, and superinduce nothing to the destruction of that, they have nothing to do but to rely upon God's goodness, and if they perish, it is certain they cannot help it; and that is demonstration enough that they cannot perish, considering the justice and goodness of our Lord and Judge.

4. Whoever break the bands of a society or communion, and go out from that congregation in whose confession they are baptized, do an intolerable scandal to their doctrine and persons, and give suspicious men reason to decline their assemblies, and not to choose them at all for any thing of their authority or outward circumstances. And St. Paul bids the Romans to "mark them that cause divisions and offences;" but the following words make their caution prudent and practicable, "contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them:" they that recede from the doctrine which they have learned, *they* cause the offence, and if they also obtrude this upon their congregations, they also make the division. For it is certain, if we receive any doctrine contrary to what Christ gave and the apostles taught, for the authority of any man, then we "call men master," and leave "our Master which is in heaven;" and in that case we must separate from the congregation, and adhere to Christ. But this is not to be done, unless the case be evident and notorious. But as it is hard that the public doctrine of a church should be rifled, and misunderstood, and reproved, and rejected, by any of her wilful or ignorant sons and daughters; so it is also as hard, that they should be bound not to see, when the case is plain and evident. There may be mischiefs on both sides; but the former sort of evils men may avoid if they will; for they may be humble and modest, and entertain better opinions of their superiors than of themselves, and in doubtful things give them the honour of a just opinion; and if they do not do so, that evil will be their own private; for, that it become not public, the king and the bishop are to take care. But for the latter sort of evil, it will certainly become universal; if, I say, an authoritative false doctrine be imposed, and is to be accepted accordingly; for then all men shall be bound to profess against their conscience, that is, "with their mouths not to confess unto salvation, what with their hearts they believe unto righteousness." The best way of remedying both the evils is, that governors lay no burden of doctrines or laws but what are necessary or very profitable; and that inferiors do not contend for things unnecessary, nor call any thing necessary that is not; till then there will be evils on both sides. And although the governors are to carry the question in the point of law, reputation, and public government, yet as to God's judicature they will bear the bigger load, who in his right do him an injury, and by the impresses of his authority destroy his truth. But, in this case also, although separating be a suspicious thing, and intolerable, unless it be when a sin is imposed; yet to separate is also accidental to truth, for some men separate with reason, some men against reason. Therefore, here all the certainty that is in the thing, is when the truth is secured, and all the security to the men will be in the humility of their persons, and the heartiness and simplicity of their intention, and diligence of inquiry. The church of England had reason to separate from the confession and practices of Rome in many particulars; and yet if her children separate from her, they may be unreasonable and impious.

5. The ways of direction which we have from Holy Scripture, to distinguish false apostles from true, are taken from their doctrine, or their lives. That of the doctrine is the more sure way, if we can hit upon it; but that also is the thing signified, and needs to have other signs. St. John and St. Paul took this way, for they were able to do it infallibly. "All that confess Jesus incarnate, are of God," said St. John. Those men that deny it are heretics; avoid them. And St. Paul bids to "observe them that cause divisions and offences against the doctrine delivered;" them also avoid that do so. And we might do so as easily as they, if the world would only make their "depositum" that doctrine which they delivered to all men, that is, "the creed;" and superinduce nothing else, but suffer christian faith to rest in its own perfect simplicity, unmingled with arts, and opinions, and interests. This course is plain and easy, and I will not intricate it with more words, but leave it directly in its own truth and certainty, with this only direction, that when we are to choose our doctrine or our side, we take that which is in

the plain unexpounded words of Scripture; for in that only our religion can consist. Secondly, choose that which is most advantageous to a holy life, to the proper graces of a christian, to humility, to charity, to forgiveness and alms, to obedience, and complying with governments, to the honour of God and the exaltation of his attributes, and to the conservation and advantages of the public societies of men; and this last St. Paul directs, "Let us be careful to maintain good works for necessary uses:" for he that heartily pursues these proportions, cannot be an ill man, though he were accidentally, and in the particular explications, deceived.

6. But, because this is an act of wisdom rather than prudence, and supposes science or knowledge rather than experience, therefore, it concerns the prudence of a christian to observe the practice and the rules of practice, their lives and pretences, the designs and colours, the arts of conduct, and gaining proselytes, which their doctors and catechists do use in order to their purposes, and in their ministry about souls. For although many signs are uncertain, yet some are infallible, and some are highly probable.

7. Therefore, those teachers that pretend to be guided by a private spirit, are certainly false doctors. I remember what Simmias in Plutarch tells concerning Socrates, that if he heard any man say he saw a divine vision, he presently esteemed him vain and proud; but, if he pretended only to have heard a voice, or the word of God, he listened to that religiously, and would inquire of him with curiosity. There was some reason in his fancy; for God does not communicate himself by the eye to men, but by the ear: "Ye saw no figure, but ye heard a voice," said Moses to the people concerning God. And, therefore, if any man pretends to speak the word of God, we will inquire concerning it; the man may the better be heard, because he may be certainly reproved if he speaks amiss; but, if he pretends to visions and revelations, to a private spirit, and a mission extraordinary, the man is proud and unlearned, vicious and impudent. "No scripture is of private interpretation," saith St. Peter, that is, "private emission" or "declaration." God's words were delivered indeed by single men, but such as were publicly designed prophets, remarked with a known character, approved of by the high priest and Sanhedrim, endued with a public spirit, and his doctrines were always agreeable to the other scriptures. But, if any man pretends now to the Spirit, either it must be a private or public. If it be private, it can but be useful to himself alone, and it may cozen him too, if it be not assisted by the spirit of a public man. But if it be a public spirit, it must enter in at the public door of ministries and Divine ordinances, of God's grace and man's endeavour: it must be subject to the prophets; it is discernible and judicable by them, and, therefore, may be rejected, and then it must pretend no longer. For he that will pretend to an extraordinary spirit, and refuses to be tried by the ordinary ways, must either prophesy or work miracles, or must have a voice from heaven to give him testimony. The prophets in the Old Testament, and the apostles in the new, and Christ between both, had no other way of extraordinary probation; and they that pretend to any thing extraordinary, cannot, ought not to be believed, unless they have something more than their own word: "If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true," said Truth itself, our blessed Lord. But, secondly, they that intend to teach by an extraordinary spirit, if they pretend to teach according to Scripture, must be examined by the measures of Scripture, and then their extraordinary must be judged by the ordinary spirit, and stands or falls by the rules of every good man's religion and public government; and then we are well enough. But if they speak any thing against Scripture, it is the spirit of antichrist, and the spirit of the devil: "For if an angel from heaven" (he certainly is a spirit) "preach any other doctrine, let him be accursed."

But this pretence of a single and extraordinary spirit is nothing else but the spirit of pride, error, and delusion; a snare to catch easy and credulous souls, which are willing to die for a gay word and a distorted face; it is the parent of folly and giddy doctrine, impossible to be proved, and, therefore, useless to all purposes of religion, reason, or sober counsels; it is like an invisible colour, or music without a sound; it is, and indeed is so intended to be, a direct overthrow of order, and government, and public ministries: it is bold to say any thing, and resolved to prove nothing; it imposes upon willing people after the same manner that oracles and the lying demons did of old time, abusing men, not by proper efficacy of its own, but because the men love to be abused: it is a great disparagement to the sufficiency of Scripture, and asperses the Divine Providence, for giving so many ages of the church an imperfect religion, expressly against the truth of their words, who said, they "had declared the whole truth of God," and "told all the will of God:" and it is an affront to the Spirit of God, the Spirit of wisdom and knowledge, of order, and public ministries. But the will furnishes out malice, and the understanding sends out levity, and they marry, and produce a fantastic dream; and the daughter, sucking wind instead of "the milk of the word," grows up to madness, and the spirit of reprobation. Besides all this, an extraordinary spirit is extremely unnecessary; and God does not give emissions and miracles from heaven to no purpose, and to no necessities of his church; for the supplying of which he hath given apostles and evangelists, prophets and pastors, bishops and priests, the spirit of ordination and the spirit of instruction, catechists and teachers, arts and sciences, scriptures, and a constant succession of expositors, the testimony of churches, and a constant line of tradition, or delivery of apostolical doctrine, in all things necessary to salvation. And, after all this, to have a fungus arise from the belly of mud and darkness, and nourish a glow-worm, that shall challenge to outshine the lantern of God's word, and all the candles which God set upon a hill, and all that the Spirit hath set upon the candlesticks, and all the stars of Christ's right hand, is to annul all the excellent, established,

orderly, and certain effects of the Spirit of God, and to worship the false fires of the night. He, therefore, that will follow a guide that leads him by an extraordinary spirit, shall go an extraordinary way, and have a strange fortune, and a singular religion, and a portion by himself, a great way off from the common inheritance of the saints, who are all led by the Spirit of God, and have one heart and one mind, one faith and one hope, the same baptism, and the helps of the ministry, leading them to the common country, which is the portion of all that are the sons of adoption, consigned by the Spirit of God, the earnest of their inheritance.

Concerning the pretence of a private spirit for interpretation of the confessed doctrine of God, (the Holy Scriptures,) it will not so easily come into this question of choosing our spiritual guides; because every person that can be a candidate in this office, that can be chosen to guide others, must be a public man, that is, of a holy calling, sanctified or separate publicly to the office; and then to interpret is part of his calling and employment, and to do so is the work of a public spirit; he is ordained and designed, he is commanded and enabled to do it: and in this there is no other caution to be interposed, but that the more public the man is, of the more authority his interpretation is; and he comes nearer to a law of order, and in the matter of government is to be observed: but the more holy and the more learned the man is, his interpretation in matter of question is more likely to be true; and, though less to be pressed as to the public confession, yet it may be more effective to a private persuasion, provided it be done without scandal, or lessening the authority, or disparagement to the more public person.

8. Those are to be suspected for evil guides, who, to get authority among the people, pretend a great zeal, and use a bold liberty in reproving princes and governors, nobility and prelates; for such homilies cannot be the effects of a holy religion, which lay a snare for authority, and undermine power, and discontent the people, and make them bold against kings, and immodest in their own stations, and trouble the government. Such men may speak a truth, or teach a true doctrine; for every such design does not unhallow the truth of God: but they take tome truths, and force them to minister to an evil end. But, therefore, mingle not in the communities of such men; for they will make it a part of your religion, to prosecute that end openly, which they, by arts of the tempter, have insinuated privately.

But if ever you enter into the seats of those doctors that speak reproachfully of their superiors, or detract from government, or love to curse the king in their heart, or slander him with their mouths, or disgrace their person, bless yourself and retire quickly; for there dwells the plague, but the Spirit of God is not president of the assembly. And, therefore, you shall observe in all the characters which the blessed apostles of our Lord made for describing and avoiding societies of heretics, false guides, and bringers in of strange doctrines,—still they reckon treason and rebellion. So St. Paul: "In the last days perilous times shall come; then men shall have the form of godliness, and deny the power of it; they shall be traitors, heady, high-minded;" [a] that is the characteristic note. So St. Peter: "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: but chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government; presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities." [b]—The same also is recorded and observed by St. Jude: "Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities." [c] These three testimonies are but the declaration of one great contingency; they are the same prophecy, declared by three apostolical men that had the gift of prophecy; and by this character the Holy Ghost in all ages hath given us caution to avoid such assemblies, where the speaking and ruling man shall be the canker of government, and a preacher of sedition, who shall either ungird the prince's sword, or unloose the button of their mantle.

9. But the apostles in all these prophecies have remarked lust to be the inseparable companion of these rebel prophets: "They are filthy dreamers, they defile the flesh," so St. Jude; "They walk after the flesh, in the lust of uncleanness," so St. Peter; "They are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, incontinent and sensual," so St. Paul. And by this part of the character, as the apostles remarked the Nicolaitans, the Gnostics, the Carpocratians, and all their impure branches, which began in their days, and multiplied after their deaths; so they prophetically did fore-signify all such sects to be avoided, who, to catch silly women laden with sins, preach doctrines of ease and licentiousness, apt to countenance and encourage vile things, and not apt to restrain a passion, or mortify a sin:—such as these: that God sees no sin in his children; that no sin will take us from God's favour; that all of such a party are elect people; that God requires of us nothing but faith; and that faith which justifies is nothing but a mere believing that we are God's chosen; that we are not tied to the law of commandments; that the law of grace is the law of liberty, and that liberty is to do what we list; that divorces are to be granted upon many and slight causes; that simple fornication is no sin. These are such doctrines, that upon the belief of them men may do any thing, and will do that which shall satisfy their own desires, and promote their interests, and seduce their she-disciples. And, indeed, it was not without great reason that these three apostles joined lust and treason together; because the former is so shameful a crime, and renders a man's spirit naturally averse to government, that if it falls upon the person of a ruler, it takes from him the spirit of government, and renders him diffident, pusillanimous, private, and ashamed: if it happen in the person of a subject, it makes him hate the man that shall shame him and punish him; it hates the light and the sun, because that opens him, and, therefore, is much more against

[a] 2 Tim. iii. 1, &c. [b] 2 Pet. ii. 9, 10. [c] Jude 5, 8.

government, because that publishes and punishes too. One thing I desire to be observed, that though the primitive heretics now named, and all those others, their successors, practised and taught horrid impurities, yet they did not invade government at all; and, therefore, those sects that these apostles did signify by prophecy, and in whom both these are concentred,—were to appear in some later times, and the days of the prophecy were not then to be fulfilled. What they are since, every age must judge by its own experience, and for its own interest. But christian religion is so pure and holy, that chastity is sometimes used for the whole religion; and to do an action chastely signifies purity of intention, abstraction from the world, and separation from low and secular ends, the virginity of the soul, and its union with God;[d] and all deviations and estrangements from God, and adhesion to forbidden objects, is called fornication and adultery. Those sects, therefore, that teach, encourage, or practise impious or unhallowed mixtures, and shameful lusts, are issues of the impure spirit, and most contrary to God, who can behold no unclean thing.

10. Those prophets and pastors,—that pretend severity and live loosely, or are severe in small things, and give liberty in greater, or forbid some sins with extreme rigour, and yet practise or teach those that serve their interest or constitute their sect,—are to be suspected and avoided accordingly: "Nihil est hominum ineptâ persuasione falsius, nec fictâ severitate ineptius." All ages of the church were extremely curious to observe, when any new teachers did arise, what kind of lives they lived; and if they pretended severely and to a strict life, then they knew their danger doubled; for it is certain all that teach doctrines contrary to the established religion delivered by the apostles, all they are evil men. God will not suffer a good man to be seduced damnably, much less can he be a seducer of others: and, therefore, you shall still observe the false apostles to be furious and vehement in their reproofs, and severe in their animadversions of others; but then if you watch their private, or stay till their numbers are full, or observe their spiritual habits, you shall find them indulgent to themselves, or to return from their disguises, or so spiritually wicked, that their pride or their revenge, their envy or their detraction, their scorn or their complacency in themselves, their desire of pre-eminence and their impatience of a rival, shall place them far enough in distance from a poor carnal sinner, whom they shall load with censures and an upbraiding scorn; but themselves are like devils, the spirits of darkness, "the spiritual wickednesses in high places." Some sects of men are very angry against servants for recreating and easing their labours with a less prudent and unsevere refreshment: but the patrons of their sects shall oppress a wicked man and unbelieving person; they shall chastise a drunkard and entertain murmurers; they shall not abide an oath, and yet shall force men to break three or four. This sect is to be avoided, because although it is good to be severe against carnal and bodily sins, yet it is not good to mingle with them who chastise a bodily sin to make way for a spiritual; or reprove a servant, that his lord may sin alone; or punish a stranger and a beggar, that will not approve their sin, but will have sins of his own. Concerning such persons, St. Paul hath told us, that "they shall not proceed far, but their folly shall be manifest;" Ὀλίγον χρόνον δύναιτ' ἂν τις πλάσασθαι τὸν τρόπον τοῦ αὐτοῦ, said Lysias: "Citò ad naturam ficta reciderunt suam." They that dissemble their sin and their manners, or make severity to serve looseness, and an imaginary virtue to minister to a real vice; they that abhor idols, and would commit sacrilege; chastise a drunkard, and promote sedition; declaim against the vanity of great persons, and then spoil them of their goods; reform manners, and engross estates; talk godly, and do impiously; these are teachers which the Holy Spirit of God hath, by three apostles, bid us to beware of and decline, as we would run from the hollowness of a grave, or the despairs and sorrows of the damned.

11. The substance of all is this: that we must not choose our doctrine by our guide, but our guide by the doctrine; and if we doubt concerning the doctrine, we may judge of that by the lives and designs of the teachers: "By their fruits ye shall know them;" and by the plain words of the Scripture, by the apostles' creed, and by the commandments, and by the certain known and established forms of government. These are the great indices, and so plain, apt, and easy, that he that is deceived, is so because he will be so; he is betrayed into it by his own lust, and a voluntary chosen folly.

12. Besides these premises, there are other little candles that can help to make the judgment clearer; but they are such as do not signify alone, but in conjunction with some of the precedent characters, which are drawn by the great lines of Scripture. Such as are: 1. When the teachers of sects stir up unprofitable and useless questions. 2. When they causelessly retire from the universal customs of christendom. 3. And cancel all the memorials of the greatest mysteries of our redemption. 4. When their confessions and catechisms and their whole religion consists ἐν γνώσει, "in speculations" and ineffective notions, in discourses of angels and spirits, in abstractions and raptures, in things they understand not, and of which they have no revelation. 5. Or else if their religion spends itself in ceremonies, outward guises, and material solemnities, and imperfect forms, drawing the heart of the vine forth into leaves and irregular fruitless suckers, turning the substance into circumstances, and the love of God into gestures, and the effect of the Spirit into the impertinent offices of a burdensome ceremonial: for by these two particulars the apostles reproved the Jews and the Gnostics, or those that from the school of Pythagoras pretended conversation with angels, and great knowledge of the secrets of the spirits, choosing tutelar angels, and assigning them offices and charges, as in the church of Rome, to this day, they do to saints. To these add, 6. That we observe whether the guides of souls avoid to suffer for their religion; for then

[d] Eloquia Domini casta eloquia.

the matter is foul, or the man not fit to lead, that dares not die in cold blood for his religion. Will the man lay his life and his soul upon the proposition? If so, then you may consider him upon his proper grounds; but if he refuses that, refuse his conduct sure enough. 7. You may also watch whether they do not choose their proselytes among the rich and vicious; that they may serve themselves upon his wealth, and their disciple upon his vice. 8. If their doctrines evidently and greatly serve the interest of wealth or honour, and are ineffective to piety. 9. If they strive to gain any one to their confession, and are negligent to gain them to good life. 10. If, by pretences, they lessen the severity of Christ's precepts, and are easy in dispensations and licentious glosses. 11. If they invent suppletories to excuse an evil man, and yet to reconcile his bad life with the hopes of heaven; you have reason to suspect the whole, and to reject these parts of error and design, which in themselves are so unhandsome always, and sometimes criminal. He that shall observe the church of Rome so implacably fierce for purgatory and the pope's supremacy, for clerical immunities and the superiority of the ecclesiastical persons to secular, for indulgences and precious and costly pardons, and then so full of devices to reconcile an evil life with heaven, requiring only contrition even at the last for the abolition of eternal guilt, and having a thousand ways to commute and take off the temporal; will see he hath reason to be jealous that interest is in these bigger than the religion, and yet that the danger of the soul is greater than that interest; and, therefore, the man is to do accordingly.

Here, indeed, is the great necessity that we should have the prudence and discretion, the ὀξυδερκὲς of serpents.

——— magis ut cernamus acutum
Quàm aut aquila, aut serpens Epidaurius———. HOR.

For so serpents, as they are curious to preserve their heads from contrition or a bruise, so also to safeguard themselves that they be not charmed with sweet and enticing words of false prophets, who charm not wisely but cunningly, leading aside unstable souls; against these we must stop our ears, or lend our attention, according to the foregoing measures and significations. But here also I am to insert two or three cautions.

1. We cannot expect that by these or any other signs we shall be enabled to discover concerning all men, whether they teach an error or no: neither can a man by these reprove a Lutheran or a Zuinglian, a Dominican or a Franciscan, a Russian or a Greek, a Muscovite or a Georgian; because those that are certain signs of false teachers, do signify such men who destroy an article of faith or a commandment. God was careful to secure us from death by removing the lepers from the camp, and giving certain notices of distinction, and putting a term between the living and the dead: but he was not pleased to secure every man from innocent and harmless errors, from the mistakes of men and the failings of mortality: the signs which can distinguish a living man from a dead, will not also distinguish a black man from a brown, or a pale from a white: it is enough that we decline those guides that lead us to hell, but not to think that we are enticed to death by the weaknesses of every disagreeing brother.

2. In all discerning of sects, we must be careful to distinguish the faults of men from the evils of their doctrine; for some there are that say very well and do very ill; εἰσὶ γὰρ

Δὴ ναρθηκοφόροι πολλοὶ, Βάκχοιδέ γε παῦροι,
Multos thyrsigeros, paucos est cernere Bacchos;

Many men of holy calling and holy religion, that are of unholy lives: "Homines ignavi opera, philosophi sententia." But these must be separated from the institution: and the evil of the men is only to be noted, as that such persons be not taken to our single conduct and personal ministry. I will be of the man's religion if it be good, though he be not; but I will not make him my confessor, Μισῶ σοφιστὴν, ὅστις οὐχ αὑτῷ σοφὸς.[e] If he be not wise for himself, I will not sit down at his feet, lest we mingle filthiness instead of being cleansed and instructed.

3. Let us make one separation more, and then we may consider and act according to the premises. If we espy a design or an evil mark upon one doctrine, let us divide it from the other that are not so spotted. For indeed the public communions of men are at this day so ordered, that they are as fond of their errors as of their truths, and sometimes most zealous for what they have least reason to be so. And if we can, by any arts of prudence, separate from an evil proposition, and communicate in all the good, then we may love colleges of religious persons, though we do not worship images; and we may obey our prelates, though we do no injury to princes; and we may be zealous against a crime, though we be not imperious over men's persons; and we may be diligent in the conduct of souls, though we be not rapacious of estates; and we may be moderate exactors of obedience to human laws, though we do not dispense with the breach of the Divine; and the clergy may represent their calling necessary, though their persons be full of modesty and humility; and we may preserve our lights, and not lose our charity. For this is the meaning of the apostle, "Try all things, and retain that which is good:" from every sect and community of christians take any thing that is good, that advances holy religion and the Divine honour. For one hath a better government, a second a better confession, a third hath excellent spiritual arts for the conduct of souls, a fourth hath fewer errors; and by what instrument soever a holy life is advantaged, use that, though thou grindest thy spears and arrows at the forges of the Philistines; knowing thou hast no master but Christ, no religion but the christian, no rule but the Scriptures, and the laws, and right reason: other things that are helps, are to be used accordingly.

These are the general rules of christian prudence, which I have chosen to insist upon: there are

[e] Eurip.

many others more particular indeed, but yet worth not only the enumerating, but observing also, and that they be reduced to practice. For the prudence of a christian does oblige and direct respectively all the children of the institution, that we be careful to decline a danger, watchful against a temptation, always choosing that that is safe and fitted to all circumstances; that we be wise in choosing our company, reserved and wary in our friendships, and communicative in our charity; that we be silent, and retentive of what we hear and what we think, not credulous, not inconstant; that we be deliberate in our election and vigorous in our prosecutions; that we suffer not good nature to discompose our duty, but that we separate images from substances, and the pleasing of a present company from our religion to God and our eternal interest: for sometimes that which is counselled to us by christian prudence, is accounted folly by human prudence, and so it is ever accounted when our duty leads us into a persecution. Hither also appertain, that we never do a thing that we know we must repent of; that we do not admire too many things, nor any thing too much; that we be even in prosperity and patient in adversity, but transported with neither into the regions of despair or levity, pusillanimity or tyranny, dejection or garishness; always to look upon the scar we have impressed upon our flesh, and no more to handle dangers and knives; to abstain from ambitious and vexatious suits; not to contend with a mighty man; ever to listen to him, who, according to the proverb, "hath four ears, reason, religion, wisdom, and experience;" rather to lose a benefit, than to suffer a detriment and an evil; to stop the beginnings of evil; to pardon and not to observe all the faults of friends or enemies; of evils to choose the least, and of goods to choose the greatest, if it be also safest; not to be insolent in success, but to proceed according to the probability of human causes and contingencies; ever to be thankful for benefits, and profitable to others, and useful in all that we can; to watch the seasons and circumstances of actions; to do that willingly which cannot be avoided, lest the necessity serve another's appetite, and it be lost to all our purposes: "Insignis enim est prudentiæ ut quod non facere non possis, id ita facere ut libenter fecisse videaris;" not to pursue difficult, uncertain, and obscure things, with violence and passion. These if we observe, we shall do advantage to ourselves and to the religion; and avoid those evils which fools and unwary people suffer for nothing, dying or bleeding without cause and without pity. I end this with the saying of Socrates: Χωρισόμενα φρονήσεως, καὶ ἀλλαττόμενα ἀντὶ ἀλλήλων, μὴ σκιαγραφία τις ᾖ ἡ τοιαύτη ἀρετὴ, καὶ τῷ ὄντι ἀνδραποδης τε, καὶ οὐδὲν ὑγιὲς, οὐδ' ἀληθὲς, ἔχῃ· "Virtue is but a shadow and a servile employment, unless it be adorned and instructed with prudence;"[f] which gives motion and conduct, spirits and vigorousness, to religion, making it not only human and reasonable, but Divine and celestial.

[f] Plat. Phædo.

SERMON XXIII.

OF CHRISTIAN SIMPLICITY.

PART I.

And harmless as doves.—Matt. x. latter part of verse 16.

OUR blessed Saviour having prefaced concerning prudence, adds to the integrity of the precept, and for the conduct of our religion, that we be simple as well as prudent, innocent as well as wary. Harmless and safe together do well: for without this blessed union, prudence turns into craft, and simplicity degenerates into folly. "Prudens simplicitas" is Martial's character of a good man; a wary and cautious innocence, a harmless prudence and provision; "Verâ simplicitate bonus." A true simplicity is that which leaves to a man arms defensive, his castles and strong forts; but takes away his swords and spears, his anger and his malice, his peevishness and spite. But such is the misery and such is the iniquity of mankind, that craft hath invaded all the contracts and intercourses of men, and made simplicity so weak a thing, that it is grown into contempt, sometimes with, and sometimes without reason; "Et homines simplices, minimè malos," the Romans called "parum cautos, sæpe stolidos;" unwary fools and defenceless people were called simple. And when the innocence of the old simple Romans in Junius Brutus's time, in Fabricius and Camillus's, began to degenerate, and to need the Aquilian law to force men to deal honestly; quickly the mischief increased, till the Aquilian law grew as much out of power as honesty was out of countenance; and there, and every where else, men thought they got a purchase when they met with an honest man: and ἠλίθιον Aristotle calls, χρηστὸν, and τὸν ὀργίλον καὶ τὸν μανικὸν, ἁπλοῦν· "A fool is a profitable person, and he that is simple is little better than mad:" and so it is when simplicity wants prudence. He that, because he means honestly himself, thinks every man else does so, and therefore is unwary in all or any of his intercourses, is a simple man in an evil sense: and therefore St. Gregory Nazianzen remarks Constantius with a note of folly, for suffering his easy nature to be abused by Georgius, Οἰκειοῦται τὴν βασιλέως ἁπλότητα· ὄντως γὰρ ἐγὼ καλῶ σὴν κουφότητα, αἰδούμενος τὴν εὐλάβειαν· "The prince's simplicity, so he calls it for reverence;"[a] but indeed it was folly, for it was zeal without knowledge. But it was a better temper which he observed in his own father, ἡ ἁπλότης καὶ τὸ τοῦ ἤθους ἄδολον, such "a simplicity which only wanted craft or deceit," but wanted no prudence or caution: and that is truly christian simplicity, or the sincerity of an honest, and ingenious, and a fearless person; and it is a rare band, not only of societies and contracts, but also of friendships and advantages of mankind.

[a] Orat. 21.

We do not live in an age in which there is so much need to bid men be wary, as to take care that they be innocent. Indeed in religion we are usually too loose and ungirt, exposing ourselves to temptation, and others to offence, and our name to dishonour, and the cause itself to reproach, and we are open and ready to every evil but persecution: from that we are close enough, and that alone we call prudence; but in the matter of interest we are wary as serpents, subtle as foxes, vigilant as the birds of the night, rapacious as kites, tenacious as grappling-hooks and the weightiest anchors, and above all, false and hypocritical as a thin crust of ice spread upon the face of a deep, smooth, and dissembling pit; if you set your foot, your foot slips, or the ice breaks, and you sink into death, and are wound in a sheet of water, descending into mischief or your grave, suffering a great fall or a sudden death, by your confidence and unsuspecting foot. There is a universal crust of hypocrisy, that covers the face of the greatest part of mankind. Their religion consists in forms and outsides, and serves reputation or a design, but does not serve God. Their promises are but fair language, and the civilities of the piazzas or exchanges, and disband and untie like the air that beat upon their teeth, when they spake the delicious and hopeful words. Their oaths are snares to catch men, and make them confident; their contracts are arts and stratagems to deceive, measured by profit and possibility; and every thing is lawful that is gainful. And their friendships are trades of getting; and their kindness of watching a dying friend is but the office of a vulture, the gaping for a legacy, the spoil of the carcass. And their sicknesses are many times policies of state; sometimes a design to show the riches of our bedchamber. And their funeral tears are but the paranymphs and pious solicitors of a second bride. And every thing that is ugly must be hid, and every thing that is handsome must be seen; and that will make a fair cover for a huge deformity. And therefore it is, as they think, necessary that men should always have some pretences and forms, some faces of religion or sweetness of language, confident affirmatives or bold oaths, protracted treaties or multitude of words, affected silence or grave deportment, a good name or a good cause, a fair relation or a worthy calling, great power or a pleasant wit; any thing that can be fair or that can be useful, any thing that can do good or be thought good, we use it to abuse our brother, or promote our interest. Leporina resolved to die, being troubled for her husband's danger; and he resolved to die with her that had so great a kindness for him, as not to outlive the best of her husband's fortune. It was agreed; and she tempered the poison, and drank the face of the unwholesome goblet; but the weighty poison sunk to the bottom, and the easy man drank it all off, and died, and the woman carried him forth to funeral; and after a little illness, which she soon recovered, she entered upon the inheritance, and a second marriage.

Tuta frequensque via est ———

It is a usual and safe way to cozen, upon colour of friendship or religion; but that is hugely criminal: to tell a lie to abuse a man's belief, and by it to enter upon any thing of his possession to his injury, is a perfect destruction of all human society, the most ignoble of all human follies, perfectly contrary to God, who is truth itself, the greatest argument of a timorous and a base, a cowardly and a private mind, not at all honest, or confident to see the sun, "a vice fit for slaves;" ἀνόητον καὶ δουλοπρεπὲς, as Dio Chrysostomus[b] calls it; ὁρῶν καὶ ὅτι θηρίων τὰ δειλότατα καὶ ἀγενέστερα τὰ ἐκεῖνα ψεύδεται πάντων μάλιστα, καὶ ἐξαπατᾷ· "for the most timorous and the basest of the beasts use craft," and lie in wait, and take their prey, and save their lives by deceit. And it is the greatest injury to the abused person in the world: for, besides that it abuses his interest, it also makes him for ever insecure, and uneasy in his confidence, which is the period of cares, the rest of a man's spirit; it makes it necessary for a man to be jealous and suspicious, that is, to be troublesome to himself and every man else: and above all, lying, or craftiness, and unfaithful usages, rob a man of the honour of his soul, making his understanding useless and in the condition of a fool, spoiled, and dishonoured, and despised. Πᾶσα ψυχὴ ἄκουσα στερεῖται τῆς ἀληθείας, said Plato: "Every soul loses truth very unwillingly." Every man is so great a lover of truth, that if he hath it not, he loves to believe he hath, and would fain have all the world to believe as he does; either presuming that he hath truth, or else hating to be deceived, or to be esteemed a cheated and an abused person. "Non licet suffurari mentem hominis etiam Samaritani," said R. Moses;[c] "sed veritatem loquere, atque age ingenuè:" "If a man be a Samaritan, that is, a hated person, a person from whom you differ in matter of religion, yet steal not his mind away, but speak truth to him honestly and ingenuously." A man's soul loves to dwell in truth, it is his resting-place; and if you take him from thence, you take him into strange regions, a place of banishment and dishonour. "Qui ignotos lædit, latro appellatur; qui amicos, paulò minus quam parricida:" "He that hurts strangers is a thief; but he that hurts his friend is little better than a parricide." This is the brand and stigma of hypocrisy and lying: it hurts our friends, "Mendacium in damnum potens;" and makes the man that owns it guilty of a crime, that is to be punished by the sorrows usually suffered in the most execrable places of the cities. But I must reduce the duty to particulars, and discover the contrary vice by several parts of its proportion.

1. The first office of a christian simplicity consists in our religion and manners; that they be open and honest, public and justifiable, the same at home and abroad; for, besides the ingenuity, and honesty of this, there is an indispensable and infinite necessity it should be so; because whoever is a hypocrite in his religion, mocks God, presenting

[b] Dissert. 1. de Regno.

[c] Can. Eth.

to him the outside, and reserving the inward for his enemy; which is either a denying God to be the searcher of our hearts, or else an open defiance of his omniscience and of his justice. To provoke God, that we may deceive men; to defy his almightiness, that we may abuse our brother; is, to destroy all that is sacred, all that is prudent; it is an open hostility to all things human and Divine, a breaking from all the bands of all relations; and uses God so cheaply, as if he were to be treated or could be cozened like a weak man, and an undiscerning and easy merchant. But so is the life of many men:

> Vita fallax! abditos sensus gerens,
> Animisque pulchram turpibus faciem induens
> Pudor impudentem celat, audacem quies,
> Pietas nefandum; vera fallaces probant;
> Simulantque molles dura. SENEC.

It is a crafty life that men live, carrying designs, and living upon secret purposes. Men pretend modesty, and under that red veil are bold against superiors; saucy to their betters upon pretences of religion; invaders of others' rights by false propositions in theology; pretending humility, they challenge superiority above all orders of men; and for being thought more holy, think that they have title to govern the world: they bear upon their face great religion, and are impious in their relations, false to their trust, unfaithful to their friend, unkind to their dependants; *ὀφρῦς ἐπηρκότες, καὶ τὸ φρόνιμον ζητῶντες ἐν τοῖς περιπάτοις*, "turning up the white of their eye, and seeking for reputation in the streets:" so did some of the old hypocrites, the gentile Pharisees; "Asperum cultum, et intonsum caput, negligentiorem barbam, et nitidum argento odium, et cubile humi positum, et quicquid aliud ambitionem viâ perversâ sequitur;" being the softest persons under an austere habit, the loosest livers under a contracted brow, under a pale face having the reddest and most sprightly livers. This kind of men have abused all ages of the world, and all religions; it being so easy in nature, so prepared and ready for mischiefs, that men should creep into opportunities of devouring the flock, upon pretence of defending them, and to raise their estates upon colour of saving their souls.

> Introrsum turpes, speciosi pelle decorâ. HOR.

Men that are like painted sepulchres, entertainment for the eye, but images of death, chambers of rottenness, and repositories of dead men's bones. It may, sometimes, concern a man to seem religious; God's glory may be shown by fair appearances, or the edification of our brother, or the reputation of a cause; but this is but sometimes: but it always concerns us that we be religious; and we may reasonably think, that, if the colours of religion so well do advantage to us, the substance and reality would do it much more. For no man can have a good by seeming religious, and another by not being so; the power of godliness never destroys any well-built fabric, that was raised upon the reputation of religion and its pretences. "Nunquam est peccare utile, quia semper est turpe," said Cicero; "It is never profitable to sin, because it is always base and dishonest." And if the face of religion could do a good turn, which the heart and substance does destroy, then religion itself were the greatest hypocrite in the world, and promises a blessing which it never can perform, but must be beholden to its enemy to verify its promises. No: we shall be sure to feel the blessings of both the worlds, if we serve in the offices of religion, devoutly and charitably, before men and before God: if we ask of God things honest in the sight of men, *μετὰ φωνῆς εὐχόμενοι*, (as Pythagoras gave in precept,) "praying to God with a free heart and a public prayer," and doing before men things that are truly pleasing to God, turning our heart outwards and our face inwards, that is, conversing with men as in the presence of God; and in our private towards God, being as holy and devout as if we prayed in public, and in the corners of the streets. Pliny, praising Ariston, gave him the title of an honest and hearty religion: "Ornat hunc magnitudo animi, quæ nihil ad ostentationem, omnia ad conscientiam refert; recteque facti, non ex populi sermone, mercedem, sed ex facto petit."[f] And this does well state the question of a sincere religion, and an ingenuous goodness: it requires that we do nothing for ostentation, but every thing for conscience; and we may be obliged in conscience to publish our manner of lives; but then it must be, not that we may have a popular noise for a reward, but that God may be glorified by our public worshippings, and others edified by our good examples.

Neither doth the sincerity of our religion require, that we should not conceal our sins: for he that sins, and dares to own them publicly, may become impudent: and, so long as in modesty we desire our shame should be hid, and men to think better of us than we deserve, I say, for no other reason but either because we would not derive the ill examples to others, or the shame to ourselves; we are within the protection of one of virtue's sisters, and we are not far from the gates of the kingdom of heaven; easy and apt to be invited in, and not very unworthy to enter.

But if any other principle draws the veil, if we conceal our vices because we would be honoured for sanctity, or because we would not be hindered in our designs, we serve the interest of pride and ambition, covetousness or vanity. If an innocent purpose hides the ulcer, it does half heal it; but if it retires into the secrecy of sin and darkness, it turns into a plague, and infects the heart, and it dies infallibly of a double exulceration. The Macedonian boy,—that kept the coal in his flesh, and would not shake his arm, lest he should disturb the sacrifice, or discompose the ministry before Alexander the Great,—concealed his pain to the honour of patience and religion: but the Spartan boy, who suffered the little fox to eat his bowels, rather than confess his theft, when he was in danger of discovery, paid the price of a bold hypocrisy; that is the dissimulation reprovable in matter of manners, which conceals one sin to make way for another. *Οἱ καὶ μάλα*

[f] Lib. i. ep. 22.

σεμνοὶ καὶ σκυθρωποὶ τὰ ἔξω καὶ τὰ δημοσίᾳ φαινόμενοι, εἰ παιδὸς ὡραίου ἢ γυναικὸς λάβωνται, ὅσα ποιοῦσιν ; Lucian notes it of his philosophical hypocrites, dissemblers in matter of deportment and religion; they seem severe abroad, but they enter into the vaults of harlots, and are not ashamed to see a naked sin in the midst of its ugliness and undressed circumstances. A mighty wrestler, that had won a crown at Olympus for contending prosperously, was observed to turn his head and go forward with his face upon his shoulder, to behold a fair woman that was present; and he lost the glory of his strength, when he became so weak, that a woman could turn his head about, which his adversary could not. These are the follies and weaknesses of man, and dishonours to religion, when a man shall contend nobly, and do handsomely, and then be taken in a base or a dishonourable action, and mingle venom with his delicious ointment.

Quid? quod olet gravius mistum diapasmate virus,
Atque duplex animæ longius exit odor? MART.

When Fescennia perfumed her breath, that she might not smell of wine, she condemned the crime of drunkenness; but grew ridiculous, when the wine broke through the cloud of a tender perfume, and the breath of a lozenge. And that, indeed, is the reward of an hypocrite; his laborious arts of concealment furnish all the world with declamation and severity against the crime, which himself condemns with his caution. But when his own sentence too is prepared against the day of his discovery,

Notas ergo nimis fraudes deprensaque furta
Jam tollas, et sis ebria simpliciter. MART.

A simple drunkard hath but one fault: but they that avoid discovery, that they may drink on without shame or restraint, add hypocrisy to their vicious fulness; and for all the amazements of their consequent discovery, have no other recompence, but that they pleased themselves in the security of their crime, and their undeserved reputation.

Sic, quæ nigrior est cadente moro,
Cerussata sibi placet Lycoris: MART.

For so the most easy and deformed woman, whose girdle no foolish young man will unloose, because "she is blacker than the falling mulberry, may please herself under a skin of ceruse," and call herself fairer than Pharaoh's daughter, or the hinds living upon the snowy mountains.

One thing more there is to be added as an instance to the simplicity of religion, and that is, that we never deny our religion, or lie concerning our faith, nor tell our propositions and articles deceitfully, nor instruct novices or catechumens with fraud; but that when we teach them, we do it honestly, justly, and severely; not always to speak all, but never to speak otherwise than it is, nor to hide a truth from them, whose souls are concerned in it that it be known. "Neque enim id est celare, cùm quid reticeas; sed cùm, quod tu scias, id ignorare emolumenti tui causâ velis eos, quorum interest id scire;" so Cicero [d] determines the case of prudence and simplicity. The discovery of pious frauds, and the disclaiming of false, but profitable and rich propositions; the quitting honours fraudulently gotten, and unjustly detained; the reducing every man to the perfect understanding of his own religion, so far as can concern his duty; the disallowing false miracles, legends, and fabulous stories, to cozen the people into awfulness, fear, and superstition; these are parts of christian simplicity, which do integrate this duty. For religion hath strengths enough of its own to support itself; it needs not a devil for its advocate; it is the breath of God; and as it is purer than the beams of the morning, so it is stronger than a tempest, or the combination of all the winds, though united by the prince that ruleth in the air. And we find that the Nicene faith prevailed upon all the world, though some Arian bishops went from Ariminum to Nice, and there decreed their own articles, and called it the faith read at Nice, and used all arts, and all violence, and all lying, and diligence, to discountenance it; yet it could not be; it was the truth of God; and, therefore, it was stronger than all the gates of hell, than all the powers of darkness. And he that tells a lie for his religion, or goes about by fraud and imposture to gain proselytes, either dares not trust his cause, or dares not trust his God. True religion is open in its articles, honest in its prosecutions, just in its conduct, innocent when it is accused, ignorant of falsehood, sure in its truth, simple in its sayings, and (as Julius Capitolinus said of the emperor Verus) it is "morum simplicium, et quæ adumbrare nihil possit:" it covers, indeed, a multitude of sins, by curing them, and obtaining pardon for them; but it can dissemble nothing of itself, it cannot tell or do a lie: but it can become a sacrifice; a good man can quit his life, but never his integrity. That is the first duty; the sum of which is that which Aquilius said concerning fraud and craft; "bona fides," "the honesty of a man's faith and religion is destroyed," "cùm aliud simulatum, aliud actum sit," "when either we conceal what we ought to publish, or do not act what we pretend."

2. Christian simplicity, or the innocence of prudence, relates to laws both in their sanction and execution; that they be decreed with equity, and proportioned to the capacity and profit of the subjects, and that they be applied to practice with remissions and reasonable interpretations, agreeable to the sense of the words and the mind of the lawgiver. But laws are not to be cozened and abused by contradictory glosses and fantastic allusions; as knowing that if the majesty and sacredness of them be once abused, and subjected to contempt, and unreasonable and easy resolutions, their girdle is unloosed, and they suffer the shame of prostitution and contempt. When Saul made a law, that he that did eat before night should die, the people persuaded him directly to rescind it in the case of Jonathan; because it was unequal and unjust, that he who had wrought their deliverance, and, in that working, was absent from the promulgation of the

[d] Cic. lib. 3. Offic.

law, should suffer for breaking it, in a case of violent necessity, and of which he heard nothing, upon so fair and probable a cause. And it had been well that the Persian had been so rescued, who, against the laws of his country, killed a lion to save the life of his prince. In such cases it is fit the law be rescinded and dispensed withal, as to certain particulars; so it be done ingenuously, with competent authority, in great necessity, and without partiality. But that which I intend here is, that in the rescission or dispensation of the law, the process be open and free, and such as shall preserve the law and its sacredness, as well as the person and his interest. The laws of Sparta forbade any man to be twice admiral; but, when their affairs required it, they made Aræus titular, and Lysander supravisor of him, and admiral to all real and effective purposes; this wanted ingenuity, and laid a way open for them to despise the law, which was made patient of such a weak evasion. The Lacedemonian ambassador persuaded Pericles to turn the tables of the law, which were forbidden to be removed; and another ordained in a certain case, that the laws should sleep twenty-four hours; a third decreed that June should be called May, because the time of an election appointed by the law was elapsed. These arts are against the ingenuity and simplicity of laws and lawgivers, and teach the people to cheat in their obedience, when their judges are so fraudulent in the administration of their laws. Every law should be made plain, open, honest, and significant; and he that makes a decree, and intricates it on purpose, or by inconsideration lays a snare or leaves one there, is either an imprudent person, and, therefore, unfit to govern, or else he is a tyrant and a vulture. It is too much that a man can make a law by an arbitrary power. But when he shall also leave the law, so that every of the ministers of justice and the judges shall have power to rule by a loose, by an arbitrary, by a contradictory interpretation, it is intolerable. They that rule by prudence, should, above all things, see that the patrons and advocates of innocence should be harmless, and without an evil sting.

3. Christian simplicity relates to promises and acts of grace and favour; and its caution is, that all promises be simple, ingenuous, agreeable to the intention of the promiser, truly and effectually expressed, and never going less in the performance than in the promises and words of the expression; concerning which the cases are several. 1. First, all promises in which a third or a second person hath no interest, that is, the promises of kindness and civilities, are tied to pass into performance "secundum æquum et bonum;" and though they may oblige to some small inconvenience, yet never to a great one; as, I will visit you to-morrow morning, because I promised you, and, therefore, I will come, "etiamsi non concoxero," "although I have not slept my full sleep;" but "si febricitavero," "if I be in a fever," or have reason to fear one, I am disobliged. For the nature of such promises bears upon them no bigger burden than can be expounded by reasonable civilities, and the common expectation of kind, and the ordinary performances of just men, who do excuse and are excused respectively by all rules of reason proportionably to such small intercourses; and, therefore, although such conditions be not expressed in making promises, yet to perform or rescind them by such laws is not against christian simplicity. 2. Promises in matters of justice or in matters of grace, as from a superior to an inferior, must be so singly and ingenuously expressed, intended, and performed accordingly, that no condition is to be reserved or supposed in them to warrant their non-performance but impossibility, or, that which is next to it, an intolerable inconvenience; in which cases we have a natural liberty to commute our promises, but so that we pay to the interested person a good at least equal to that which we first promised. And to this purpose it may be added, that it is not against christian simplicity to express our promises in such words, which we know the interested man will understand to other purposes than I intend, so it be not less that I mean than that he hopes for. When our blessed Saviour told his disciples that "they should sit upon twelve thrones," they presently thought they had his bond for a kingdom, and dreamed of wealth and honour, power and a splendid court; and Christ knew they did, but did not disentangle his promise from the enfolded and intricate sense, of which his words were naturally capable; but he performed his promise to better purposes than they hoped for; they were presidents in the conduct of souls, princes of God's people, the chief in sufferings, stood nearest to the cross, had an elder brother's portion in the kingdom of grace, were the founders of churches, and dispensers of the mysteries of the kingdom, and ministers of the Spirit of God, and channels of mighty blessings, under-mediators in the priesthood of their Lord, and "their names were written in heaven:" and this was infinitely better than to groan and wake under a head pressed with a golden crown and pungent cares, and to eat alone, and to walk in a crowd, and to be vexed with all the public and many of the private evils of the people: which is the sum total of an earthly kingdom.

When God promised to the obedient, that they should live long in the land which he would give them, he meant it of the land of Canaan, but yet reserved to himself the liberty of taking them quickly from that land and carrying them to a better. He that promises to lend me a staff to walk withal, and instead of that gives me a horse to carry me, hath not broken his promise nor dealt deceitfully. And this is God's dealing with mankind; he promises more than we could hope for; and when he hath done that, he gives us more than he hath promised. God hath promised to give to them that fear him, all that they need, food and raiment; but he adds, out of the treasures of his mercy, variety of food and changes of raiment; some to get strength, and some to refresh; something for them that are in health, and some for the sick. And though the skins of bulls, and stags, and foxes, and bears, could have drawn a veil thick enough to hide

the apertures of sin and natural shame, and to defend us from heat and cold; yet when he addeth the fleeces of sheep and beavers, and the spoils of silkworms, he hath proclaimed, that although his promises are the bounds of our certain expectation, yet they are not the limits of his loving-kindness; and if he does more than he hath promised, no man can complain that he did otherwise, and did greater things than he said. Thus God does; but therefore so also must we, imitating that example, and transcribing that copy of Divine truth, always remembering, that "his promises are yea and amen." And although God often goes more, yet he never goes less; and, therefore, we must never go from our promises, unless we be thrust from thence by disability, or let go by leave, or called up higher by a greater intendment and increase of kindness. And, therefore, when Solyman had sworn to Ibrahim Bassa, that he would never kill him so long as he were alive, he quitted himself but ill, when he sent an eunuch to cut his throat when he slept, because the priest told him that sleep was death. His act was false and deceitful as his great prophet.

But in this part of simplicity we christians have a most special obligation: for our religion being ennobled by the most and the greatest promises, and our faith made confident by the veracity of our Lord, and his word made certain by miracles, and prophecies, and voices from heaven, and all the testimony of God himself; and that truth itself is bound upon us by the efficacy of great endearments and so many precepts; if we shall suffer the faith of a christian to be an instrument to deceive our brother, and that he must either be incredulous or deceived, uncharitable or deluded like a fool, we dishonour the sacredness of the institution, and become strangers to the spirit of truth and to the eternal word of God. Our blessed Lord would not have his disciples to swear at all,—no, not in public judicature, if the necessities of the world would permit him to be obeyed. If christians will live according to the religion, the word of a christian were a sufficient instrument to give testimony, and to make promises, to secure a faith; and upon that supposition oaths were useless, and, therefore, forbidden, because there could be no necessity to invoke God's name in promises or affirmations if men were indeed christians, and therefore, in that case, would be a taking it in vain: but because many are not, and they that are in name, oftentimes are in nothing else,—it became necessary that man should swear in judgment and in public courts. But consider who it was that invented and made the necessity of oaths, of bonds, of securities, of statutes, extents, judgments, and all the artifices of human diffidence and dishonesty. These things were indeed found out by men; but the necessity of these was from him that is the father of lies, from him that hath made many fair promises, but never kept any; or if he did, it was to do a bigger mischief, to cozen the more. For so does the devil: he promises rich harvests, and blasts the corn in the spring; he tells his servants they shall be rich, and fills them with beggarly qualities, makes them base and indigent, greedy and penurious; and they that serve him entirely, as witches and such miserable persons, never can be rich: if he promises health, then men grow confident and intemperate, and do such things whereby they shall die the sooner, and die longer; they shall die eternally. He deceives men in their trust, and frustrates their hopes, and eludes their expectations; and his promises have a period set, beyond which they cannot be true; for wicked men shall enjoy a fair fortune but till their appointed time, and then it ends in perfect and most accomplished misery: and therefore, even in this performance, he deceives them most of all, promising jewels, and performing coloured stones and glass gems, that he may cozen them of their glorious inheritance. All fraudulent breakers of promises dress themselves by his glass, whose best imagery is deformity and lies.

SERMON XXIV.

PART II.

4. CHRISTIAN simplicity teaches openness and ingenuity in contracts, and matters of buying and selling, covenants, associations, and all such intercourses, which suppose an equality of persons as to the matter of right and justice in the stipulation. Μετὰ τὴν ἀγορὰν ἀψευδεῖν, was the old Attic law; and nothing is more contrary to christian religion, than that the intercourses of justice be direct snares, and that we should deal with men as men deal with foxes, and wolves, and vermin; do all violence: and when that cannot be, use all craft, and every thing whereby they can be made miserable.

Ἡ δόλῳ ἢ βίῃ, ἢ ἀμφαδὸν ἢ κρυφηδόν.

There are men in the world who love to smile; but that smile is more dangerous than the furrows of a contracted brow, or a storm in Adria; for their purpose is only to deceive: they easily speak what they never mean; they heap up many arguments to persuade that to others which themselves believe not; they praise that vehemently which they deride in their hearts; they declaim against a thing which themselves covet; they beg passionately for that which they value not, and run from an object, which they would fain have to follow and overtake them; they excuse a person dexterously where the man is beloved, and watch to surprise him where he is unguarded; they praise that they may sell, and disgrace that they may keep. And these hypocrisies are so interwoven and embroidered with their whole design, that some nations refuse to contract, till their arts are taken off by the society of banquets, and the good-natured kindnesses of festival chalices: for so Tacitus observes concerning the old Germans. "De adsciscendis principibus, de pace et bello, in conviviis consultant; tanquam nullo magis tempore ad simplices cogitationes pateat animus, aut ad

magnas incalescat:" "As if then they were more simple when they were most valiant, and were least deceitful when they were least themselves."

But it is an evil condition, that a man's honesty shall be owing to his wine, and virtue must live at the charge and will of a vice. The proper band of societies and contracts is justice and necessities, religion and the laws; the measures of it are equity, and ourselves, and our own desires in the days of our need, natural or forced: but the instruments of the exchange and conveyance of the whole intercourse is words and actions, as they are expounded by custom, consent, or understanding of the interested person, in which, if simplicity be not severely preserved, it is impossible that human society can subsist, but men shall be forced to snatch at what they have bought, and take securities that men swear truly, and exact an oath that such is the meaning of the word; and no man shall think himself secure, but shall fear he is robbed, if he has not possession first; and it shall be disputed who shall trust the other, and neither of them shall have cause to be confident upon bands, or oaths, or witnesses, or promises, or all the honour of men, or all the engagements of religion. Οὐδεὶς γὰρ ἂν ἔτι πιστεῦσαι δύναιτο ὑμῖν, οὐδ' εἰ πάνυ προθυμεῖτο, ἰδὼν ἀδικούμενον τὸν μάλιστα φιλίᾳ προσήκοντα, said Cyrus in Xenophon:[a] A man, though he desires it, cannot be confident of the man that pretends truth, yet tells a lie, and is deprehended to have made use of the sacred name of friendship or religion, honesty or reputation, to deceive his brother.

But because a man may be deceived by deeds and open actions as well as words, therefore it concerns their duty, that no man by an action on purpose done to make his brother believe a lie, abuse his persuasion and his interest. When Pythius,[b] the Sicilian, had a mind to sell his garden to Canius, he invited him thither, and caused fishermen, as if by custom, to fish in the channel by which the garden stood, and they threw great store of fish into their arbours, and made Canius believe it was so every day; and the man grew greedy of that place of pleasure, and gave Pythius a double price, and the next day perceived himself abused. Actions of pretence and simulation are like snares laid, into which the beasts fall though you pursue them not, but walk in the inquiry for their necessary provisions: and if a man fall into a snare that you have laid, it is no excuse to say, you did not tempt him thither. To lay a snare is against the ingenuity of a good man and a christian, and from thence he ought to be drawn; and, therefore, it is not fit we should place a danger, which ourselves are therefore bound to hinder, because from thence we are obliged to rescue him. "Vir bonus est, qui prodest quibus potest, nocet nemini:" "When we do all the good we can, and do an evil to no man, then only we are accounted good men." But this pretence of an action signifying otherwise than it looks for, is only forbidden in matter of contract, and the material interest of a second person. But when actions are of a double signification, or when a man is not abused or defeated of his right by an uncertain sign, it is lawful to do a thing to other purposes than is commonly understood. Flight is a sign of fear; but it is lawful to fly when a man fears not. Circumcision was the seal of the Jewish religion; and yet St. Paul circumcised Timothy, though he intended he should live like the gentile christians, and "not as do the Jews." But because that rite did signify more things besides that one, he only did it to represent that he was no enemy of Moses's law, but would use it when there was just reason, which was one part of the things which the using of circumcision could signify. So our blessed Saviour pretended that he would pass forth beyond Emmaus; but if he intended not to do it, yet he did no injury to the two disciples, for whose good it was that he intended to make this offer: and neither did he prevaricate the strictness of simplicity and sincerity, because they were persons with whom he had made no contracts, to whom he had passed no obligation: and in the nature of the thing, it is proper and natural, by an offer to give an occasion to another to do a good action; and in case it succeeds not, then to do what we intended not; and so the offer was conditional. But in all cases of bargaining, although the actions of themselves may receive naturally another sense, yet I am bound to follow that signification which may not abuse my brother, or pollute my own honesty, or snatch or rifle his interest: because it can be no ingredient into the commutation, if I exchange a thing which he understands not, and is, by error, led into this mistake, and I hold forth the fire, and delude him, and amuse his eye; for by me he is made worse.

But, secondly, as our actions must be of a sincere and determined signification in contract, so must our words; in which the rule of the old Roman honesty was this: "Uterque si ad eloquendum venerit, non plus quam semel eloquetur:" "Every one that speaks, is to speak but once;" that is, "but one thing," because commonly that is truth; truth being but one, but error and falsehood infinitely various and changeable: and we shall seldom see a man so stiffened with impiety as to speak little and seldom, and pertinaciously adhere to a single sense, and yet that at first, and all the way after, shall be a lie. Men use to go about when they tell a lie, and devise circumstances, and stand off at distance, and cast a cloud of words, and intricate the whole affair, and cozen themselves first, and then cozen their brother, while they have minced the case of conscience into little particles, and swallowed the lie by crumbs, so that no one passage of it should rush against the conscience, nor do hurt, until it is all got into the belly, and unites in the effect; for by that time two men are abused, the merchant in his soul, and the contractor in his interest: and this is the certain effect of much talking and little honesty. But he that means honestly, must speak but once, that is, one truth,—and hath leave to vary within the degrees of just prices and fair conditions, which because they have a latitude, may be enlarged or restrained according as the merchant pleases; save

[a] Lib. 8. Instit.

[b] Cicero.

only he must never prevaricate the measures of equity, and the proportions of reputation, and the public. But in all the parts of this traffic, let our words be the signification of our thoughts, and our thoughts design nothing but the advantages of a permitted exchange. In this case the severity is so great, so exact, and so without variety of case, that it is not lawful for a man to tell a truth with a collateral design to cozen and abuse; and, therefore, at no hand can it be permitted to lie or equivocate, to speak craftily, or to deceive by smoothness, or intricacy, or long discourses.

But this precept of simplicity in matter of contract, hath one step of severity beyond this: in matter of contract it is not lawful so much as to conceal the secret and undiscernible faults of the merchandise; but we must acknowledge them, or else affix prices made diminutive and lessened to such proportions and abatements as that fault should make. "Caveat emptor" is a good caution for him that buys, and it secures the seller in public judicature, but not in court of conscience; and the old laws of the Romans were as nice in this affair, as the conscience of a christian. Titus Claudius Centumalus[c] was commanded by the augurs to pull down his house in the Cœlian mountain, because it hindered their observation of the flight of birds. He exposes his house to sale; Publius Calphurnius buys it, and is forced to pluck it down; but complaining to the judges he had remedy, because Claudius did not tell him the true state of the inconvenience. He that sells a house infected with the plague, or haunted with evil spirits, sells that which is not worth such a price which it might be put at, if it were in health and peace; and therefore cannot demand it, but openly and upon publication of the evil. To which also this is to be added,—That in some great faults, and such as have danger, (as in the cases now specified,) no diminution of the price is sufficient to make the merchant just and sincere, unless he tells the appendant mischief; because to some persons in many cases, and to all persons in some cases, it is not at all valuable; and they would not possess it, if they might, for nothing. Marcus Gratidianus[d] bought a house of Sergius Orata, which himself had sold before; but because Sergius did not declare the appendant vassalage and service, he was recompensed by the judges: for although it was certain that Gratidianus knew it, because it had been his own, yet "oportuit ex bonâ fide denunciari," said the law; "it concerned the ingenuity of a good man to have spoken it openly." In all cases it must be confessed in the price, or in the words: but when the evil may be personal, and more than matter of interest and money, it ought to be confessed, and then the goods proscribed, lest by my act I do my neighbour injury, and I receive profit by his damage. Certain it is, that ingenuity is the sweetest and easiest way; there is no difficulty or case of conscience in that; and it can have no objection in it, but that possibly sometimes we lose a little advantage, which, it may be, we may lawfully acquire, but still we secure a quiet conscience; and if the merchandise be not worth so much to me, then neither is it to him; if it be to him, it is also to me; and therefore I have no loss, no hurt to keep it, if it be refused. But he that secures his own profit, and regards not the interest of another, is more greedy of a full purse than of a holy conscience, and prefers gain before justice, and the wealth of his private before the necessity of public society and commerce,—being a son of earth, whose centre is itself, without relation to heaven, that moves upon another's point, and produces flowers for others, and sends influence upon all the world, and receives nothing in return but a cloud of perfume, or the smell of a fat sacrifice.

God sent justice into the world, that all conditions, in their several proportions, should be equal; and he that receives a good, should pay one; and he whom I serve, is obliged to feed and to defend me in the same proportions as I serve; and justice is a relative term, and supposes two persons obliged; and though fortunes are unequal, and estates are in majority and subordination, and men are wise or foolish, honoured or despised, yet in the intercourses of justice God hath made that there is no difference. And therefore it was esteemed ignoble to dismiss a servant, when corn was dear; in dangers of shipwreck, to throw out an unprofitable boy, and keep a fair horse; or for a wise man to snatch a plank from a drowning fool; or if the master of the ship should challenge the board, upon which his passenger swims for his life; or to obtrude false monies upon others, which we first took for true, but at last discover to be false; or not to discover the gold, which the merchant sold for alchymy. The reason of all these is, because the collateral advantages are not at all to be considered in matter of rights; and though I am dearest to myself, as my neighbour is to himself, yet it is necessary that I permit him to his own advantages, as I desire to be permitted to mine. Now, therefore, simplicity and ingenuity in all contracts is perfectly and exactly necessary, because its contrary destroys that equality which justice hath placed in the affairs of men, and makes all things private, and makes a man dearer to himself, and to be preferred before kings, and republics, and churches; it destroys society, and it makes multitudes of men to be but like herds of beasts, without proper instruments of exchange, and securities of possession; without faith, and without propriety; concerning all which there is no other account to be given, but that the rewards of craft are but a little money, and a great deal of dishonour, and much suspicion, and proportionable scorn; watches and guards, spies and jealousies, are his portion. But the crown of justice is a fair life, and a clear reputation, and an inheritance there where justice dwells since she left the earth, even "in the kingdom of the Just," who shall call us to "judgment for every word, and render to every man according to his works." And what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when the Lord taketh away his soul? "Tollendum esse ex rebus contrahendis omne mendacium;"[e] that is the

[c] Cicero. [d] Ibid. [e] Cicero.

sum of this rule. "No falsehood or deceit is to be endured in any contract."

5. Christian simplicity hath also its necessity, and passes obligation upon us towards enemies, in questions of law or war. Plutarch commends Lysander and Philopœmen for their craft and subtlety in war; but commends it not as an ornament to their manners, but that which had influence into prosperous events: just as Ammianus affirms, "Nullo discrimine virtutis ac doli, prosperos omnes laudari debere bellorum eventus:" "whatsoever in war is prosperous, men use to commend." But he that is a good soldier, is not always a good man. Callicratidas was a good man, and followed the old way of downright hostility, ἁπλοῦν καὶ γενναῖον τῶν ἡγεμόνων τρόπον. But Lysander was πανοῦργος, καὶ σοφιστὴς ἀπάταις διαποικίλλων τὰ τοῦ πολέμου, "a crafty man, full of plots, but not noble in the conduct of his arms."[f] I remember Euripides brings in Achilles, commending the ingenuity of his breeding, and the simplicity and nobleness of his own heart:

Ἐγὼ δ' ἐξ ἀνδρὸς εὐσεβεστάτου τραφεὶς,
Χείρωνος, ἔμαθον τοὺς τρόπους ἁπλοῦς ἔχειν·

"The good old man, Chiron, was my tutor, and he taught me to use simplicity and honesty in all my manners."[g] It was well and noble.—But yet some wise men do not condemn all soldiers, that use to get victories by deceit: St. Austin allows it to be lawful; and St. Chrysostom commends it.[h] These good men supposed that a crafty victory was better than a bloody war; and certainly so it is, if the power gotten by craft be not exercised in blood. But this business, as to the case of conscience, will quickly be determined. Enemies are no persons bound by contract and society, and therefore are not obliged to open hostilities and ingenuous prosecutions of the war; and if it be lawful to take by violence, it is not unjust to take the same thing by craft. But this is so to be understood, that, where there is an obligation, either by the law of nations or by special contracts, no man dare to violate his faith or honour, but in these things deal with an ingenuity equal to the truth of peaceful promises, and acts of favour, and endearment to our relatives. Josephus tells of the sons of Herod, that in their enmities with their uncle Pheroras, and Salome, they had disagreeing manners of prosecution, as they had disagreeing hearts:[i] some railed openly, and thought their enmity the more honest, because it was not concealed; but, by the ignorance and rude untutored malice, lay open to the close designs of the elder brood of foxes. In this, because it was a particular and private quarrel, there is no rule of conscience, but that it be wholly laid aside, and appeased with charity; for the openness of the quarrel was but the rage and indiscretion of the malice; and the close design was but the craft and advantage of the malice. But in just wars, on that side where a competent authority, and a just cause, warrants the arms, and turns the active opposition into the excuse and license of defence, there is no restraint upon the actions and words of men in the matter of sincerity, but that the laws of nations be strictly pursued, and all parties, promises, and contracts, observed religiously, and by the proportion of a private and christian ingenuity. We find it by wise and good men mentioned, with honour, that the Romans threw bread from the besieged capitol into the stations of the Gauls, that they might think them full of corn; and that Agesilaus discouraged the enemies, by causing his own men to wear crowns, in token of a naval victory gotten by Pisander, who yet was at that time destroyed by Conon; and that Flaccus said the city was taken by Æmilius; and that Joshua dissembled a flight at Ai; and the consul, Quinctius, told aloud that the left wing of the enemies was fled, and that made the right wing fly; and that Valerius Lævinus bragged prudently that he had killed Pyrrhus; and that others use the ensigns of enemies' colours and garments. Concerning which sort of actions and words, Agesilaus, in Plutarch, said, οὐ μόνον τὸ δίκαιον, ἀλλὰ καὶ δόξα πολλὴ, καὶ τὸ μεθ' ἡδονῆς κερδαίνειν ἔνεστι, "It is just and pleasant, profitable and glorious." But to call a parley, and fall in upon the men that treat; to swear a peace, and watch advantage; to entertain heralds, and then to torment them, to get from them notices of their party; these are such actions which are dishonourable and unjust, condemned by the laws of nations, and essential justice, and by all the world. And the Hungarian army was destroyed by a Divine judgment, at the prayer and appeal of the Mahometan enemy, for their violating their faith and honour, and profaning the name of Christ, by using it in a solemn oath to deceive their enemies: Τὸ μὲν σπεισάμενον ἀδικεῖν, τῶν Θεῶν ἐστι καταφρονεῖν· "This is to despise God, when men first swear by him, and then violate their oaths or leagues, their treaties or promises." In other cases liberty hath been taken by all men, and it is reproved by no man, since the first simplicity of fighting and downright blows did cease, by the better instructed people of the world, which was, as is usually computed, about the end of the second Carthaginian war. Since that time, some few persons have been found so noble as to scorn to steal a victory, but had rather have the glory of a sharp sword than of a sharp wit.

But their fighting-gallantry is extrinsical to the question of lawful or unlawful.

6. Thus we see how far the laws of ingenuity and christian simplicity have put fetters upon our words and actions, and directed them in the paths of truth and nobleness: and the first degrees of permission of simulation are in the arts of war, and the cases of just hostility. But here it is usually inquired, Whether it be lawful to tell a lie or dissemble, to save a good man's life, or to do him a great benefit?—a question which St. Austin was much troubled withal, affirming it to be of the greatest difficulty; for he saw, generally, all the doctors before his time allowed it; and of all the fathers, no man is noted to have reproved it but St.

[f] In Lysand.
[g] Iphig. in Aul.
[h] Quæ. 10. super Joshuam, lib. i. de Sacerdotio.
[i] Hist. lib. xvi. c. 6.

Austin alone, and he also, as his manner is, with some variety: those which followed him are to be accounted upon his score. And it relies upon such precedents, which are not lightly to be disallowed. For so Abraham and Isaac told a lie, in the case of their own danger, to Abimelech; so did the Israelitish midwives to Pharaoh, and Rahab concerning the spies, and David to the king of Gath, and the prophet that anointed Saul, and Elisha to Hazael, and Solomon in the sentence of the stolen child; concerning which Irenæus hath given us a rule, That those whose actions the Scripture hath remarked, and yet not chastised or censured, we are not, without great reason and certain rule, to condemn. But whether his rule can extend to this case, is now to be inquired.

1. It is certain that children may be cozened into goodness, and sick men to health, and passengers in a storm into safety; and the reason of these is,—because not only the end is fair, and charitable, and just, but the means are such which do no injury to the persons which are to receive benefit; because there are persons who are, either naturally or accidentally, ignorant and incompetent judges of affairs: and if they be also wilful, as such persons most commonly are, there is in art and nature left no way to deal with them, but with innocent, charitable, and artificial deceptions; they are not capable of reason and solid discourses, and therefore either must be exposed to all harms, like lions' whelps, when their nurse and sire are taken in a toil, or else be provided for in ways proportionable to their capacity.

2. Sinners may not be treated with the liberty we take to children and sick persons, because they must serve God with choice and election; and therefore, although a sick man may be cozened into his health, yet a man must not be cozened into his duty; which is no duty at all, or pleasing to God, unless it be voluntary and chosen; and therefore they are to be treated with arguments proper to move their wills, by the instrument of understanding specially, being persons of perfect faculties, and apt to be moved by the ways of health and of a man. It is an argument of infirmity, that in some cases it is necessary to make pretences; but those pretences are not made legitimate, unless it be by the infirmity of the interested man with whom we do comply. My infirmity cannot make it lawful to make colours and images of things; but the infirmity of him with whom I deal may be such, that he can be defended or instructed no other way. But sinners that offend God by choice, must have their choice corrected, and their understandings instructed, or else their evil is not cured, nor their state amended.

3. For it is here very observable, that in intercourses of this nature we are to regard a double duty—the matter of justice, and the rights of charity; that is, that good be done by lawful instruments: for it is certain it is not lawful to abuse a man's understanding, with a purpose to gain him sixpence; it is not fit to do evil for a good end, or to abuse one man to preserve or do advantage to another. And therefore it is not sufficient that I intend to do good to my neighbour; for I may not therefore tell a lie and abuse his credulity, because his understanding hath a right as certain as his will hath, or as his money; and his right to truth is no more to be cozened and defrauded, than his right unto his money. And therefore such artificial intercourses are nowise to be permitted, but to such persons over whose understandings we have power and authority. Plato said it was lawful for kings and governors to dissemble, because there is great necessity for them so to do; but it was but crudely said, so nakedly to deliver the doctrine: for in such things, which the people cannot understand and yet ought to obey, there is a liberty to use them as we use children, who are of no other condition or capacities than children; but in all things where they can and ought to choose, because their understanding is only a servant to God, no man hath power to abuse their credulity and reason, to preserve their estates and peace. But because children, and mad people, and diseased, are such whose understandings are in minority and under tuition, they are to be governed by their proper instruments and proportions: Τὸ γὰρ ἀγαθὸν κρεῖττόν ἐστι τῆς ἀληθείας, said Proclus; "A good turn is to be preferred before a true saying." It is only true to such persons who cannot value truth, and prefer an intellectual before a material interest. It is better for children to have warm clothes than a true proposition, and therefore, in all senses, they and their like may be so treated; but other persons, who have distinct capacities, have an injury done them by being abused into advantages; and although those advantages make them recompence, yet he that is tied to make a man recompence, hath done him injury, and committed a sin, by which he was obliged to restitution: and therefore the man ought not to be cozened for his own good.

4. And now, upon the grounds of this discourse, we may more easily determine concerning saving the life of a man by telling a lie in judgment. Δεῖ με συμπράττειν τοῖς φίλοις, ἀλλὰ μέχρι Θεῶν, said Pericles of Athens, when his friend desired him to swear on his side; "I will assist my friend, so far as I may not dishonour God." And to lie in judgment is directly against the being of government, the honour of tribunals, and the commandment of God; and therefore by no accident can be hallowed; it is καθ' αὐτὸ φαῦλον καὶ ψεκτὸν, as Aristotle said of a lie, it is "a thing evil in itself;" that is, it is evil in the whole kind, ever since it came to be forbidden by God. And therefore all those instances of crafty and delusive answers which are recorded in Scripture, were extra-judicial, and had not this load upon them, to be deceiving of authority in those things where they had right to command or inquire, and either were before or besides the commandment, not at all against it. And since the law of Moses forbade "lying in judgment" only, by that law we are to judge of those actions in the Old Testament, which were committed after its publication: and because in the sermons of the prophets, and especially in the New Testament, Christ hath superadded or enlarged the law of ingenuity and hearty simplicity, we are to leave the

old Scripture precedents upon the ground of their own permissions, and finish our duty by the rules of our religion: which hath so restrained our words, that they must always be just, and always charitable; and there is no leave given to prevaricate, but to such persons where there can be no obligation, persons that have no right, such with whom no contract can be made, such as children, and fools, and infirm persons, whose faculties are hindered or depraved. I remember that Secundus extremely commends Arria for deluding her husband's fears concerning the death of his beloved boy. She wiped her eyes, and came in confidently, and sat by her husband's bed-side; and when she could no longer forbear to weep, her husband's sickness was excuse enough to legitimate that sorrow, or else she could retire; but so long she forbore to confess the boy's death, till Cæcinna Pætus had so far recovered, that he could go forth to see the boy, and need not fear with sorrow to return to his disease. It was, indeed, a great kindness and rare prudence, as their affairs and laws were ordered; but we have better means to cure our sick; our religion can charm the passion, and enable the spirit to entertain and master a sorrow. And when we have such rare supplies out of the storehouses of reason and religion, we have less reason to use these arts and little devices, which are arguments of an infirmity as great as is the charity; and therefore we are to keep ourselves strictly to the foregoing measures. "Let every man speak the truth to his neighbour, putting away lying, for we are members one of another;"[k] and, "Be as harmless as doves," saith our blessed Saviour in my text; which contain the whole duty concerning the matter of truth and sincerity. In both which places, truth and simplicity are founded upon justice and charity; and, therefore, wherever a lie is in any sense against justice, and wrongs any man of a thing, his judgment and his reason, his right or his liberty, it is expressly forbidden in the christian religion. What cases we can truly suppose to be besides these, the law forbids not; and therefore it is lawful to say that to myself which I believe not, for what innocent purpose I please, and to all those over whose understanding I have, or ought to have, right.

These cases are intricate enough; and therefore I shall return plainly to press the doctrine of simplicity, which ought to be so sacred, that a man ought to do nothing indirectly, which it is not lawful to own; to receive no advantage by the sin of another, which I should account dishonest, if the action were my own; for whatsoever disputes may be concerning the lawfulness of pretending craftily in some rare and contingent cases, yet it is on all hands condemned, that my craft should do injury to my brother. I remember, that when some greedy and indigent people forged a will of Lucius Minutius Basilius, and joined M. Crassus and Q. Hortensius in the inheritance, that their power for their own interest might secure the others' share; they suspecting the thing to be a forgery, yet being not principals and actors in the contrivance, "alieni facinoris munusculum non repudiaverunt," "refused not to receive a present made them by another's crime;"[l] but so they entered upon a moiety of the estate, and the biggest share of the dishonour. We must not be crafty to another's injury, so much as by giving countenance to the wrong; for tortoises and the ostrich hatch their eggs with their looks only; and some have designs which a dissembling face, or an acted gesture, can produce: but as a man may commit adultery with his eye, so with his eye also he may tell a lie, and steal with one finger, and do injury collaterally, and yet design it with a direct intuition, upon which he looks with his face over his shoulder; and by whatsoever instrument my neighbour may be abused, by the same instrument I sin, if I do design it antecedently, or fall upon it together with something else, or rejoice in it when it is done.

7. One thing more I am to add, that it is not lawful to tell a lie in jest. It was a virtue noted in Aristides and Epaminondas, that they would not lie, οὐδ' ἐν παιδιᾶς τινὶ τρόπῳ, "not in sport." And as christian simplicity forbids all lying in matter of interest and serious rights; so there is an appendix to this precept, forbidding to lie in mirth; for "of every idle word a man shall speak, he shall give account in the day of judgment." And such are the "jestings" which St. Paul reckons amongst "things uncomely." But among these, fables, apologues, parables, or figures of rhetoric, and any artificial instrument of instruction or innocent pleasure, are not to be reckoned. But he that, without any end of charity or institution, shall tell lies only to become ridiculous in himself, or mock another, hath set something upon his doomsday book, which must be taken off by water or by fire, that is, by repentance or a judgment.

Nothing is easier than simplicity and ingenuity; it is open and ready without trouble and artificial cares, fit for communities and the proper virtue of men, the necessary appendage of useful speech, without which language were given to men as nails and teeth to lions, for nothing but to do mischief. It is a rare instrument of institution, and a certain token of courage; the companion of goodness and a noble mind; the preserver of friendship, the band of society, the security of merchants, and the blessing of trade; it prevents infinite of quarrels, and appeals to judges, and suffers none of the evils of jealousy. Men, by simplicity, converse as do the angels; they do their own work, and secure their proper interest, and serve the public, and do glory to God. But hypocrites, and liars, and dissemblers, spread darkness over the face of affairs, and make men like the blind, to walk softly and timorously; and crafty men, like the close air, suck that which is open, and devour its portion and destroy its liberty; and it is the guise of devils, and the dishonour of the soul, and the canker of society, and the enemy of justice, and truth, and peace, of wealth and honour, of courage and merchandise. He is a good man with whom a blind man may safely converse: "dignus quîcum in tenebris mices,"[m] to

[k] Ephes. iv. 25.

[l] Cicero.

[m] Cicero.

whom, in respect of his fair treatings, the darkness and light are both alike; but he that bears light upon the face with a dark heart, is like him that transforms himself into an angel of light when he means to do most mischief. Remember this only; that false colours laid upon the face besmear the skin and dirty it, but they neither make a beauty nor mend it.—"For without shall be dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."[n]

SERMON XXV.

THE MIRACLES OF THE DIVINE MERCY.

PART I.

For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy to all them that call upon thee. —Psal. lxxxvi. 5.

MAN having destroyed that which God delighted in, that is, the beauty of his soul, fell into an evil portion, and being seized upon by the Divine justice, grew miserable, and condemned to an incurable sorrow. Poor Adam, being banished and undone, went and lived a sad life in the mountains of India, and turned his face and his prayers towards Paradise; thither he sent his sighs, to that place he directed his devotions, there was his heart now, where his felicity sometimes had been; but he knew not how to return thither, for God was his enemy, and, by many of his attributes, opposed himself against him. God's power was armed against him; and poor man, whom a fly or a fish could kill, was assaulted and beaten with a sword of fire in the hand of a cherubim. God's eye watched him, his omniscience was man's accuser, his severity was the judge, his justice the executioner. It was a mighty calamity that man was to undergo, when he that made him armed himself against his creature, which would have died or turned to nothing, if he had but withdrawn the miracles and the almightiness of his power; if God had taken his arm from under him, man had perished. But it was, therefore, a greater evil when God laid his arm upon him and against him, and seemed to support him that he might be longer killing him. In the midst of these sadnesses, God remembered his own creature, and pitied it; and, by his mercy, rescued him from the hand of his power, and the sword of his justice, and the guilt of his punishment, and the disorder of his sin; and placed him in that order of good things where he ought to have stood. It was mercy that preserved the noblest of God's creatures here below; he who stood condemned and undone under all the other attributes of God, was only saved and rescued by his mercy; that it may be evident that God's mercy is above all his works, and above all ours, greater than the creation, and greater than our sins. As is his majesty, so is his mercy, that is, without measures and without rules, sitting in heaven and filling all the world, calling for a duty that he may give a blessing, making man that he may save him, punishing him that he may preserve him. And God's justice bowed down to his mercy, and all his power passed into mercy, and his omniscience converted into care and watchfulness, into providence and observation for man's avail; and Heaven gave its influence for man, and rained showers for our food and drink; and the attributes and acts of God sat at the foot of mercy, and all that mercy descended upon the head of man. For so the light of the world in the morning of the creation was spread abroad like a curtain, and dwelt no where, but filled the "expansum" with a dissemination great as the unfoldings of the air's looser garment, or the wilder fringes of the fire, without knots, or order, or combination; but God gathered the beams in his hand, and united them into a globe of fire, and all the light of the world became the body of the sun; and he lent some to his weaker sister that walks in the night, and guides a traveller, and teaches him to distinguish a house from a river, or a rock from a plain field. So is the mercy of God, a vast "expansum," and a huge ocean; from eternal ages it dwelt round about the throne of God, and it filled all that infinite distance and space, that hath no measures but the will of God: until God, desiring to communicate that excellency and make it relative, created angels, that he might have persons capable of huge gifts; and man, who he knew would need forgiveness. For so the angels, our elder brothers, dwelt for ever in the house of their Father, and never brake his commandments; but we, the younger, like prodigals, forsook our Father's house, and went into a strange country, and followed stranger courses, and spent the portion of our nature, and forfeited all our title to the family, and came to need another portion. For, ever since the fall of Adam,—who, like an unfortunate man, spent all that a wretched man could need, or a happy man could have,—our life is repentance, and forgiveness is all our portion: and though angels were objects of God's bounty, yet man only is, in proper speaking, the object of his mercy: and the mercy which dwelt in an infinite circle, became confined to a little ring, and dwelt here below; and here shall dwell below, till it hath carried all God's portion up to heaven, where it shall reign in glory, upon our crowned heads for ever and ever!

But for him that considers God's mercies, and dwells awhile in that depth, it is hard not to talk widely, and without art and order of discoursings. St. Peter talked he knew not what, when he entered into a cloud with Jesus upon mount Tabor, though it passed over him like the little curtains that ride upon the north wind, and pass between the sun and us. And when we converse with a light greater than the sun, and taste a sweetness more delicious than the dew of heaven, and in our thoughts entertain the ravishments and harmony of that atonement, which reconciles God to man, and man to felicity,

[n] Apocal. xxii. 15.

—it will be more easily pardoned, if we should be like persons that admire much, and say but little; and indeed we can best confess the glories of the Lord by dazzled eyes, and a stammering tongue, and a heart overcharged with the miracles of this infinity. For so those little drops that run over, though they be not much in themselves, yet they tell that the vessel was full, and could express the greatness of the shower no otherwise but by spilling, and in artificial expressions and runnings over. But because I have undertaken to tell the drops of the ocean, and to span the measures of eternity, I must do it by the great lines of revelation and experience, and tell concerning God's mercy as we do concerning God himself, that he is that great fountain of which we all drink, and the great rock of which we all eat, and on which we all dwell, and under whose shadow we all are refreshed. God's mercy is all this; and we can only draw the great lines of it, and reckon the constellations of our hemisphere, instead of telling the number of the stars; we only can reckon what we feel and what we live by: and though there be, in every one of these lines of life, enough to engage us for ever to do God service and to give him praises; yet it is certain there are very many mercies of God upon us, and towards us, and concerning us, which we neither feel, nor see, nor understand as yet; but yet we are blessed by them, and are preserved and secure, and we shall then know them, when we come to give God thanks in the festivities of an eternal sabbath. But that I may confine my discourse into order, since the subject of it cannot, I consider,

1. That mercy, being an emanation of the Divine goodness upon us, supposes us and found us miserable. In this account concerning the mercies of God, I must not reckon the miracles and graces of the creation, or any thing of the nature of man, nor tell how great an endearment God passed upon us that he made us men, capable of felicity, apted with rare instruments of discourse and reason, passions and desires, notices of sense, and reflections upon that sense; that we have not the deformity of a crocodile, nor the motion of a worm, nor the hunger of a wolf, nor the wildness of a tiger, nor the birth of vipers, nor the life of flies, nor the death of serpents.

Our excellent bodies and useful faculties, the upright motion and the tenacious hand, the fair appetites and proportioned satisfactions, our speech and our perceptions, our acts of life, the rare invention of letters, and the use of writing, and speaking at distance, the intervals of rest and labour, (either of which, if they were perpetual, would be intolerable,) the needs of nature and the provisions of providence, sleep and business, refreshments of the body and entertainments of the soul; these are to be reckoned as acts of bounty rather than mercy: God gave us these when he made us, and before we needed mercy; these were portions of our nature, or provided to supply our consequent necessities: but when we forfeited all God's favour by our sins, then that they were continued or restored to us became a mercy, and therefore ought to be reckoned upon this new account. For it was a rare mercy that we were suffered to live at all, or that the anger of God did permit to us one blessing, that he did punish us so gently: but when the rack is changed into an axe, and the axe into an imprisonment, and the imprisonment changed into an enlargement, and the enlargement into an entertainment in the family, and this entertainment passes on to an adoption: these are steps of a mighty favour, and perfect redemption from our sin: and the returning back our own goods is a gift, and a perfect donative, sweetened by the apprehensions of the calamity from whence every lesser punishment began to free us. And thus it was that God punished us, and visited the sin of Adam upon his posterity. He threatened we should die, and so we did, but not so as we deserved: we waited for death, and stood sentenced, and are daily summoned by sicknesses and uneasiness; and every day is a new reprieve, and brings a new favour, certain as the revolution of the sun upon that day; and at last, when we must die by the irreversible decree, that death is changed into a sleep, and that sleep is in the bosom of Christ, and there dwells all peace and security, and it shall pass forth into glories and felicities. We looked for a judge, and behold a Saviour! we feared an accuser, and behold an Advocate! we sat down in sorrow, and rise in joy: we leaned upon rhubarb and aloes, and our aprons were made of the sharp leaves of Indian fig-trees, and so we fed, and so were clothed; but the rhubarb proved medicinal, and the rough leaf of the tree brought its fruit wrapped up in its foldings: and round about our dwellings was planted a hedge of thorns and bundles of thistles, the aconite and the briony, the nightshade and the poppy; and at the root of these grew the healing plantain, which, rising up into a tallness, by the friendly invitation of heavenly influence, turned about the tree of the cross, and cured the wounds of the thorns, and the curse of the thistles, and the malediction of man, and the wrath of God. "Si sic irascitur, quomodo convivatur?" "If God be thus kind when he is angry, what is he when he feasts us with caresses of his more tender kindness?" All that God restored to us after the forfeiture of Adam, grew to be a double kindness; for it became the expression of a bounty which knew not how to repent, a graciousness that was not to be altered, though we were; and that was it which we needed. That is the first general: all the bounties of the creation became mercies to us, when God continued them to us, and restored them after they were forfeit.

2. But as a circle begins every where and ends no where, so do the mercies of God: after all this huge progress, now it began anew: "God is good and gracious," and "God is ready to forgive." Now, that he had once more made us capable of mercies, God had what he desired, and what he could rejoice in, something upon which he might pour forth his mercies. And, by the way, this I shall observe, (for I cannot but speak without art, when I speak of that which hath no measure,) God made us capable of one sort of his mercies, and we made

ourselves capable of another. "God is good and gracious," that is, desirous to give great gifts: and of this God made us receptive, first, by giving us natural possibilities,—that is, by giving those gifts, he made us capable of more; and next, by restoring us to his favour, that he might not, by our provocations, be hindered from raining down his mercies. But God i also "ready to forgive:" and of this kind of mercy we made ourselves capable, even by not deserving it. Our sin made way for his grace, and our infirmities called upon his pity; and because we sinned we became miserable, and because we were miserable we became pitiable; and this opened the other treasure of his mercy; that because our "sin abounds," his "grace may superabound." In this method we must confine our thoughts:

1. Giving. } Thou, Lord, art good, } plenteous in mercy to all
2. Forgiving. } and ready to forgive, } them that call upon thee.

3. God's mercies, or the mercies of his giving, came first upon us by mending of our nature: for the ignorance we fell into, is instructed, and better learned in spiritual notices, than Adam's morning knowledge in Paradise; our appetites are made subordinate to the Spirit, and the liberty of our wills is improved, having "the liberty of the sons of God;" and Christ hath done us more grace and advantage than we lost in Adam: and as man lost Paradise, and got heaven; so he lost the integrity of the first, and got the perfection of the second Adam: his "living soul" is changed into "a quickening spirit;" our discerning faculties are filled with the spirit of faith, and our passions and desires are entertained with hope, and our election is sanctified with charity, and our first life of a temporal possession is passed into a better, a life of spiritual expectations; and, though our first parent was forbidden it, yet we live of the fruits of the tree of life. But I instance in two great things, in which human nature is greatly advanced, and passed on to greater perfections. The first is, that besides body and soul, which was the sum total of Adam's constitution, God hath superadded to us a third principle, the beginner of a better life, I mean, the Spirit:[a] so that now man hath a spiritual and celestial nature breathed into him, and the old man, that is, the old constitution, is the least part, and in its proper operation is dead, or dying; but the new man is that which gives denomination, life, motion, and proper actions to a christian, and that is renewed in us day by day.—But, secondly, human nature is so highly exalted and mended by that mercy, which God sent immediately upon the fall of Adam, the promise of Christ, that when he did come, and actuate the purposes of this mission, and ascended up into heaven, he carried human nature above the seats of angels, to the place whither "Lucifer, the son of the morning," aspired to ascend, but in his attempt fell into hell. For (so said the prophet) the son of the morning said, "I will ascend into heaven, and sit in the sides of the north," that is, the throne of Jesus seated in the east, called the sides or obliquity of the north. And as the seating of his human nature in that glorious seat brought to him all adoration, and the majesty of God, and the greatest of his exaltation; so it was so great an advancement to us, that all the angels of heaven take notice of it, and feel a change in the appendage of their condition; not that they are lessened, but that we, who in nature are less than angels, have a relative dignity greater, and an equal honour of being fellow-servants. This mystery is plain in Scripture, and the real effect of it we read in both the Testaments. When Manoah, the father of Samson, saw an angel, he worshipped him;[b] and, in the Old Testament, it was esteemed lawful; for they were the lieutenants of God, sent with the impresses of his majesty, and took in his name the homage from us, who then were so much their inferiors. But when the man Christ Jesus was exalted, and made the Lord of all the angels, then they became our fellow-servants, and might not receive worship from any of the servants of Jesus, especially from prophets and martyrs, and those that are ministers of "the testimony of Jesus." And, therefore, when an angel appeared to St. John, and he, according to the custom of the Jews, fell down and worshipped him, as not yet knowing, or not considering any thing to the contrary; the angel reproved him, saying, "See thou do it not; I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God;"[c] or, as St. Cyprian[d] reads it, "worship *Jesus*." God and man are now only capable of worship; but no angel: God, essentially; man, in the person of Christ, and in the exaltation of our great Redeemer: but angels not so high, and, therefore, not capable of any religious worship. And this dignity of man St. Gregory explicates fully:[e] "Quid est, quod, ante Redemptoris adventum, adorantur ab hominibus [angeli] et tacent, postmodum verò adorari refugiunt?" "Why did the angels of old receive worshippings, and were silent; but, in the New Testament, decline it, and fear to accept it?" "Nisi quòd naturam nostram, quam priùs despexerant, postquam hanc super se assumptam aspiciunt, prostratam sibi videri pertimescunt; nec jam sub se velut infirmam contemnere ausi sunt, quam super se, viz. in cœli Rege, venerantur:" "The reason is because they, seeing our nature, which they did so lightly value, raised up above them, they fear to see it humbled under them; neither do they any more despise the weakness, which themselves worship in the King of heaven." The same also is the sense of the gloss of St. Ambrose, Ansbertus, Haymo, Rupertus, and others of old; and Ribera, Salmeron, and Lewis of Granada of late: which being so plainly consonant to the words of the angel, and consigned by the testimony of such men, I the rather note, that those who worship angels, and make religious addresses to them, may see what privilege themselves lose, and how they part with the honour of Christ, who in his nature relative to us is "exalted far above all thrones, and principalities, and dominions." I need not add lustre to this: it is like the sun, the biggest body of light, and nothing can describe it so well as its own beams: and there

[a] Vide Sermon II. [b] Judges xiii. [c] Rev. xxii. 9. [d] De Bono Patientiæ. [e] Homil. 8. in Evangel.

is not in nature, or the advantages of honour, any thing greater, than that we have the issues of that mercy which makes us fellow-servants with angels, too much honoured to pay them a religious worship, whose Lord is a man, and he that is their King is our Brother.

4. To this, for the likeness of the matter, I add, that the Divine mercy hath so prosecuted us with the enlargement of his favours, that we are not only fellow-ministers and servants with the angels, and, in our nature in the person of Christ, exalted above them; but we also shall be their judges. And if this be not an honour above that of Joseph or Mordecai, an honour beyond all the measures of a man, then there are in honour no degrees, no priority or distances, or characters of fame and nobleness. Christ is the great Judge of all the world; his human nature shall then triumph over evil men and evil spirits; then shall the devils, those angels that fell from their first originals, be brought in their chains from their dark prisons, and once be allowed to see the light, that light that shall confound them; while all that follow the Lamb, and that are accounted worthy of that resurrection, shall be assessors in the judgment. "Know ye not," saith St. Paul, "that ye shall judge angels?" [f] And Tertullian, speaking concerning devils and accursed spirits, saith; "Hi sunt angeli quos judicaturi sumus; hi sunt angeli quibus in lavacro renunciavimus:" "Those angels which we renounced in baptism, those we shall judge in the day of the Lord's glory, in the great day of recompences." [g] And that the honour may be yet greater, the same day of sentence that condemns the evil angels, shall also reward the good, and increase their glory: which because they derive from their Lord and ours, from their King and our elder Brother, "the King of glories," whose glorious hands shall put the crown upon all our heads, we, who shall be servants of that judgment, and some way or other assist in it, have a part of that honour, to be judges of all angels, and of all the world. The effect of these things ought to be this, that we do not by base actions dishonour that nature, that sits upon the throne of God, that reigns over angels, that shall sit in judgment upon all the world. It is a great indecency that the son of a king should bear water upon his head, and dress vineyards among the slaves; or to see a wise man, and the guide of his country, drink drunk among the meanest of his servants; but when members of Christ shall be made members of a harlot, and that which rides above a rainbow stoops to an imperious, whorish woman; when the soul, that is sister to the Lord of angels, shall degenerate into the foolishness or rage of a beast, being drowned with the blood of the grape, or made mad with passion, or ridiculous with weaker follies; we shall but strip ourselves of that robe of honour, with which Christ hath invested and adorned our nature; and carry that portion of humanity which is our own, and which God hath honoured in some capacities above angels, into a portion of an eternal shame, and become less in all senses, and equally disgraced with devils. The shame and sting of this change shall be, that we turned the glories of the Divine mercy into the baseness of ingratitude, and the amazement of suffering the Divine vengeance. But I pass on.

5. The next order of Divine mercies that I shall remark, is also an improvement of our nature, or an appendage to it. For, whereas our constitution is weak, our souls apt to diminution and impedite faculties, our bodies to mutilation and imperfection, to blindness and crookedness, to stammering and sorrows, to baldness and deformity, to evil conditions and accidents of body, and to passions and sadness of spirit; God hath, in his infinite mercy, provided for every condition rare suppletories of comfort and usefulness, to make recompence, and sometimes with an overrunning proportion, for those natural defects, which were apt to make our persons otherwise contemptible, and our conditions intolerable. God gives to blind men better memories. For upon this account it is that Ruffinus makes mention of Didymus of Alexandria, who, being blind, was blest with a rare attention and singular memory, and by prayer, and hearing, and discoursing, came to be one of the most excellent divines of that whole age. And it was more remarkable in Nicasius Mechliniensis, who, being blockish at his book, in his first childhood fell into accidental blindness, and from thence continually grew to so quick an apprehension and so tenacious a memory, that he became the wonder of his contemporaries, and was chosen rector of the college at Mechlin, and was made licentiate of theology at Louvain, and doctor of both the laws at Cologne, living and dying in great reputation for his rare parts and excellent learning. At the same rate also God deals with men in other instances: want of children he recompences with freedom from care; and whatsoever evil happens to the body is therefore most commonly single and unaccompanied, because God accepts that evil as the punishment of the sin of the man, or the instrument of his virtue or his security, and it is reckoned as a sufficient antidote. God hath laid a severe law upon all women, that "in sorrow they shall bring forth children:" yet God hath so attempered that sorrow, that they think themselves more accursed if they want that sorrow; and they have reason to rejoice in that state, the trouble of which is alleviated by a promise, that "they shall be saved in bearing children." He that wants one eye, hath the force and vigorousness of both united in that which is left him: and whenever any man is afflicted with sorrow, his reason and his religion, himself and all his friends, persons that are civil and persons that are obliged, run in to comfort him; and he may, if he will observe wisely, find so many circumstances of ease and remission, so many designs of providence and studied favours, such contrivances of collateral advantage, and certain reserves of substantial and proper comfort, that in the whole sum of affairs it often happens, that a single cross is a double blessing, and that even in a temporal sense "it is better to go to the house of mourning" than of joys and festival egressions. Is not the

[f] 1 Cor. vi. 3. [g] De Cult. Fœmin.

affliction of poverty better than the prosperity of a great and tempting fortune? Does not wisdom dwell in a mean estate and low spirit, retired thoughts, and under a sad roof! And is it not generally true, that sickness itself is appayed with religion and holy thoughts, with pious resolutions and penitential prayers, with returns to God and to sober counsels? And if this be true, that Gods sends sorrow to cure sin, and affliction be the handmaid to grace; it is also certain, that every sad contingency in nature is doubly recompensed with the advantages of religion, besides those intervening refreshments which support the spirit, and refresh its instruments. I shall need to instance but once more in this particular.

God hath sent no greater evil into the world, than that "in the sweat of our brows we shall eat our bread;" and in the difficulty and agony, in the sorrows and contention of our souls, we shall "work out our salvation." But see how in the first of these God hath outdone his own anger, and defeated the purposes of his wrath, by the inundation of his mercy; for this labour and sweat of our brows is so far from being a curse, that without it our very bread would not be so great a blessing. Is it not labour that makes the garlick and the pulse, the sycamore and the cresses, the cheese of the goats and the butter of the sheep, to be savoury and pleasant as the flesh of the roebuck, or the milk of the kine, the marrow of oxen, or the thighs of birds? If it were not for labour, men neither could eat so much, nor relish so pleasantly, nor sleep so soundly, nor be so healthful nor so useful, so strong nor so patient, so noble nor so untempted. And as God hath made us beholden to labour for the purchase of many good things, so the thing itself owes to labour many degrees of its worth and value. And, therefore, I need not reckon, that, besides these advantages, the mercies of God have found out proper and natural remedies for labour; nights to cure the sweat of the day,—sleep to ease our watchfulness,—rest to alleviate our burdens,—and days of religion to procure our rest: and things are so ordered, that labour is become a duty, and an act of many virtues, and is not so apt to turn into a sin as its contrary; and is therefore necessary, not only because we need it for making provisions for our life, but even to ease the labour of our rest; there being no greater tediousness of spirit in the world than want of employment, and an inactive life: and the lazy man is not only unprofitable, but also accursed, and he groans under the load of his time; which yet passes over the active man light as a dream, or the feathers of a bird; while the unemployed is a disease, and like a long sleepless night to himself, and a load unto his country. And therefore, although, in this particular, God hath been so merciful in this infliction, that from the sharpness of the curse a very great part of mankind are freed, and there are myriads of people, good and bad, who do not "eat their bread in the sweat of their brows;" yet this is but an overrunning and an excess of the Divine mercy; God did more for us than we did absolutely need: for he hath so disposed of the circumstances of this curse, that man's affections are so reconciled to it, that they desire it, and are delighted in it; and so the anger of God is ended in loving-kindness, and the drop of water is lost in the full chalice of the wine, and the curse is gone out into a multiplied blessing.

But then for the other part of the severe law and laborious imposition, that we must work out our spiritual interest with the labours of our spirit, seems to most men to be so intolerable, that, rather than pass under it, they quit their hopes of heaven, and pass into the portion of devils. And what can there be to alleviate this sorrow, that a man shall be perpetually solicited with an impure tempter, and shall carry a flame within him, and all the world is on fire round about him, and every thing brings fuel to the flame, and full tables are a snare, and empty tables are collateral servants to a lust, and help to blow the fire and kindle the heap of prepared temptations; and yet a man must not at all taste of the forbidden fruit, and he must not desire what he cannot choose but desire, and he must not enjoy whatsoever he does violently covet, and must never satisfy his appetite in the most violent importunities, but must therefore deny himself, because to do so is extremely troublesome? This seems to be an art of torture, and a device to punish man with the spirit of agony, and a restless vexation. But this also hath in it a great ingredient of mercy, or rather is nothing else but a heap of mercy in its entire constitution. For, if it were not for this, we had nothing of our own to present to God, nothing proportionable to the great rewards of heaven, but either all men, or no man, must go thither; for nothing can distinguish man from man, in order to beatitude, but choice and election; and nothing can ennoble the choice but love, and nothing can exercise love but difficulty, and nothing can make that difficulty but the contradiction of our appetite, and the crossing of our natural affections. And, therefore, whenever any of you are tempted violently, or grow weary in your spirits with resisting the petulancy of temptation, you may be cured, if you will please but to remember and rejoice, that now you have something of your own to give to God, something that he will be pleased to accept, something that he hath given thee that thou mayest give it him: for our money and our time, our days of feasting and our days of sorrow, our discourse and our acts of praise, our prayers and our songs, our vows and our offerings, our worshippings and protestations, and whatsoever else can be accounted in the sum of our religion, are only accepted according as they bear along with them portions of our will, and choice of love, and appendant difficulty.

Lætius est quoties magno tibi constat honestum.

So that whoever can complain that he serves God with pains and mortifications, he is troubled because there is a distinction of things such as we call virtue and vice, reward and punishment; and, if we will not suffer God to distinguish the first, he will certainly confound the latter; and his portion shall be blackness without variety, and punishment shall be his reward.

6. As an appendage to this instance of Divine

mercy, we are to account that, not only in nature, but in contingency and emergent events of providence, God makes compensation to us for all the evils of chance and hostilities of accident, and brings good out of evil; which is that solemn triumph which mercy makes over justice, when it rides upon a cloud, and crowns its darkness with a robe of glorious light. God indeed suffered Joseph to be sold a bond-slave into Egypt, but then it was that God intended to crown and reward his chastity; for by that means he brought him to a fair condition of dwelling, and there gave him a noble trial; he had a brave contention, and he was a conqueror. Then God sent him to prison; but still that was mercy; it was to make way to bring him to Pharaoh's court. And God brought famine upon Canaan, and troubled all the souls of Jacob's family: and there was a plot laid for another mercy; this was to bring them to see and partake of Joseph's glory. And then God brought a great evil upon their posterity, and they groaned under taskmasters; but this God changed into the miracles of his mercy, and suffered them to be afflicted that he might do ten miracles for their sakes, and proclaim to all the world how dear they were to God. And was not the greatest good to mankind brought forth from the greatest treason that ever was committed,—the redemption of the world, from the fact of Judas? God loving to defeat the malice of man and the arts of the devil by rare emergencies and stratagems of mercy. It is a sad calamity to see a kingdom spoiled, and a church afflicted; the priests slain with the sword, and the blood of nobles mingled with cheaper sand; religion made a cause of trouble, and the best men most cruelly persecuted; government confounded, and laws ashamed; judges decreeing causes in fear and covetousness, and the ministers of holy things setting themselves against all that is sacred, and setting fire upon the fields, and turning in "little foxes" on purpose to "destroy the vineyards." And what shall make recompence for this heap of sorrows, whenever God shall send such swords of fire? Even the mercies of God, which then will be made public, when we shall hear such afflicted people sing, "In convertendo captivitatem Sion," with the voice of joy and festival eucharist, "among such as keep holy day;" and when peace shall become sweeter, and dwell the longer. And in the mean time it serves religion, and the affliction shall try the children of God, and God shall crown them, and men shall grow wiser and more holy, and leave their petty interests, and take sanctuary in holy living, and be taught temperance by their want, and patience by their suffering, and charity by their persecution, and shall better understand the duty of their relations; and, at last, the secret worm that lay at the root of the plant, shall be drawn forth and quite extinguished. For so have I known a luxuriant vine swell into irregular twigs and bold excrescences, and spend itself in leaves and little rings, and afford but trifling clusters to the wine-press, and a faint return to his heart, which longed to be refreshed with a full vintage: but when the lord of the vine had caused the dressers to cut the wilder plant, and made it bleed, it grew temperate in its vain expense of useless leaves, and knotted into fair and juicy bunches, and made accounts of that loss of blood by the return of fruit. So is an afflicted province cured of its surfeits, and punished for its sins, and bleeds for its long riot, and is left ungoverned for its disobedience, and chastised for its wantonness; and when the sword hath let forth the corrupted blood, and the fire hath purged the rest, then it enters into the double joys of restitution, and gives God thanks for his rod, and confesses the mercies of the Lord in making the smoke to be changed into fire, and the cloud into a perfume, the sword into a staff, and his anger into mercy.

Had not David suffered more, if he had suffered less? and had he not been miserable, unless he had been afflicted? He understood it well, when he said, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." He that was rival to Crassus when he stood candidate to command the legions in the Parthian war, was much troubled that he missed the dignity; but he saw himself blest that he escaped the death, and the dishonour of the overthrow, by that time the sad news arrived at Rome. The gentleman at Marseilles cursed his stars, that he was absent when the ship set sail to sea, having long waited for a wind, and missed it; but he gave thanks to the Providence that blessed him with the cross, when he knew that the ship perished in the voyage, and all the men were drowned. And even those virgins and barren women in Jerusalem that longed to become glad mothers, and for want of children would not be comforted, yet, when Titus sacked the city, found the words of Jesus true, "Blessed is the womb that never bare, and the paps that never gave suck." And the world being governed with a rare variety, and changes of accidents and providence; that which is a misfortune in the particular, in the whole order of things becomes a blessing bigger than we hoped for, then when we were angry with God for hindering us to perish in pleasant ways, or when he was contriving to pour upon thy head a mighty blessing. Do not think the judge condemns you, when he chides you; nor think to read thy own final sentence by the first half of his words. Stand still, and see how it will be in the whole event of things: let God speak his mind out; for it may be this sad beginning is but an art to bring in, or to make thee to esteem, and entertain, and understand the blessing.

They that love to talk of the mercies of the Lord, and to recount his good things, cannot but have observed that God delights to be called by such appellatives, which relate to miserable and afflicted persons: he is "the Father of the fatherless, and an "Avenger of the widow's cause;" he standeth at the right hand of the poor, to save his soul from unrighteous judges;" and "he is with us in tribulation." And upon this ground let us account whether mercy be not the greater ingredient in that death and deprivation, when I lose a man, and get God to be my Father; and when my weak arm of flesh is cut from my shoulder, and God makes me to lean upon him, and becomes my Patron and my

Guide, my Advocate and Defender. And if, in our greatest misery, God's mercy is so conspicuous, what can we suppose him to be in the endearment of his loving-kindness? If his evil be so transparent, well may we know that upon his face dwells glory, and from his eyes light and perpetual comforts run in channels larger than the returns of the sea, when it is driven and forced faster into its natural course by the violence of a tempest from the north. The sum is this: God intends every accident should minister to virtue, and every virtue is the mother and the nurse of joy, and both of them daughters of the Divine goodness; and therefore, if our sorrows do not pass into comforts, it is beside God's intention; it is because we will not comply with the act of that mercy, which would save us by all means and all varieties, by health and by sickness, by the life and by the death of our dearest friends, by what we choose, and by what we fear; that as God's providence rules over all chances of things and all designs of men, so his mercy may rule over all his providence.

SERMON XXVI.

PART II.

7. God having, by these means, secured us from the evils of nature and contingencies, and represented himself to be our Father, which is the great endearment and tie, and expression of a natural, unalterable, and essential kindness; he next makes provisions for us to supply all those necessities which himself hath made. For even to make necessities was a great circumstance of the mercy; and all the relishes of wine, and the savouriness of meat, the sweet and the fat, the pleasure and the satisfaction, the restitution of spirits and the strengthening of the heart, are not owing to the liver of the vine or the kidneys of wheat, to the blood of the grape or the strength of the corn, but to the appetite or the necessity: and therefore it is, that he,—that sits at a full table, and does not recreate his stomach with fasting, and let his digestion rest, and place himself in the advantages of nature's intervals;—he loses the blessing of his daily bread, and leans upon his table as a sick man upon his bed, or the lion in the grass, which he cannot feed on: but he that wants it, and sits down when nature gives the sign, rejoices in the health of his hunger, and the taste of his meat, and the strengthening of his spirit, and gives God thanks, while his bones and his flesh rejoice in the provisions of nature and the blessing of God. Are not the imperfections of infancy and the decays of old age the evils of our nature, because respectively they want desire, and they want gust and relish, and reflections upon their acts of sense? and "when desire fails, presently the mourners go about the streets."[a]

[a] Eccles. xii

But then, that those desires are so provided for by nature and art, by ordinary and extraordinary, by foresight and contingency, according to necessity and up unto convenience, until we arrive at abundance, is a chain of mercies larger than the bow in the clouds, and richer than the trees of Eden, which were permitted to feed our miserable father. Is not all the earth our orchard and our granary, our vineyard and our garden of pleasure? and the face of the sea is our traffic, and the bowels of the sea is our vivarium, a place for fish to feed us, and to serve some other collateral appendant needs; and all the face of heaven is a repository for influences and breath, fruitful showers and fair refreshments. And when God made provision for his other creatures, he gave it of one kind, and with variety no greater than the changes of day and night, one devouring the other, or sitting down with his draught of blood, or walking upon his portion of grass: but man hath all the food of beasts, and all the beasts themselves that are fit for food, and the food of angels, and the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth: and every part of his body hath a provision made for it: and the smoothness of the olive and the juice of the vine refresh the heart and make the face cheerful, and serve the ends of joy and the festivity of man; and are not only to cure hunger or to allay thirst, but to appease a passion and allay a sorrow. It is an infinite variety of meat with which God furnishes out the table of mankind. And in the covering our sin, and clothing our nakedness, God passed from fig-leaves to the skins of beasts, from aprons to long robes, from leather to wool, and from thence to the warmth of furs and the coolness of silks; he hath dressed not only our needs, but hath fitted the several portions of the year, and made us to go dressed like our mother, leaving off the winter-sables when the florid spring appears; and as soon as the tulip fades, we put on the robe of summer, and then shear our sheep for winter: and God uses us as Joseph did his brother Benjamin; we have many changes of raiment, and our mess is five times bigger than the provision made for our brothers of the creation. But the providence and mercies of God are to be estimated also according as these provisions are dispensed to every single person. For that I may not remark the bounties of God running over the tables of the rich, God hath also made provisions for the poorest person; so that if they can but rule their desires, they shall have their tables furnished. And this secured and provided for by one promise and two duties, by our own labour and our brother's charity: and our faith in this affair is confirmed by all our own, and by all the experience of other men. Are not all the men and the women in the world provided for, and fed, and clothed, till they die? And was it not always so from the first morning of the creatures? And that a man is starved to death, is a violence and a rare contingency, happening almost as seldom as for a man to have but one eye; and if our being provided for be as certain as for a man to have two eyes, we have reason to adore the wisdom and admire the mercies of our almighty Father. But

these things are evident. Is it not a great thing that God hath made such strange provisions for our health—such infinite differences of plants—and hath discovered the secrets of their nature by mere chance, or by inspiration? Either of which is the miracle of Providence, secret to us, but ordered by certain and regular decrees of Heaven. It was a huge diligence and care of the Divine mercy that discovered to man the secrets of spagyric medicines, of stones, of spirits, and the results of seven or eight decoctions, and the strange effects of accidental mixtures, which the art of man could not suspect, being bound up in the secret sanctuary of hidden causes and secret natures, and being laid open by the concourse of twenty or thirty little accidents, all which were ordered by God as certainly as are the first principles of nature, or the descent of sons from the fathers in the most noble families.

But that which I shall observe in this whole affair is, that there are, both for the provision of our tables and the relief of our sicknesses, so many miracles of Providence, that they give plain demonstration what relation we bear to heaven: and the poor man need not be troubled that he is to expect his daily portion after the sun is up; for he hath found to this day he was not deceived; and then he may rejoice, because he sees, by an effective probation, that in heaven a decree was made, every day to send him provisions of meat and drink. And that is a mighty mercy, when the circles of heaven are bowed down to wrap us in a bosom of care and nourishment, and the wisdom of God is daily busied to serve his mercy, as his mercy serves our necessities. Does not God plant remedies there, where the diseases are most popular? and every country is best provided against its own evils. Is not the rhubarb found, where the sun most corrupts the liver; and the scabious by the shore of the sea, that God might cure as soon as he wounds? and the inhabitants may see their remedy against the leprosy and the scurvy, before they feel their sickness. And then to this we may add nature's commons and open fields, the shores of rivers and the strand of the sea, the unconfined air, the wilderness that hath no hedge; and that in these every man may hunt, and fowl, and fish, respectively; and that God sends some miracles and extraordinary blessings so for the public good, that he will not endure they should be enclosed and made several. Thus he is pleased to dispense the manna of Calabria, the medicinal waters of Germany, the muscles at Sluys at this day, and the Egyptian beans in the marshes of Albania, and the salt at Troas of old; which God, to defeat the covetousness of man, and to spread his mercy over the face of the indigent, as the sun scatters his beams over the bosom of the whole earth, did so order, that as long as every man was permitted to partake, the bosom of heaven was open; but when man gathered them into single handfuls, and made them impropriate, God gathered his hand into his bosom, and bound the heavens with ribs of brass, and the earth with decrees of iron; and the blessing reverted to him that gave it, since *they* might not receive it to whom it was sent. And in general, this is the excellency of his mercy, that all our needs are certainly supplied and secured by a promise which God cannot break: but he that cannot break the laws of his own promises, can break the laws of nature, that he may perform his promise, and he will do a miracle rather than forsake thee in thy needs: so that our security and the relative mercy is bound upon us by all the power and the truth of God.

8. But because such is the bounty of God, that he hath provided a better life for the inheritance of man, if God is so merciful in making fair provisions for our less noble part, in order to the transition toward our country, we may expect that the mercies of God have rare arts to secure to us his designed bounty in order to our inheritance, to that which ought to be our portion for ever. And here I consider, that it is an infinite mercy of the almighty Father of mercies, that he hath appointed to us such a religion, that leads us to a huge felicity through pleasant ways. For the felicity that is designed to us, is so above our present capacities and conceptions, that while we are so ignorant as not to understand it, we are also so foolish as not to desire it with passions great enough to perform the little conditions of its purchase. God, therefore, knowing how great an interest it is, and how apt we should be to neglect it, hath found out such conditions of acquiring it, which are eases and satisfaction to our present appetites. God hath bound our salvation upon us by the endearment of temporal prosperities; and because we love this world so well, God hath so ordered it, that even this world may secure the other. And of this, God in old time made open profession; for when he had secretly designed to bring his people to a glorious immortality in another world, he told them nothing of that, it being a thing bigger than the capacity of their thoughts, or of their theology; but told them that which would tempt them most, and endear obedience: "If you will obey, ye shall eat the good things of the land;" ye shall possess a rich country, ye shall triumph over your enemies, ye shall have numerous families, blessed children, rich granaries, overrunning wine-presses. For God knew the cognation of most of them was so dear between their affections and the good things of this world, that if they did not obey in hope of that they did need, and fancy, and love, and see, and feel—it was not to be expected they should quit their affections for a secret in another world, whither before they come they must die, and lose all desire, and all capacities of enjoyment. But this design of God, which was barefaced in the days of the law, is now in the gospel interwoven secretly (but yet plain enough to be discovered by an eye of faith and reason) into every virtue; and temporal advantage is a great ingredient in the constitution of every christian grace. For so the richest tissue dazzles the beholder's eye, when the sun reflects upon the metal, the silver and the gold weaved into fantastic imagery, or a wealthy plainness; but the rich wire and shining filaments are wrought upon cheaper silk, the spoil of worms and flies; so is the em-

broidery of our virtue. The glories of the Spirit dwell upon the face and vestment, upon the fringes and the borders, and there we see the beryl and the onyx, the jasper and the sardonyx, order and perfection, love, and peace, and joy, mortification of the passions and ravishment of the will, adherences to God and imitation of Christ, reception and entertainment of the Holy Ghost, and longings after heaven, humility and chastity, temperance and sobriety; these make the frame of the garment, the clothes of the soul, that it may not be found naked in the day of the Lord's visitation; but through these rich materials a thread of silk is drawn, some compliance with worms and weaker creatures, something that shall please our bowels, and make the lower man to rejoice; they are wrought upon secular content and material satisfactions; and now we cannot be happy unless we be pious, and the religion of a christian is the greatest security, and the most certain instrument of making a man rich, and pleasing, and healthful, and wise, and beloved, in the whole world. I shall now remark only two or three instances; for the main body of this truth I have otherwhere represented.[b]

1. The whole religion of a christian, as it relates to others, is nothing but justice and mercy, certain parents of peace and benefit; and upon this supposition, what evil can come to a just and a merciful, to a necessary and useful person? For the first permission of evil was upon the stock of injustice. He that kills may be killed, and he that does injury may be mischieved; he that invades another man's right, must venture the loss of his own; and when I put my brother to his defence, he may chance drive the evil so far from himself, that it may reach me. Laws and judges, private and public judicatures, wars and tribunals, axes and wheels, were made, not for the righteous, but for the unjust; and all that whole order of things and persons would be useless, if men did do as they would willingly suffer.

2. And because there is no evil that can befall a just man, unless it comes by injury and violence, our religion hath also made as good provisions against that too, as the nature of the thing will suffer. For by patience we are reconciled to the sufferance, and by hope and faith we see a certain consequent reward; and by praying for the persecuting man we are cured of all the evil of the mind, the envy and the fretfulness that uses to gall the troubled and resisting man; and when we turn all the passion into charity, and God turns all the suffering into reward, there remains nothing that is very formidable. So that our religion obliges us to such duties which prevent all evils that happen justly to men; and in our religion no man can suffer as a malefactor, if he follows the religion truly; and for the evils that are unavoidable and come by violence, the graces of this discipline turn them into virtues and rewards, and make them that in their event they are desirable, and in the suffering they are very tolerable.

3. But then when we consider that the religion of a christian consists in doing good to all men; that it is made up of mercies and friendships, of friendly conventions and assemblies of saints; that all are to do public works for necessary uses, that is, to be able to be beneficial to the public, and not to be burdensome to any, where it can be avoided; what can be wished to men in relation to others, and what can be more beneficial to themselves, than that they be such whom other men will value for their interest, such whom the public does need, such whom princes and nobles ought to esteem, and all men can make use of according to their several conditions; that they are so well provided for, that, unless a persecution disables them, they can not only maintain themselves, but oblige others to their charity? This is a temporal good, which all wise man reckon as part of that felicity which recompenses all the labours of their day, and sweetens the sleep of their night, and places them in that circle of neighbourhood and amity, where men are most valued and most secure.

4. To this we may add this material consideration: That all those graces, which oblige us to do good to others, are nothing else but certain instruments of doing advantage to ourselves. It is a huge nobleness of charity to give alms, not only to our brother, but for him. It is the christian sacrifice, like that of Job, who made oblations for his sons when they feasted each other, fearing lest they had sinned against God. And if I give alms, and fast, and pray, in behalf of my prince or my patron, my friend or my children, I do a combination of holy actions; which are, of all things that I can do, the most effectual intercession for him whom I so recommend. But then observe the art of this, and what a plot is laid by the Divine mercy, to secure blessing to ourselves. That I am a person fit to intercede and pray for him, must suppose me a gracious person, one whom God rather will accept; so that, before I be fit to pray and interpose for him, I must first become dear to God; and my charity can do him no good, for whose interest I gave it, but by making me first acceptable to God, that so he may the rather hear me. And when I fast, it is first an act of repentance for myself, before it can be an instrument of impetration for him. And thus I do my brother a single benefit, by doing myself a double one. And it is also so ordered, that when I pray for a person for whom God will not hear me, yet then he will hear me for myself, though I say nothing in my own behalf: and our prayers are like Jonathan's arrows; if they fall short, yet they return my friend or my friendship to me; or if they go home, they secure him whom they pray for; and I have not only the comfort of rejoicing with him, but the honour and the reward of procuring him a joy. And certain it is, that the charitable prayer for another can never want what it asks, or, instead of it, a greater blessing. The good man,—that saw his poor brother troubled, because he had nothing to present for an offering at the holy communion, (when all knew themselves obliged to do kindness for Christ's poor members, with which themselves were incorporated with so mysterious an

[b] Life of Holy Jesus, Part ii. Disc. 14.

union,) and gave him money, that he might present for the good of his soul, as other christians did,—had not only the reward of alms, but of religion too; and that offering was well husbanded, for it did benefit to two souls. For as I sin when I make another sin; so if I help to do a good, I am a sharer in the gains of that talent; and he shall not have the less, but I shall be rewarded upon his stock. And this was it which David rejoiced in: "Particeps sum omnium timentium te:" "I am a partner, a companion, of all them that fear thee;" I share in their profits. If I do but rejoice at every grace of God which I see in my brother, I shall be rewarded for that grace. And we need not envy the excellency of another; it becomes mine as well as his; and if I do rejoice, I shall have cause to rejoice. So excellent, so full, so artificial is the mercy of God, in making, and seeking, and finding all occasions to do us good.

5. The very charity, and love, and mercy, that is commanded in our religion, is in itself a great excellency; not only in order to heaven, but to the comforts of the earth too, and such, without which a man is not capable of a blessing or a comfort. And he that sent charity and friendships into the world, intended charity to be as relative as justice, and to do its effect both upon the loving and the beloved person. It is a reward and a blessing to a kind father, when his children do well; and every degree of prudent love which he bears to them, is an endearment of his joy; and he that loves them not, but looks upon them as burdens of necessity and loads to his fortune, loses those many rejoicings, and the pleasures of kindness which they feast withal, who love to divide their fortunes amongst them, because they have already divided large and equal portions of their heart. I have instanced in this relation; but it is true in all the excellency of friendship: and every man rejoices twice, when he hath a partner of his joy. A friend shares my sorrow, and makes it but a moiety; but he swells my joy, and makes it double. For so two channels divide the river, and lessen it into rivulets, and make it fordable, and apt to be drunk up at the first revels of the Syrian star; but two torches do not divide, but increase the flame. And though my tears are the sooner dried up, when they run upon my friend's cheeks in the furrows of compassion; yet when my flame hath kindled his lamp, we unite the glories, and make them radiant, like the golden candlesticks that burn before the throne of God; because they shine by numbers, by unions, and confederations of light and joy.

And now, upon this account, which is already so great, I need not reckon concerning the collateral issues and little streams of comfort, which God hath made to issue from that religion to which God hath obliged us; such as are mutual comforts,—visiting sick people,—instructing the ignorant,—and so becoming better instructed, and fortified, and comforted ourselves, by the instruments of our brother's ease and advantages;—the glories of converting souls, of rescuing a sinner from hell, of a miserable man from the grave,—the honour and nobleness of being a good man,—the noble confidence and the bravery of innocence,—the ease of patience,—the quiet of contentedness,—the rest of peacefulness,—the worthiness of forgiving others,—the greatness of spirit that is in despising riches,—and the sweetness of spirit that is in meekness and humility;—these are christian graces in every sense; favours of God, and issues of his bounty and his mercy. But all that I shall now observe further concerning them is this: That God hath made these necessary; he hath obliged us to have them, under pain of damnation; he hath made it so sure to us to become happy even in this world, that if we will not, he hath threatened to destroy us; which is not a desire or aptness to do us an evil, but an art to make it impossible that we should. For God hath so ordered it, that we cannot perish, unless we desire it ourselves; and unless we will do ourselves a mischief on purpose to get hell, we are secured of heaven: and there is not in the nature of things any way that can more infallibly do the work of felicity upon creatures that can choose, than to make that which they should naturally choose be spiritually their duty: and then he will make them happy hereafter, if they will suffer him to make them happy here. But hard by stand another throng of mercies, that must be considered by us, and God must be glorified in them; for they are such as are intended to preserve to us all this felicity.

9. God, that he might secure our duty and our present and consequent felicity, hath tied us with golden chains, and bound us, not only with the bracelets of love and the deliciousness of hope, but with the ruder cords of fear and reverence; even with all the innumerable parts of a restraining grace. For it is a huge aggravation of human calamity to consider, that after a man hath been instructed in the love and advantages of his religion, and knows it to be the way of honour and felicity, and that to prevaricate his holy sanctions is certain death and disgrace to eternal ages; yet that some men shall despise their religion, others shall be very wary of its laws, and call the commandments a burden; and too many, with a perfect choice, shall delight in death, and the ways that lead thither; and they choose money infinitely, and to rule over their brother by all means, and to be revenged extremely, and to prevail by wrong, and to do all that they can, and please themselves in all that they desire, and love it fondly, and be restless in all things but where they perish. If God should not interpose by the arts of a miraculous and merciful grace, and put a bridle in the mouth of our lusts, and chastise the sea of our follies by some heaps of sand or the walls of a rock, we should perish in the deluge of sin universally; as the old world did in that storm of the Divine anger, "the flood of waters." But thus God suffers but few adulteries in the world, in respect of what would be, if all men that desire to be adulterers had power and opportunity. And yet some men, and very many women, are, by modesty and natural shamefacedness, chastised in their too forward appetites; or the laws of man, or public reputation, or the indecency and unhandsome circumstances of

sin, check the desire, and make it that it cannot arrive at act. For so have I seen a busy flame sitting upon a sullen coal, turn its point to all the angles and portions of its neighbourhood, and reach at a heap of prepared straw, which, like a bold temptation, called it to a restless motion and activity; but either it was at too big a distance, or a gentle breath from heaven diverted the sphere and the ray of the fire to the other side, and so prevented the violence of the burning; till the flame expired in a weak consumption, and died, turning into smoke, and the coolness of death, and the harmlessness of a cinder. And when a man's desires are winged with sails and a lusty wind of passion, and pass on in a smooth channel of opportunity, God oftentimes hinders the lust and the impatient desire from passing on to its port, and entering into action, by a sudden thought, by a little remembrance of a word, by a fancy, by a sudden disability, by unreasonable and unlikely fears, by the sudden intervening of company, by the very weariness of the passion, by curiosity, by want of health, by the too great violence of the desire, bursting itself with its fulness into dissolution and a remiss easiness, by a sentence of Scripture, by the reverence of a good man, or else by the proper interventions of the Spirit of grace, chastising the crime, and representing its appendant mischiefs, and its constituent disorder and irregularity; and after all this, the very anguish and trouble of being defeated in the purpose, hath rolled itself into so much uneasiness and unquiet reflections, that the man is grown ashamed, and vexed into more sober counsels.

And the mercy of God is not less than infinite, in separating men from the occasions of their sin, from the neighbourhood and temptation. For if the hyæna and a dog should be thrust into the same kennel, one of them would soon find a grave, and it may be, both of them their death. So infallible is the ruin of most men, if they be showed a temptation. Nitre and resin, naphtha and bitumen, sulphur and pitch, are their constitution; and the fire passes upon them infinitely, and there is none to secure them. But God, by removing our sins far from us, "as far as the east is from the west," not only putting away the guilt, but setting the occasion far from us, extremely far,—so far that sometimes we cannot sin, and many times not easily,—hath magnified his mercy, by giving us safety in all those measures in which we are untempted. It would be the matter of new discourses, if I should consider concerning the variety of God's grace; his preventing and accompanying, his inviting and corroborating grace; his assisting us to will, his enabling us to do; his sending angels to watch us, to remove us from evil company, to drive us with swords of fire from forbidden instances, to carry us by unobserved opportunities into holy company, to minister occasions of holy discourses, to make it by some means or other necessary to do a holy action, to make us in love with virtue, because they have mingled that virtue with a just and a fair interest; to some men, by making religion that thing they live upon; to others, the means of their reputation and the securities of their honour, and thousands of ways more, which every prudent man that watches the ways of God, cannot but have observed. But I must also observe other great conjugations of mercy; for he that is to pass through an infinite, must not dwell upon every little line of life.

10. The next order of mercies is such which is of so pure and unmingled constitution, that it hath at first no regard to the capacities and dispositions of the receivers; and afterwards, when it hath, it relates only to such conditions which itself creates and produces in the suscipient; I mean, the mercies of the Divine predestination. For was it not an infinite mercy, that God should predestinate all mankind to salvation by Jesus Christ, even when he had no other reason to move him to do it, but because man was miserable, and needed his pity? But I shall instance only in the intermedial part of this mysterious mercy. Why should God cause us to be born of christian parents, and not to be circumcised by the impure hands of a Turkish priest? What distinguished me from another, that my father was severe in his discipline, and careful to "bring me up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;" and I was not exposed to the carelessness of an irreligious guardian, and taught to steal and lie, and to make sport with my infant vices and beginnings of iniquity? Who was it that discerned our persons from the lot of dying chrysoms, whose portion must be among those who never glorified God with a free obedience? What had you done of good, or towards it, that you were not condemned to that stupid ignorance, which makes the souls of most men to be little higher than beasts; and who understand nothing of religion and noble principles, of parables and wise sayings of old men? And not only in our cradles, but in our schools and our colleges, in our friendships and in our marriages, in our enmities and in all our conversation, in our virtues and in our vices, where all things in us were equal, or else we were the inferior, there is none of us but have felt the mercies of many differences. Or it may be, my brother and I were intemperate, and drunk, and quarrelsome, and he killed a man: but God did not suffer me to do so: he fell down and died with a little disorder; I was a beast, and yet was permitted to live, and not yet to die in my sins: he did amiss once, and was surprised in that disadvantage; I sin daily, and am still invited to repentance: he would fain have lived and amended; I neglect the grace, but am allowed the time. And when God sends the angel of his wrath to execute his anger upon a sinful people, we are encompassed with funerals, and yet the angel hath not smitten us. What or who makes the difference? We shall then see, when, in the separations of eternity, we sitting in glory shall see some of the partners of our sins carried into despair and the portions of the left hand, and roaring in the seats of the reprobate; we shall then perceive that it is even that mercy which hath no cause but itself, no measure of its emanation but our misery, no natural limit but eternity, no beginning but God, no object but man, no reason but an essential and

an unalterable goodness, no variety but our necessity and capacity, no change but new instances of its own nature, no ending or repentance, but our absolute and obstinate refusal to entertain it.

11. Lastly: All the mercies of God are concentred in that which is all the felicity of man; and God is so great a lover of souls, that he provides securities and fair conditions for them, even against all our reason and hopes, our expectations and weak discoursings. The particulars I shall remark are these: 1. God's mercy prevails over the malice and ignorances, the weaknesses and follies of men; so that in the conventions and assemblies of *heretics*, (as the word is usually understood, for erring and mistaken people,) although their doctrines are such, that, if men should live according to their proper and natural consequences, they would live impiously, yet in every one of these there are persons so innocently and invincibly mistaken, and who mean nothing but truth, while in the simplicity of their heart they talk nothing but error, that, in the defiance and contradiction of their own doctrines, they live according to its contradictory. He that believes contrition alone, with confession to a priest, is enough to expiate ten thousand sins, is furnished with an excuse easy enough to quit himself from the troubles of a holy life; and he that hath a great many cheap ways of buying off his penances for a little money, even for the greatest sins, is taught a way not to fear the doing of an act, for which he must repent; since repentance is a duty so soon, so certainly, and so easily performed. But these are notorious doctrines of the Roman church; and yet God so loves the souls of his creatures, that many men, who trust to these doctrines in their discourses, dare not rely upon them in their lives. But while they talk as if they did not need to live strictly, many of them live so strictly as if they did not believe so foolishly. He that tells that, antecedently, God hath, to all human choice, decreed men to heaven or to hell, takes away from men all care of the way, because they believe that he that infallibly decreed that end, hath unalterably appointed the means; and some men that talk thus wildly, live soberly, and are overwrought in their understanding by some secret art of God, that man may not perish in his ignorance, but be assisted in his choice, and saved by the Divine mercies. And there is no sect of men but are furnished with antidotes and little excuses to cure the venom of their doctrine; and therefore, although the adherent and constituent poison is notorious, and therefore to be declined, yet, because it is collaterally cured and overpowered by the torrent and wisdom of God's mercies, the men are to be taken into the quire, that we may all join, giving God praise for the operation of his hands.— 2. I said formerly, that there are many secret and undiscerned mercies by which men live, and of which men can give no account, till they come to give God thanks at their publication; and of this sort is that mercy which God reserves for the souls of many millions of men and women, concerning whom we have no hopes, if we account concerning them by the usual proportions of revelation and christian commandments; and yet we are taught to hope some strange good things concerning them, by the analogy and general rules of the Divine mercy. For what shall become of ignorant christians, people that live in wildernesses, and places more desert than a primitive hermitage? people that are baptized, and taught to go to church, it may be, once a year? people that can get no more knowledge; they know not where to have it, nor how to desire it? And yet that an eternity of pains shall be consequent to such an ignorance, is unlike the mercy of God; and yet that they should be in any disposition towards an eternity of intellectual joys, is no where set down in the leaves of revelation. And when the Jews grew rebellious, or a silly woman of the daughters of Abraham was tempted, and sinned, and punished with death, we usually talk as if that death passed on to a worse; but yet we may arrest our thoughts upon the Divine mercies, and consider that it is reasonable to expect from the Divine goodness, that no greater forfeiture be taken upon a law than was expressed in its sanction and publication. He that makes a law, and binds it with the penalty of stripes, we say, he intends not to afflict the disobedient with scorpions and axes: and it had been hugely necessary that God had scared the Jews from their sins by threatening the pains of hell to them that disobeyed, if he intended to inflict it; for although many men would have ventured the future, since they are not affrightened with the present and visible evil, yet some persons would have had more philosophical and spiritual apprehensions than others, and have been infallibly cured, in all their temptations, with the fear of an eternal pain; and, however, whether they had or no, yet since it cannot be understood how it consists with the Divine justice to exact a pain bigger than he threatened, greater than he gave warning of, we are sure it is a great way off from God's mercy to do so. He that usually imposes less, and is loth to inflict any, and very often forgives it all, is hugely distant from exacting an eternal punishment, when the most that he threatened, and gave notice of, was but a temporal. The effect of this consideration I would have to be this: That we may publicly worship this mercy of God, which is kept in secret, and that we be not too forward in sentencing all heathens, and prevaricating Jews, to the eternal pains of hell; but to hope that they have a portion in the secrets of the Divine mercy, where also, unless many of us have some little portions deposited, our condition will be very uncertain, and sometimes most miserable. God knows best how intolerably accursed a thing it is to perish in the eternal flames of hell, and therefore he is not easy to inflict it; and if the joys of heaven be too great to be expected upon too easy terms, certainly the pains of the damned are infinitely too big to pass lightly upon persons who cannot help themselves, and who, if they were helped with clearer revelations, would have avoided them. But as in these things we must not pry into the secrets of the Divine economy, being sure, whether it be so or no, it is

most just, even as it is; so we may expect to see the glories of the Divine mercy made public, in unexpected instances, at the great day of manifestation. And, indeed, our dead many times go forth from our hands very strangely and carelessly, without prayers, without sacraments, without consideration, without counsel, and without comfort; and to dress the souls of our dear people at so sad a parting, is an employment we therefore omit, not always because we are negligent, but because the work is sad, and allays the affections of the world with those melancholic circumstances; but if God did not in his mercies make secret and equivalent provisions for them, and take care of his redeemed ones, we might unhappily meet them in a sad eternity, and, without remedy, weep together and groan for ever! But "God hath provided better things for them, that they, without us," that is, without our assistances, "shall be made perfect."

SERMON XXVII.

PART III.

THERE are very many more orders and conjugations of mercies; but because the numbers of them naturally tend to their own greatness, that is, to have no measure, I must reckon but a few more, and them also without order: for that they do descend upon us, we see and feel, but by what order of things or causes, is as undiscerned as the head of Nilus, or a sudden remembrance of a long-neglected and forgotten proposition.

1. But upon this account it is that good men have observed, that the providence of God is so great a provider for holy living, and does so certainly minister to religion, that nature and chance, the order of the world and the influences of Heaven, are taught to serve the ends of the Spirit of God and the spirit of a man. I do not speak of the miracles that God hath, in the several periods of the world, wrought for the establishing his laws, and confirming his promises, and securing our obedience; though that was, all the way, the overflowings and miracles of mercy, as well as power: but that which I consider is, that besides the extraordinary emanations of the Divine power upon the first and most solemn occasions of an institution, and the first beginnings of a religion, (such as were the wonders God did in Egypt and in the wilderness, preparatory to the sanction of that law and the first covenant, and the miracles wrought by Christ and his apostles, for the founding and the building up the religion of the gospel and the new covenant,) God does also do things wonderful and miraculous, for the promoting the ordinary and less solemn actions of our piety, and to assist and accompany them in a constant and regular succession. It was a strange variety of natural efficacies, that manna should stink in twenty-four hours, if gathered upon Wednesday and Thursday, and that it should last till forty-eight hours, if gathered upon the even of the sabbath; and that it should last many hundreds of years, when placed in the sanctuary by the ministry of the high priest. But so it was in the Jews' religion: and manna pleased every palate, and it filled all appetites, and the same measure was a different proportion, it was much and it was little; as if nature, that it might serve religion, had been taught some measures of infinity, which is every where and no where, filling all things and circumscribed with nothing, measured by one omer and doing the work of two; like the crowns of kings, fitting the brows of Nimrod and the most mighty warrior, and yet not too large for the temples of an infant prince. And not only is it thus in nature, but in contingencies and acts depending upon the choice of men; for God having commanded the sons of Israel to go up to Jerusalem to worship thrice every year, and to leave their borders to be guarded by women, and children, and sick persons, in the neighbourhood of diligent and spiteful enemies, yet God so disposed of their hearts and opportunities, that they never entered the land when the people were at their solemnity, until they desecrated their rites, by doing at their passover the greatest sin and treason in the world. Till at Easter they crucified the Lord of life and glory, they were secure in Jerusalem and in their borders; but when they had destroyed religion by this act, God took away their security, and Titus besieged the city at the feast of Easter, that the more might perish in the deluge of the Divine indignation.

To this observation the Jews add, that in Jerusalem no man ever had a fall that came thither to worship; that at their solemn festivals there was reception in the town for all the inhabitants of the land; concerning which, although I cannot affirm any thing, yet this is certain, that no godly person, among all the tribes of Israel, was ever a beggar, but all the variety of human chances were overruled to the purposes of providence, and providence was measured by the ends of the religion, and the religion which promised them plenty, performed the promise, till the nation and the religion too began to decline, that it might give place to a better ministry, and a more excellent dispensation of the things of the world.

But when christian religion was planted, and had taken root, and had filled all lands, then all the nature of things, the whole creation, became servant to the kingdom of grace; and the head of the religion is also the head of the creatures, and ministers all the things of the world in order to the Spirit of grace: and now "angels are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for the good of them that fear the Lord;" and all the violences of men, and things of nature and choice, are forced into subjection and lowest ministries, and to co-operate, as with an united design, to verify all the promises of the gospel, and to secure and advantage all the children of the kingdom: and now he that is made poor by chance or persecution, is made rich by re-

ligion; and he that hath nothing, yet possesses all things: and sorrow itself is the greatest comfort, not only because it ministers to virtue, but because itself is one, as in the case of repentance; and death ministers to life, and bondage is freedom, and loss is gain, and our enemies are our friends, and every thing turns into religion, and religion turns into felicity and all manner of advantages. But that I may not need to enumerate any more particulars in this observation, certain it is, that angels of light and darkness, all the influences of heaven, and the fruits and productions of the earth, the stars and the elements, the secret things that lie in the bowels of the sea and the entrails of the earth, the single effects of all efficients, and the conjunction of all causes, all events foreseen and all rare contingencies, every thing of chance and every thing of choice, is so much a servant to him whose greatest desire and great interest is, by all means, to save our souls, that we are thereby made sure, that all the whole creation shall be made to bend, in all the flexures of its nature and accidents, that it may minister to religion, to the good of the catholic church, and every person within its bosom, who are the body of him that rules over all the world, and commands them as he chooses.

2. But that which is next to this, and not much unlike the design of this wonderful mercy, is, that all the actions of religion, though mingled with circumstances of differing, and sometimes of contradictory, relations, are so concentred in God their proper centre, and conducted in such certain and pure channels of reason and rule, that no one duty does contradict another; and it can never be necessary for any man, in any case, to sin. They that bound themselves by an oath to kill Paul, were not environed with the sad necessities of murder on one side, and vow-breach on the other, so that if they did murder him, they were man-slayers, if they did not, they were perjured; for God had made provision for this case, that no unlawful oath should pass an obligation. He that hath given his faith in unlawful confederation against his prince, is not girded with a fatal necessity of breach of trust on one side, or breach of allegiance on the other; for in this also God hath secured the case of conscience, by forbidding any man to make an unlawful promise; and, upon a stronger degree of the same reason, by forbidding him to keep it, in case he hath made it. He that doubts whether it be lawful to keep the Sunday holy, must not do it during that doubt, because "whatsoever is not of faith, is sin." But yet God's mercy hath taken care to break this snare in sunder, so that he may neither sin against the commandment, nor against his conscience; for he is bound to lay aside his error, and be better instructed; till when, the scene of his sin lies in something that hath influence upon his understanding, not in the omission of the fact. "No man can serve two masters," but therefore "he must hate the one, and cleave to the other." But then if we consider what infinite contradiction there is in sin, and that the great long-suffering of God is expressed in this, that God "suffered the contradiction of sinners," we shall feel the mercy of God in the peace of our consciences and the unity of religion, so long as we do the work of God. It is a huge affront to a covetous man, that he is the further off from fulness by having great heaps and vast revenues; and that his thirst increases by having that which should quench it; and that the more he shall need to be satisfied, the less he shall dare to do it; and that he shall refuse to drink because he is dry; that he dies if he tastes, and languishes if he does not; and at the same time he is full and empty, bursting with a plethory, and consumed with hunger, drowned with rivers of oil and wine, and yet dry as the Arabian sands. But then the contradiction is multiplied, and the labyrinths more amazed, when prodigality waits upon another curse, and covetousness heaps up, that prodigality may scatter abroad; then distractions are infinite, and a man hath two devils to serve of contradictory designs, and both of them exacting obedience more unreasonably than the Egyptian taskmasters; then there is no rest, no end of labours, no satisfaction of purposes, no method of things; but they begin where they should end, and begin again; and never pass forth to content, or reason, or quietness, or possession. But the duty of a christian is easy in a persecution, it is clear under a tyranny, it is evident in despite of heresy, it is one in the midst of schism, it is determined amongst infinite disputes; being like a rock in the sea, which is beaten with the tide, and washed with retiring waters, and encompassed with mists, and appears in several figures, but it always dips its foot in the same bottom, and remains the same in calms and storms, and survives the revolution of ten thousand tides, and there shall dwell till time and tides shall be no more. So is our duty, uniform and constant, open and notorious, variously represented, but in the same manner exacted; and in the interest of our souls God hath not exposed us to uncertainty, or the variety of any thing that can change; and it is by the grace and mercy of God, put into the power of every christian, to do that which God, through Jesus Christ, will accept to salvation; and neither men nor devils shall hinder it, unless we list ourselves.

3. After all this, we may sit down and reckon up great sums and conjugations of his gracious gifts, and tell the minutes of eternity by the number of the Divine mercies. God hath given his laws to rule us, his word to instruct us, his Spirit to guide us, his angels to protect us, his ministers to exhort us: he revealed all our duty, and he hath concealed whatsoever can hinder us: he hath affrighted our follies with fear of death, and engaged our watchfulness by its secret coming: he hath exercised our faith by keeping private the state of souls departed, and yet hath confirmed our faith by a promise of a resurrection, and entertained our hope by some general significations of the state of interval. His mercies make contemptible means instrumental to great purposes, and a small herb the remedy of the greatest diseases. He impedes the devil's rage, and infatuates his counsels; he diverts his malice, and defeats his purposes; he binds him in the chain of

darkness, and gives him no power over the children of light; he suffers him to walk in solitary places, and yet fetters him that he cannot disturb the sleep of a child; he hath given him mighty power, and yet a young maiden that resists him shall make him flee away; he hath given him a vast knowledge, and yet an ignorant man can confute him with the twelve articles of his creed; he gave him power over the winds, and made him prince of the air, and yet the breath of a holy prayer can drive him as far as the utmost sea; and he hath so restrained him, that (except it be by faith) we know not whether there be any devil, yea or no; for we never heard his noises, nor have seen his affrighting shapes. This is that great principle of all the felicity we hope for, and of all the means thither, and of all the skill and all the strengths we have to use those means. He hath made great variety of conditions, and yet hath made all necessary, and all mutual helpers; and by some instruments, and in some respects, they are all equal in order to felicity, to content, and final and intermedial satisfactions. He gave us part of our reward in hand, that he might enable us to work for more; he taught the world arts for use, arts for entertainment of all our faculties and all our dispositions: he gives eternal gifts for temporal services, and gives us whatsoever we want for asking, and commands us to ask, and threatens us if we will not ask, and punishes us for refusing to be happy. This is that glorious attribute that hath made order and health, harmony and hope, restitutions and variety, the joys of direct possession, and the joys, the artificial joys of contrariety and comparison. He comforts the poor, and he brings down the rich, that they may be safe, in their humility and sorrow, from the transportations of an unhappy and uninstructed prosperity. He gives necessaries to all, and scatters the extraordinary provisions so, that every nation may traffic in charity, and commute for pleasures. He was the Lord of hosts, and he is still what he was; but he loves to be called the God of peace, because he was terrible in that, but he is delighted in this. His mercy is his glory, and his glory is the light of heaven. His mercy is the life of the creation, and it fills all the earth; and his mercy is a sea too, and it fills all the abysses of the deep: it hath given us promises for supply of whatsoever we need, and relieves us in all our fears, and in all the evils that we suffer. His mercies are more than we can tell, and they are more than we can feel: for all the world in the abyss of the Divine mercies is like a man diving into the bottom of the sea, over whose head the waters run insensibly and unperceived, and yet the weight is vast, and the sum of them is unmeasurable; and the man is not pressed with the burden, nor confounded with numbers: and no observation is able to recount, no sense sufficient to perceive, no memory large enough to retain, no understanding great enough to apprehend this infinity; but we must admire, and love, and worship, and magnify this mercy for ever and ever; that we may dwell in what we feel, and be comprehended by that which is equal to God, and the parent of all felicity.

And yet this is but the one half. The mercies of giving I have now told of; but those of forgiving are greater, though not more:—"He is ready to forgive."—And upon this stock strives the interest of our great hope, the hope of a blessed immortality. For if the mercies of giving have not made our expectation big enough to entertain the confidences of heaven; yet when we think of the graciousness and readiness of forgiving, we may with more readiness hope to escape hell, and then we cannot but be blessed by an eternal consequence. We have but small opinion of the Divine mercy, if we dare not believe concerning it, that it is desirous, and able, and watchful, and passionate, to keep us, or rescue us respectively from such a condemnation, the pain of which is insupportable, and the duration is eternal, and the extension is misery upon all our faculties, and the intention is great beyond patience, or natural or supernatural abilities, and the state is a state of darkness and despair, of confusion and amazement, of cursing and roaring, anguish of spirit and gnashing of teeth, misery universal, perfect, and irremediable. From this it is which God's mercies would so fain preserve us. This is a state that God provides for his enemies, not for them that love him; that endeavour to obey, though they do it but in weakness; that weep truly for their sins, though but with a shower no bigger than the drops of pity; that wait for his coming with a holy and pure flame, though their lamps are no brighter than a poor man's candle, though their strengths are no greater than a contrite reed or a strained arm, and their fires have no more warmth than the smoke of kindling flax. If our faith be pure, and our love unfeigned; if the degrees of it be great, God will accept it into glory; if it be little, he will accept it into grace and make it bigger. For that is the first instance of God's readiness to forgive: he will, upon any terms that are not unreasonable, and that do not suppose a remanent affection to sin, keep us from the intolerable pains of hell. And, indeed, if we consider the constitution of the conditions which God requires, we shall soon perceive God intends heaven to us a mere gift, and that the duties on our part are but little entertainments and exercises of our affections and our love, that the devil might not seize upon that portion which, to eternal ages, shall be the instrument of our happiness. For in all the parts of our duty, it may be, there is but one instance in which we are to do violence to our natural and first desires. For those men have very ill natures, to whom virtue is so contrary that they are inclined naturally to lust, to drunkenness and anger, to pride and covetousness, to unthankfulness and disobedience. Most men that are tempted with lust, could easily enough entertain the sobrieties of other counsels, as of temperance, and justice, or religion, if it would indulge to them but that one passion of lust; and persons that are greedy of money are not fond of amorous vanities, nor care they to sit long at the wine: and one vice destroys another: and when one vice is consequent to another, it is by way of punishment and dereliction of the man, unless where vices have cognation, and seem but like several de-

grees of one another. And it is evil custom and superinduced habits that make artificial appetites in most men to most sins: but many times their natural temper vexes them into uneasy dispositions, and aptnesses only to some one unhandsome sort of action. That one thing therefore is it, in which God demands of thee mortification and self-denial.

Certain it is, there are very many men in the world, that would fain commute their severity in all other instances for a license in their one appetite; they would not refuse long prayers after a drunken meeting, or great alms together with one great lust. But then consider how easy it is for them to go to heaven. God demands of them, for his sake and their own, to crucify but one natural lust, or one evil habit, (for all the rest they are easy enough to do themselves,) and God will give them heaven, where the joy is more than one. And I said, it is but one mortification God requires of most men; for, if those persons would extirp but that one thing in which they are principally tempted, it is not easily imaginable that any less evil to which the temptation is trifling, should interpose between them and their great interest. If Saul had not spared Agag, the people could not have expected mercy: and our little and inferior appetites, that rather come to us by intimation and consequent adherences than by direct violence, must not dwell with him, who hath crossed the violence of his distempered nature in a beloved instance. Since, therefore, this is the state of most men, and God in effect demands of them but one thing, and in exchange for that, will give them all good things; it gives demonstration of his huge easiness to redeem us from that intolerable evil, that is equally consequent to the indulging to one or to twenty sinful habits.

2. God's readiness to pardon appears in this, that he pardons before we ask; for he that bids us ask for pardon, hath in design and purpose done the thing already: for, what is wanting on his part, in whose only power it is to give pardon, and in whose desire it is that we should be pardoned, and who commands us to lay hold upon the offer? He hath done all that belongs to God, that is, all that concerns the pardon; there it lies ready, it is recorded in the book of life, it wants nothing but being exemplified and taken forth, and the Holy Spirit stands ready to consign and pass the privy signet, that we may exhibit it to devils and evil men when they tempt us to despair or sin.

3. Nay, God is so ready in his mercy, that he did pardon us even before he redeemed us. For, what is the secret of the mystery, that the eternal Son of God should take upon him our nature, and die our death, and suffer for our sins, and do our work, and enable us to do our own? He that did this, is God; he who "thought it no robbery to be equal with God," he came to satisfy himself, to pay to himself the price for his own creature. And when he did this for us that he might pardon us, was he at that instant angry with us? Was this an effect of his anger or of his love, that God sent his Son to work our pardon and salvation? Indeed, we were angry with God, at enmity with the Prince of life; but he was reconciled to us so far, as that he then did the greatest thing in the world for us: for nothing could be greater than that God, the Son of God, should die for us. Here was reconciliation before pardon: and God, that came to die for us, did love us first before he came. This was hasty love. But it went further yet.

4. God pardoned us before we sinned; and when he foresaw our sin, even mine and yours, he sent his Son to die for us: our pardon was wrought and effected by Christ's death above 1600 years ago; and for the sins of to-morrow, and the infirmities of the next day, Christ is already dead, already risen from the dead, and does now make intercession and atonement. And this is not only a favour to us who were born in the due time of the gospel, but to all mankind since Adam: for God, who is infinitely patient in his justice, was not at all patient in his mercy; he forbears to strike and punish us, but he would not forbear to provide cure for us and remedy. For, as if God could not stay from redeeming us, he promised the Redeemer to Adam in the beginning of the world's sin; and Christ was "the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world;" and the covenant of the gospel, though it was not made with man, yet it was from the beginning performed by God as to his part, as to the ministration of pardon; the seed of the woman was set up against the dragon as soon as ever the tempter had won his first battle: and though God laid his hand, and drew a veil of types and secrecy before the manifestation of his mercies; yet he did the work of redemption, and saved us by the covenant of faith, and the righteousness of believing, and the mercies of repentance, the graces of pardon, and the blood of the slain Lamb, even from the fall of Adam to this very day, and will do till Christ's second coming.

Adam fell by his folly, and did not perform the covenant of one little work, a work of a single abstinence; but he was restored by faith in the seed of the woman. And of this righteousness Noah was a preacher, and "by faith Enoch was translated," and by faith a remnant was saved at the flood: and to "Abraham this was imputed for righteousness," and to all the patriarchs, and to all the righteous judges, and holy prophets, and saints of the Old Testament, even while they were obliged (so far as the words of their covenant were expressed) to the law of works: their pardon was sealed and kept within the veil, within the curtains of the sanctuary; and they saw it not then, but they feel it ever since. And this was a great excellency of the Divine mercy unto them. God had mercy on all mankind before Christ's manifestation, even beyond the mercies of their covenant; and they were saved as we are, by "the seed of the woman," by "God incarnate," by "the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world:" not by works, for we all failed of them; that is, not by an exact obedience, but by faith working by love; by sincere, hearty endeavours, and believing God, and relying upon his infinite mercy, revealed in part, and now fully manifest by the great instrument and means of that mercy, Jesus Christ. So that here is pardon, be-

fore we asked it; pardon before Christ's coming, pardon before redemption, and pardon before we sinned. What greater readiness to forgive us can be imagined? Yes, there is one degree more yet, and that will prevent a mistake in this.

5. For God so pardoned us once, that we should need no more pardon: he pardons us "by turning every one of us away from our iniquities." That is the purpose of Christ; that he might safely pardon us before we sinned, and we might not sin upon the confidence of pardon. He pardoned us not only upon condition we would sin no more, but he took away our sin, cured our cursed inclinations, instructed our understanding, rectified our will, fortified us against temptation; and now every man whom he pardons, he also sanctifies; and he is born of God; and he must not, will not, cannot sin, so long as the seed of God remains with him, so long as his pardon continues. This is the consummation of pardon. For if God had so pardoned us, as only to take away our evils which are past, we should have needed a second Saviour, and a Redeemer for every month, and new pardons perpetually. But our blessed Redeemer hath taken away our sin, not only the guilt of our old, but our inclinations to new sins; he makes us like himself, and commands us to live so, that we shall not need a second pardon, that is, a second state of pardon; for we are but once baptized into Christ's death, and that death was but one, and our redemption but one, and our covenant the same; and as long as we continue within the covenant, we are still within the power and comprehensions of the first pardon.

6. And yet there is a necessity of having one degree of pardon more beyond all this. For although we do not abjure our covenant, and renounce Christ, and extinguish the Spirit; yet we resist him, and we grieve him, and we go off from the holiness of the covenant, and return again, and very often step aside, and need this great pardon to be perpetually applied and renewed; and to this purpose, that we may not have a possible need without a certain remedy, the holy "Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith" and pardon, sits in heaven in a perpetual advocation for us, that this pardon, once wrought, may be for ever applied to every emergent need, and every tumour of pride, and every broken heart, and every disturbed conscience, and upon every true and sincere return of a hearty repentance. And now upon this title no more degrees can be added; it is already greater, and was before all our needs, than the old covenant, and beyond the revelations, and did in Adam's youth antedate the gospel, turning the public miseries by secret grace into eternal glories. But now upon other circumstances it is remarkable and excellent, and swells like an hydropic cloud when it is fed with the breath of the morning tide, till it fills the bosom of heaven, and descends in dews and gentle showers, to water and refresh the earth.

7. God is so ready to forgive, that himself works our dispositions towards it, and either must, in some degree, pardon us before we are capable of pardon, by his grace making way for his mercy, or else we can never hope for pardon. For unless God, by his preventing grace, should first work the first part of our pardon, even without any dispositions of our own to receive it, we could not desire a pardon, nor hope for it, nor work towards it, nor ask it, nor receive it. This giving of preventing grace is a mercy of forgiveness contrary to that severity, by which some desperate persons are given over to a reprobate sense; that is, a leaving of men to themselves, so that they cannot pray effectually, nor desire holily, nor repent truly, nor receive any of those mercies which God designed so plenteously, and the Son of God purchased so dearly for us. When God sends a plague of war upon a land, in all the accounts of religion and expectations of reason, the way to obtain our peace is, to leave our sins for which the war was sent upon us, as the messenger of wrath: and without this, we are like to perish in the judgment. But then consider what a sad condition we are in: war mends but few, but spoils multitudes; it legitimates rapine, and authorizes murder; and these crimes must be ministered to by their lesser relatives, by covetousness, and anger, and pride, and revenge, and heats of blood, and wilder liberty, and all the evil that can be supposed to come from, or run to, such cursed causes of mischief. But then if the punishment increases the sin, by what instrument can the punishment be removed? How shall we be pardoned and eased, when our remedies are converted into causes of the sickness, and our antidotes are poison? Here there is a plain necessity of God's preventing grace; and if there be but a necessity of it, that is enough to ascertain us we shall have it; but unless God should begin to pardon us first, for nothing, and against our own dispositions, we see there is no help in us, nor for us. If we be not smitten, we are undone; if we are smitten, we perish; and, as young Demarchus said of his love, when he was made master of his wish, "Salvus sum, quia pereo; si non peream, planè inteream;" we may say of some of God's judgments, "We perish when we are safe, because our sins are not smitten; and if they be, then we are worse undone:" because we grow worse for being miserable; but we can be relieved only by a free mercy. For pardon is the way to pardon: and when God gives us our penny, then we can work for another; and a gift is the way to a grace, and all that we can do towards it is but to take it in God's method. And this must needs be a great forwardness of forgiveness, when God's mercy gives the pardon, and the way to find it, and the hand to receive it, and the eye to search it, and the heart to desire it; being busy and effective as Elijah's fire, which, intending to convert the sacrifice into its own more spiritual nature of flames and purified substances, stood in the neighbourhood of the fuel, and called forth its enemies and licked up the hindering moisture, and the water of the trenches, and made the altar send forth a fantastic smoke before the sacrifice was enkindled. So is the preventing grace of God: it does all the work of our souls, and makes its own way, and invites itself, and prepares its own lodging, and makes its

own entertainment; it gives us precepts, and makes us able to keep them; it enables our faculties, and excites our desires; it provokes us to pray, and sanctifies our heart in prayer, and makes our prayer go forth to act, and the act does make the desire valid, and the desire does make the act certain and persevering: and both of them are the works of God. For more is received into the soul from without the soul, than does proceed from within the soul: it is more for the soul to be moved and disposed, than to work when that is done; as the passage from death to life is greater than from life to action, especially since the action is owing to that cause that put in the first principle of life.

These are the great degrees of God's forwardness and readiness to forgive, for the expression of which no language is sufficient, but God's own words describing mercy in all those dimensions, which can signify to us its greatness and infinity. His mercy "is great," his mercies "are many," his mercy "reacheth unto the heavens," it "fills heaven and earth," it is "above all his works," "it endureth for ever." "God pitieth us as a father doth his children;" nay, he is "our Father," and the same also is "the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;" so that mercy and we have the same relation: and well it may be so, for we live and die together; for as to man only God shows the mercy of forgiveness, so if God takes away his mercy, man shall be no more; no more capable of felicity, or of any thing that is perfective of his condition or his person. But as God preserves man by his mercy, so his mercy hath all its operations upon man, and returns to its own centre, and incircumscription, and infinity, unless it issues forth upon us. And, therefore, besides the former great lines of the mercy of forgiveness, there is another chain, which but to produce, and tell its links, is to open a cabinet of jewels, where every stone is as bright as a star, and every star is great as the sun, and shines for ever, unless we shut our eyes, or draw the veil of obstinate and final sins.

1. God is long-suffering, that is, long before he be angry; and yet God is provoked every day, by the obstinacy of the Jews, and the folly of the heathens, and the rudeness and infidelity of the Mahometans, and the negligence and vices of christians: and he that can behold no impurity, is received in all places with perfumes of mushrooms, and garments spotted with the flesh, and stained souls, and the actions and issues of misbelief, and an evil conscience, and with accursed sins that he hates, upon pretence of religion which he loves; and he is made a party against himself by our voluntary mistakes; and men continue ten years, and twenty, and thirty, and fifty, in a course of sinning, and they grow old with the vices of their youth; and yet God forbears to kill them, and to consign them over to an eternity of horrid pains, still expecting they should repent and be saved.

2. Besides this long-sufferance and forbearing with an unwearied patience, God also excuses a sinner oftentimes, and takes a little thing for an excuse, so far as to move him to intermedial favours first, and from thence to a final pardon. He passes by the sins of our youth with a huge easiness to pardon, if he be entreated and reconciled by the effective repentance of a vigorous manhood. He takes ignorance for an excuse; and in every degree of its being inevitable or innocent in its proper cause, it is also inculpable and innocent in its proper effects, though in their own natures criminal. "But I found mercy of the Lord, because I did it in ignorance," saith St. Paul. He pities our infirmities, and strikes off much of the account upon that stock: the violence of a temptation and restlessness of its motion, the perpetuity of its solicitation, the weariness of a man's spirit, the state of sickness, the necessity of secular affairs, the public customs of a people, have all of them a power of pleading and prevailing towards some degrees of pardon and diminution before the throne of God.

3. When God perceives himself forced to strike, yet then he takes off his hand, and repents him of the evil: it is as if it were against him, that any of his creatures should fall under the strokes of an exterminating fury.

4. When he is forced to proceed, he yet makes an end before he hath half done: and is as glad of a pretence to pardon us, or to strike less, as if he himself had the deliverance, and not we. When Ahab had but humbled himself at the word of the Lord, God was glad of it, and went with the message to the prophet himself, saying, "Seest thou not how Ahab humbles himself? What was the event of it? "I will not bring the evil in his days;" but in his son's days the evil shall come upon his house.

5. God forgets our sin, and puts it out of his remembrance; that is, he makes it as though it had never been, he makes penitence to be as pure as innocence to all the effects of pardon and glory: the memory of the sins shall not be upon record, to be used to any after-act of disadvantage, and never shall return, unless we force them out of their secret places by ingratitude and a new state of sinning.

6. God sometimes gives a pardon beyond all his revelations and declared will, and provides suppletories of repentances, even then when he cuts a man off from the time of repentance, accepting a temporal death instead of an eternal; that although the Divine anger might interrupt the growing of the fruits, yet in some cases, and to some persons, the death and the very cutting off shall go no further, but be instead of explicit and long repentances. Thus it happened to Uzzah, who was smitten for his zeal, and died in severity for prevaricating the letter, by earnestness of spirit to serve the whole religion. Thus it was also in the case of the Corinthians, that died a temporal death for their indecent circumstances in receiving the holy sacrament: St. Paul, who used it for an argument to threaten them into reverence, went no further, nor pressed the argument to a sadder issue, than to die temporally.

But these suppletories are but seldom, and they are also great troubles, and ever without comfort, and dispensed irregularly, and that not in the case of habitual sins, that we know of, or very great sins, but in single actions, or instances of a less malignity;

and they are not to be relied upon, because there is no rule concerning them: but when they do happen, they magnify the infiniteness of God's mercy, which is commensurate to all our needs, and is not to be circumscribed by the limits of his own revelations.

7. God pardons the greatest sinners, and hath left them upon record: and there is no instance in the Scripture of the Divine forgiveness, but in such instances, the misery of which was a fit instrument to speak aloud the glories of God's mercies, and gentleness, and readiness to forgive. Such were St. Paul, a persecutor,—and St. Peter, that forswore his Master,—Mary Magdalene, with seven devils,—the thief upon the cross,—Manasses, an idolater,—David, a murderer and adulterer,—the Corinthian, for incest,—the children of Israel, for ten times rebelling against the Lord in the wilderness, with murmuring, and infidelity, and rebellion, and schism, and a golden calf, and open disobedience: and above all, I shall instance in the Pharisees among the Jews, who had sinned against the Holy Ghost, as our blessed Saviour intimates, and tells the particular, viz. in saying that the Spirit of God, by which Christ did work, was an evil spirit; and afterward they crucified Christ; so that two of the persons of the most holy Trinity were openly and solemnly defied, and God had sent out a decree that they should be cut off: yet forty years' time, after all this, was left for their repentance, and they were called upon by arguments more persuasive and more excellent in that forty years, than all the nation had heard from their prophets, even from Samuel to Zecharias. And Jonah thought he had reason on his side to refuse to go to threaten Nineveh; he knew God's tenderness in destroying his creatures, and that he should be thought to be but a false prophet; and so it came to pass according to his belief. "Jonah prayed unto the Lord, and said, I pray thee, Lord, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled; for I knew thou wert a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil."[a] He told beforehand what the event would be, and he had reason to know it; God proclaimed it in a cloud before the face of all Israel, and made it to be his name: "Miserator et misericors Deus:" "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious,"[b] &c.

You see the largeness of this treasure; but we can see no end, and we have not yet looked upon the rare arts of conversion; nor that God leaves the natural habit of virtues, even after the acceptation is interrupted; nor his working extra-regular miracles, besides the sufficiency of Moses, and the prophets, and the New Testament; and thousands more, which we cannot consider now.

But this we can: when God sent an angel to pour plagues upon the earth, there were in their hands "phialæ aureæ," "golden phials:" for the death of men is precious and costly, and it is an expense that God delights not in; but they were *phials*, that is, such vessels as out of them no great evil could come at once; but it comes out with difficulty, sobbing and troubled as it passes forth; it comes through a narrow neck, and the parts of it crowd at the port to get forth, and are stifled by each other's neighbourhood, and all strive to get out, but few can pass; as if God did nothing but threaten, and draw his judgments to the mouth of the phial with a full body, and there made it stop itself.

The result of this consideration is, that as we fear the Divine judgments, so we adore his love and goodness, and let the golden chains of the Divine mercy tie us to a noble prosecution of our duty and the interest of religion. For he is the worst of men whom kindness cannot soften, nor endearment oblige, whom gratitude cannot tie faster than the bands of life and death. He is an all-natured sinner, if he will not comply with the sweetnesses of heaven, and be civil to his angel-guardian, or observant of his patron God, who made him, and feeds him, and keeps all his faculties, and takes care of him, and endures his follies, and waits on him more tenderly than a nurse, more diligently than a client, who hath greater care of him than his father, and whose bowels yearn over him with more compassion than a mother; who is bountiful beyond our need, and merciful beyond our hopes, and makes capacities in us to receive more. Fear is stronger than death, and love is more prevalent than fear, and kindness is the greatest endearment of love; and yet to an ingenuous person, gratitude is greater than all these, and obliges to solemn duty, when love fails, and fear is dull and inactive, and death itself is despised. But the man who is hardened against kindness, and whose duty is not made alive with gratitude, must be used like a slave, and driven like an ox, and enticed with goads and whips; but must never enter into the inheritance of sons. Let us take heed; for mercy is like a rainbow, which God set in the clouds to remember mankind: it shines here as long as it is not hindered; but we must never look for it after it is night, and it shines not in the other world. If we refuse mercy here, we shall have justice to eternity.

[a] Jonah iv. 2. [b] Exod. xxxiv. 6.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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